



Common Myths that Affect Good Supervision

MYTHS SURROUNDING STATE EMPLOYMENT

There are many false beliefs circulating throughout the state government workforce. These myths can cause problems in the workplace. Included among these myths are the following.

“YOU CAN’T FIRE A STATE EMPLOYEE.”

- State employees can be dismissed.
- Dismissal of permanent status classified employees can occur if the agency has “cause”- meaning the employee must either actually or potentially harm the state service.
- In order to build a case for dismissal, supervisors must have documentation of problematic performance.
- Probationary employees may be dismissed at any time.

“PERFORMANCE ADJUSTMENTS ARE AUTOMATIC.”

- Performance adjustments should only be recommended for those employees who deserve them.
- Supervisors should meet regularly with employees to help them improve any performance problems or weaknesses.

“ALL EMPLOYEES MUST BE TREATED THE SAME.”

- Employees should be treated as individuals based on their behavior.
- It is not illegal discrimination to treat an employee differently based on work performance or skills .

“I CAN’T STOP EMPLOYEES FROM WASTING TIME.”

- Supervisors have the right and responsibility to ensure employees are productive at work.
- If an employee is wasting work time, consider responding by changing the workload or counseling the employee
- If necessary, disciplinary action can be recommended.

“I CAN’T ASSIGN JOB DUTIES THAT ARE NOT SPECIFICALLY LISTED IN THE JOB DESCRIPTION.”

- Supervisors have the right and responsibility to assign reasonable job duties that help the agency achieve its goals and mission.
- Employees have the responsibility to complete reasonable job duties assigned to them.
- Duties that should not be assigned to an employee include duties that are illegal, immoral, unethical, unreasonably dangerous, or require a license the employee does not have.



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“MY AGENCY CAN REALLOCATE POSITIONS BASED ON AN EMPLOYEE’S PERFORMANCE.”

- Reallocations are based on the *position* not the employee.
- Positions can only be reallocated when they undergo significant and ongoing change.

“I AM DOING ENOUGH TO PREVENT WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT.”

- Federal law prohibits employers from taking adverse job action against an employee based on a protected categories including:
 - ⇒ Race
 - ⇒ Color
 - ⇒ Gender
 - ⇒ Marital Status/Pregnancy
 - ⇒ Genetic Predisposition
 - ⇒ National Origin
 - ⇒ Religion
 - ⇒ Disability
 - ⇒ Age
- Civil Service Rules also prohibit discrimination based on:
 - ⇒ Race
 - ⇒ Gender
 - ⇒ Religion
 - ⇒ Political Beliefs
- Be aware of two types of harassment:
 - ⇒ Quid pro quo – a threat or promise of some action in exchange for the performance of a sexual act. An example might be requiring an employee to dine with you in order to receive a good evaluation.
 - ⇒ Hostile environment – allowing or promoting a work environment that is intimidating, hostile, or degrading. This might include allowing offensive jokes, pictures, comments or offensive language to exist in your workplace.