


# East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District

	<i>SOP 230 Code of Conduct</i>	
	<b>Implementation Date: 06/1999</b>	<b>Revision Date(s): 01/07/2007</b>
		<b>Reviewed Date(s):</b>
	<b>Forms or Attachments: None</b>	

## **PURPOSE:**

All employees of **East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District** are employees of a team working together with the main objective of service to our community. Any employee who fails to follow the necessary rules and regulations governing his/her conduct is not only penalizing himself/herself but doing a disservice to all of the other Department employees. The Code of Conduct rules are not intended to restrict or impose on the privileges of anyone but are designed to insure the rights and safety of all Department employees and to provide working guidelines to assure equitable and business-like Department to efficiently service our community.

## **NO LIMITATIONS:**

In recognition of the fact that each instance of misconduct differs in many respects from somewhat similar situations, Administration retains the right to treat each occurrence on an individual basis without creating a precedent for other cases which may arise in the future. Administration retains the right to suspend any disciplinary action at its discretion. The following rules and regulations are not to be construed as a limitation upon the retained rights of Administration to discipline employees; however, a more severe penalty may be imposed than that which appears in the standard procedure, if warranted by circumstances in Administration's discretion. Department Code of Conduct will meet Firefighter Bill of Rights, State and Federal laws.

The rules and regulations for the Code of Conduct are divided into four groups to reflect degrees of severity of offenses. In each group and for each rule, consideration will be given to the severity of the offense, the cost involved, the time interval between violations, the length and quality of the employee's service with the Department and the ability of the employee concerned. In each case where the penalty is modified from the recommended standard penalties, the reasons for such modifications will be noted.

(a) **NOTICE OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION:** In all cases, a supervisor shall notify the employee of the action taken and a copy of such notice will be placed in the employee's personnel folder.

(b) **USE OF PAST RECORD:** When imposing disciplinary measures for a particular offense the supervisor should not take into consideration any prior infraction which occurred more than recommended by the chart (see 231).

The Department has initiated a Positive Reinforcement policy that is to be followed in conjunction with the Code of Conduct.

East Lake Tarpon Special Fire Control District has a system of discipline that is easy for the supervisor to administer and the employee to understand. The Department's Positive Reinforcement program emphasizes correcting the problem rather than punishing the offender (depending on the seriousness of the offense). The Positive Reinforcement program requires the Department's work rules and performance standards to be easy to understand, easy to enforce, make sense, and be accurately and consistently enforced.

The program will be used primarily with Group 1 and Group 2 offenses, in varying degrees. This in no way excludes its use in Group 3 and 4 offenses, if appropriate.

Positive Reinforcement is an approach to encourage proper performance and to correct poor performance which minimizes the use of punishment. The process is designed to solve problems and encourage good performance by treating the employee as an adult with a problem to solve. A supervisor must gather all the facts regarding the incident and be fully informed prior to initiating any disciplinary action.

The commendatory or corrective actions are as follows:

- A+ = Commendation
- 1 = Guidance
- 2 = Counseling
- 3 = Written Reprimand
- 4 = Suspension and/or demotion
- 5 = Decision-Making Leave

As a part of positive reinforcement, it is essential to encourage proper performance through commendation (A+). When an employee has sustained proper performance or has gone above the norm, it should be indicated as such on the Personnel Appraisal Log (Form 229.1).

The first step of the positive reinforcement process is Guidance. This is an informal conversation between the employee and supervisor in which problems and solutions are discussed. As this first step is very informal, it will not require any form of documentation other than an entry on the Personnel Appraisal Log.

The second step of the process is counseling. The counseling session is used when Guidance has not resulted in the desired change. The employee interview form will be completed.

The third step, Written Reprimand is the beginning of Group 2 Offenses. This is also used when previous Counseling has not accomplished the desired changes. The employee interview form will be completed.