

EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

DH
(LOCAL)

**Purpose / General
Expectations**

All College District employees are expected to perform their duties in accordance with applicable law, College District policy, ~~administrative regulations~~, ethical standards, ~~and the mission and values of the College District.~~

All College District employees shall ~~recognize and respect the rights of students, other employees, and members of the community and shall work cooperatively with others to serve the best interests of the College District.~~ maintain professional and respectful working relationships with students, employees, and members of the community and shall conduct themselves in a manner that supports a safe, ethical, and effective learning and work environment.

Employees wishing to express concerns, complaints, or criticism shall do so through appropriate channels. [See DGBA]

**Ethical Standards
and Professional
Responsibilities**

The College District holds all employees to the ethical standards set out in this policy.

As a Citizen

An employee shall treat all persons with dignity and respect.

An employee shall accept all rights and responsibilities of citizenship, always avoiding use of the privileges of the employee's public position for private or partisan advantage.

As an Educator

An employee shall strive to help each student realize the student's full potential as a learner and as a human being.

An employee shall by example and action encourage and defend the unfettered pursuit of truth by all persons employed by the College District in the educational enterprise and students supporting the free exchange of ideas, observing the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity, and seeking always an attitude of scholarly objectivity and tolerance of other viewpoints.

An employee shall work to enhance cooperation and collegiality among students, faculty, administrators, and other personnel.

An employee shall maintain competence through continued professional development, shall demonstrate that competence through consistently adequate performance, and shall seek to enhance that competence by accepting and appropriating constructive criticism and evaluation.

As a Colleague

An employee shall recognize and preserve the confidential nature of professional relationships, neither disclosing nor encouraging

EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

DH
(LOCAL)

the disclosure of information or rumor, which might damage or embarrass or violate the privacy of any other person.

An employee shall support the right of all colleagues to academic freedom and due process and defend and assist a professional colleague accused of wrongdoing, incompetence, or other serious offense so long as the colleague's innocence may reasonably be maintained.

An employee shall not support a colleague whose persistently unethical conduct or professional incompetence has been demonstrated through due process.

As a Member of the
College District

An employee shall make the most judicious and effective use of the College District's time and resources.

An employee shall fulfill the employment agreement both in spirit and in fact, shall give reasonable notice upon resignation, and shall neither accept tasks for which the employee is not qualified nor assign tasks to unqualified persons.

An employee shall support the goals and ideals of the College District and shall act in public affairs in such a manner as to bring credit to the College District.

An employee shall not engage in unlawful discrimination or harassment of students or colleagues and shall adhere to the College District's policies on unlawful discrimination and harassment and other conduct.

An employee shall observe the stated policies and procedures of the College District, reserving the right to seek revision in a judicious and appropriate manner.

An employee shall participate in the governance of the College District by accepting a fair share of committee and institutional responsibilities.

REFERENCE: derived from the [Texas Community College Teachers Association Code of Professional Ethics \(PDF\)](#).

**Professional
Conduct
Expectations**

In addition to complying with applicable laws and Board policies, employees shall:

1. Communicate and interact with students, employees, and members of the public in a respectful, professional, and appropriate manner;

EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

DH
(LOCAL)

2. Refrain from conduct that disrupts the workplace, interferes with College District operations, or negatively affects the learning or work environment;
3. Maintain regular and reliable attendance, observe assigned work schedules, and provide appropriate notice of absences or tardiness in accordance with College District procedures;
4. Follow lawful directives and perform assigned duties in a competent, timely, and responsible manner;
5. Exercise sound judgment and maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students, employees, and members of the public;
6. Act honestly and with integrity in College District business, records, and communications;
7. Cooperate honestly and appropriately in College District investigations, reviews, audits, and administrative processes;
8. Maintain the confidentiality of protected, sensitive, or private information acquired through employment with the College District;
9. Use College District time, property, technology, and resources appropriately and for authorized purposes;
10. Avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest or misuse of position for personal benefit or advantage;
11. Adhere to College District safety and security rules and practices and promptly report unsafe conditions, security concerns, or workplace hazards to the appropriate supervisor or department;
12. Refrain from threatening, intimidating, abusive, harassing, discriminatory, retaliatory, or violent behavior; and
13. Comply with Board policies, administrative regulations, procedures, and applicable professional standards.

The examples listed in this policy are illustrative and not exhaustive.

**Professional
Standards for
Instructors**

~~A faculty member is expected to meet the education and experience requirements in his or her subject field and to demonstrate continuing professional growth beyond minimum requirements.~~ Faculty members are expected to meet the educational, credentialing, and experience requirements applicable to their instructional assignments and to demonstrate continued professional growth and development.

All faculty members are expected to support the philosophy mission of the College District and to ~~be aware of and concerned with the broad range of objectives and capabilities of each student the College District seeks to serve~~ remain attentive to the educational

EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

DH
(LOCAL)

needs, abilities, and goals of the students the College District serves. Faculty members shall ~~seek to develop the most effective instructional techniques and shall be receptive to promising new approaches. Faculty members shall provide guidance that promotes a student's welfare and proper educational development~~ strive to utilize effective instructional methods, remain receptive to promising and innovative approaches to teaching and learning, and provide guidance that supports student success, welfare, and educational development.

Consensual Relationships

The College District recognizes that consensual romantic relationships may develop between adults. However, relationships involving actual or perceived authority, supervision, instruction, evaluation, advising, or influence may create conflicts of interest, concerns regarding fairness or favoritism, and potential claims of harassment, coercion, or exploitation.

Employees shall avoid consensual relationships involving supervisory, evaluative, instructional, advisory, or other authority-related responsibilities.

Prohibited Relationships

An employee shall not engage in a romantic, intimate, or sexual relationship with:

1. A student whom the employee instructs, advises, supervises, evaluates, coaches, counsels, or otherwise exercises authority or influence over; or
2. An employee whom the employee directly or indirectly supervises, evaluates, or otherwise exercises professional authority over.

Disclosure Requirement

If a consensual relationship creates an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest or power imbalance, the employee with the greater authority or responsibility shall promptly disclose the relationship to Human Resources or the appropriate supervisor so that appropriate steps may be taken to manage or eliminate the conflict.

The College District may take appropriate action to eliminate the conflict of interest or power imbalance, including, but not limited to, changes to reporting relationships, supervisory assignments, instructional responsibilities, advising responsibilities, evaluative authority, work assignments, or other duties. In situations involving students, the College District may take steps to ensure that an employee does not teach, supervise, advise, evaluate, grade, mentor, or otherwise exercise authority or influence over an individual with whom the employee has a personal relationship.

EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

DH
(LOCAL)

Failure to disclose a relationship that creates a conflict of interest or violation of this provision may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Retaliation Prohibited

An employee shall not retaliate against or disadvantage another individual based on the existence, refusal, disclosure, or termination of a consensual relationship.

Relationship to
Harassment Policies

Consensual relationships that result in allegations of harassment, discrimination, retaliation, favoritism, coercion, or hostile environment concerns shall be addressed in accordance with applicable College District policies and procedures.

**Specific Workplace
Expectations**

Employees shall comply with the following workplace expectations and safety-related requirements in addition to all other applicable Board policies and administrative regulations.

Electronic Media and
Technology Use

Electronic media includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (email), web logs (blogs), electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing websites, editorial comments posted on the internet, ~~and~~ social network sites, **and other forms of digital communication and technology**. Electronic media also includes all forms of telecommunication, such as landlines, cell phones, and web-based applications.

Record Retention

An employee shall comply with the College District's requirements for records retention and destruction to the extent those requirements apply to electronic media. [See CIA and GCB]

Personal Use

Employees shall be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic media as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic media violates state or federal law or College District policy, or interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

**Tobacco, Alcohol,
and Drug-Free
Workplace**

Tobacco & E-
Cigarettes

An employee shall not use tobacco products or e-cigarettes on College District property, in College District vehicles, or at College District-related activities, unless authorized by the College President or designee. [See FLBD]

An employee shall not give or sell tobacco products or e-cigarettes to a person in violation of law.

EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

DH
(LOCAL)

Alcohol and Drugs

A copy of this policy, the purpose of which is to eliminate drug abuse from the workplace, shall be provided to each employee at the beginning of each year or upon employment.

Employees shall be prohibited from using, possessing, controlling, storing, manufacturing, transmitting, distributing, dispensing, selling, or being under the influence of any of the following substances while conducting College District business or while on College District property, in College District vehicles, or at College District-related activities, whether during or outside of usual working hours:

1. Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate.
2. Alcohol or any alcoholic beverage.
3. Any abusable glue, aerosol paint, or any other chemical substance for inhalation.
4. Any performance-enhancing substance, including steroids.
5. Any designer drug.
6. Any other intoxicant, or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drugs.

The transmittal, sale, or attempted sale of what is represented to be any of the above-listed substances shall also be prohibited under this policy.

An employee need not be legally intoxicated to be considered “under the influence” of alcohol or a controlled substance.

Exceptions

It shall not be considered a violation of this policy if the employee:

1. Manufactures, possesses, controls, stores, sells, transmits, distributes, or dispenses a substance listed above as part of the employee’s job responsibilities;
2. Uses, possesses, or stores a controlled substance or drug authorized by a licensed physician prescribed for the employee’s personal use;
3. Possesses or stores a controlled substance or drug that a licensed physician has prescribed for the employee’s child or other individual for whom the employee is a legal guardian;
4. Cultivates, possesses, transports, or sells hemp as authorized by law; or
5. Possesses, sells, or distributes Dextromethorphan.

Paraphernalia

EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

DH
(LOCAL)

The use, possession, control, storage, manufacture, transmission, distribution, dispensation, or sale of paraphernalia related to any prohibited substance is prohibited.

Notice

Each employee shall be given a copy of the College District's notice regarding a drug-free workplace. [See DI(EXHIBIT)]

**Arrests, Indictments,
Convictions, and
Other Adjudications
Criminal Offenses
Disclosure
Requirements**

An employee shall notify the employee's immediate supervisor or the Human Resources Office within three calendar days of any arrest, criminal charge, indictment, conviction, no contest or guilty plea, or other adjudication of the employee for any felony or offense involving moral turpitude deferred adjudication, or other criminal disposition involving:

- ~~1. Dishonesty, fraud, theft, or misrepresentation;~~
 - ~~2. Deliberate violence;~~
 - ~~3. Base, vile, or depraved acts that are intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the actor;~~
 - ~~4. Felony possession, transfer, sale, distribution, or conspiracy to possess, transfer, sell, or distribute any controlled substance defined in Chapter 481 of the Health and Safety Code;~~
 - ~~5. Acts constituting public intoxication, operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, or disorderly conduct, if any two or more acts are committed within any 12-month period; or~~
 - ~~6. Acts constituting abuse under the Texas Family Code.~~
1. A felony offense;
 2. An offense involving moral turpitude;
 3. An offense involving violence, threats, abuse, harassment, weapons, controlled substances, intoxication, or sexual misconduct;
 4. An offense that may reasonably affect the employee's ability to perform assigned job duties or responsibilities;
 5. An offense that may reasonably affect the perception of safety for students, employees, or the public; or
 6. An offense that may reasonably impact the employee's fitness for duty, professional responsibilities, driving privileges required for employment, licensure, certification, or the operations, reputation, or interests of the College District.

Employees are not required to report routine traffic citations, unless the citation results in suspension or restriction of driving privileges or otherwise affects the employee's ability to perform assigned job duties.

The College District shall evaluate reported matters on a case-by-case basis in accordance with applicable law and the employee's

EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

DH
(LOCAL)

job responsibilities. An arrest, charge, or allegation alone shall not automatically result in disciplinary action.

Employees whose duties include driving, operating College District vehicles, supervising minors, handling sensitive information, law enforcement/public safety functions, financial responsibilities, or professional licensure obligations may be subject to additional reporting requirements established by the College District.

Failure to make a required notification may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Violations

Employees shall comply with the standards of conduct set out in this policy and with any other policies, regulations, and guidelines that impose duties, requirements, or standards attendant to their status as College District employees. Violation of any policies, regulations, or guidelines may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment. [See DCC and DM series]