



**COLUMBUS  
CITY SCHOOLS**

**Code of Conduct  
&  
General Work Rules for Classified Staff**



**Mission:** Each student is highly educated, prepared for leadership and service, and empowered for success as a citizen in a global community.

The Columbus City School District does not discriminate based upon sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, ancestry, familial status or military status with regard to admission, access, treatment or employment. This policy is applicable in all district programs and activities.

# Code of Conduct & General Work Rules for CCS Employees

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# *Preface*

## **Code of Conduct**

The code of conduct is a set of conventional expectations and responsibilities of how classified Staff (Classified Employees, Substitutes and Classified Supervisors) employees of the Columbus City Schools should conduct themselves while in the service of the District – its students, employees, parents, and community. Its purpose is to define appropriate professional behavior in order to have standards that will serve to define proper practices, to guide actions, to prohibit improper behavior, to define acceptable conduct, and to build trust among employees and the community. The result is to cultivate the individual and collective accountability that serves as a foundation for advancing district excellence.

The code of conduct serves as a framework for ethical decision making. It provides operating principles to ensure effectiveness, to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation of each employee's obligations, to advance personal/district success, and to secure the reputation/integrity of the District and its employee – all to develop and sustain a productive organizational culture.

## **Purpose Code of Conduct and General Work Rules**

Most of the District's employees (classified, classified supervisors, and substitutes) never violate general guidelines and may never have a misconduct situation arise during the course of their career. Employees who act in an inappropriate or unreasonable manner can damage the District's brand and create unhappy coworkers, unhappy customers and/or an unhappy community. One of the best ways to make it clear what is expected of each employee is to have a set of general work rules with clear expectations. When there is a concern that expectations have been violated all matters will be handled professionally and in accordance with Collective Bargaining Agreements, Civil Service Guidelines, District Policy, District Procedure(s) and/or State Law as applicable. Disciplinary action may result based on circumstances.

The purpose of the code of conduct and the outlining of general work rules are to clarify the District's expectations for all classified employees: Classified Supervisors, Classified Staff, and all Classified Substitutes. An employer has the right to expect his or her employees to follow reasonable standards of conduct.

# Code of Professional Conduct

(Adopted from the Ohio Department of Education's Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators)

Columbus City School District employees are entrusted by the public and parents with the responsibility of providing a high-quality education to every student. Through various roles, district employees devote themselves to providing a safe and nurturing environment in which all students can learn. The professional conduct of every employee affects attitudes, performance, and achievement of students.

Maintaining the confidence and trust of students, parents, colleagues, and the public is the responsibility of each employee. Therefore, district employees are required to demonstrate the highest degree of professional conduct for themselves, other employees, and students.

**District employees are required to exhibit ethical conduct and must:**

## Conduct Activities Professionally and with Integrity

1. Behave in a professional manner, realizing that one's actions reflect directly on the status and substance of the work of ones colleagues and the District;
2. Maintain a professional relationship with each student at all times, both within and outside of the classroom;
3. Serve as positive role models;

## Perform Job Responsibilities in the Highest Quality Manner

4. Abstain from conflict of interest activities;
5. Demonstrate quality assurance in the delivery of services;
6. Ensure that school property, public funds or District resources are used in the best interest of the school district and its students and are not used for personal gain or in acts of misuse; and,
7. Fulfill all terms and obligations in employment contracts, Board of Education Policies, handbooks, job descriptions, instructions, and other documents that define the processes and procedures of the district/schools.
8. Abstain completely from the usage, possession or unlawful distribution of illegal or unauthorized drugs;

## Comply with All Laws, Regulations, Board Policies, and CCS Procedures

9. Demonstrate compliance with the access and use of technology;
10. Comply with confidentiality laws, safety/security requirements, and health regulations specific to students and employees;
11. Report information required by the Board of Education, Ohio Department of Education, or local/state/federal laws;
12. Adhere to federal, state and local laws and statutes regarding criminal activity;

# Violations of Code of Conduct and any Work Rules, Regulations, or District Procedures

Violation of rules, procedures, directives, work orders (written or oral), bulletins, or specific instructions are cause for discipline when violations occur.

Employees will be counseled and/or referred to training as appropriate to assist the employees in improving their performance. When an employee's personal problems may affect his/her performance, he/she may be referred to the District's Employee Assistance Program for professional assistance and intervention.

Disciplinary consequences may be determined and issued by management personnel at the department/building level or through Employee Relations. Disciplinary actions are grounded on the concept of progressive discipline -- a disciplinary system that provides a graduated range of responses to employee performance/conduct which can lead to termination of employment. However, a strong disciplinary response may be imposed when an employee exhibits a substantial performance or conduct violation. Flagrant, serious, grave violations (even if first offense) are subject to termination of employment.

## General disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to:

1. **Verbal Warning:** Intended to serve as warning to the employee to use more care in observing rules and regulations or to comply with workplace standards.
2. **Summary of Conference:** Intended to document proceedings which may have resulted in advisement, future instructions, no finding of violations, warning, directions.
3. **Letter of Direction:** Intended to serve as specific instruction and guidance in employee conduct.
4. **Written Reprimand:** Intended to admonish employee conduct generally providing instruction about future conduct.
5. **Suspension:** Time off work without pay for the purpose of severe warning in response to inappropriate conduct or performance.
6. **Termination of Employment:** Final action in response to employee's flagrant/serious misconduct or continued violations of work rules.

Other responses to violations may also include, but are not limited to, supervisory referral to the District's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), demotion, transfer, and/or ineligibility for salary increases or performance bonuses.

With the exception of a "Verbal Warning," disciplinary actions are normally filed in the individual's Personnel Record.

## Level 1 - Code of Conduct Violation Examples

*The following are general definitions of workplace violations that are subject to termination of employment.*

EXPECTED BEHAVIOR	EXAMPLES of VIOLATIONS	DESCRIPTION
Comply with All Laws, Regulations, Board Policies, and CCS Procedures	Illegal Work Stoppage	Interfering with, disrupting, or attempting to disrupt the operation of the Columbus City Schools by promoting, encouraging, or participating in an illegal work stoppage.
Conduct Activities Professionally and with Integrity	Falsifying Documents	Giving false information on accident reports, on-the-job-injury reports, claim forms, time cards; altering physician reports, medical documents, District reports/forms; falsifying an employment application, including medical history/information; providing false information or verification for the purpose of receiving pay, time off or compensation/benefits.
Comply with All Laws, Regulations, Board Policies, and CCS Procedures	Firearms/Weapons	Possession or use of explosives (including caps and fireworks), firearms, or any instrument identified as a dangerous ordinance (lethal weapon) by the Ohio Revised Code while on Columbus City School District property, while serving as an employee when off District property, or while in District vehicles.
Comply with All Laws, Regulations, Board Policies, and CCS Procedures	Theft/Fraud	The misuse, private use, or taking of the District's, student's, parent's, visitor's or another employee's property or monies; improper handling of money; tampering with tickets, game receipts, box office receipts; falsification of time/travel reports and/or claims for compensation (including disability or sick leave claims) for which the employee is not eligible; fraudulently and willfully being employed (or being trained, paid or unpaid) with another employer while at the same time collecting compensation and/or benefits or while on a leave of absence from the District.
Comply with All Laws, Regulations, Board Policies, and CCS Procedures	Drugs/Narcotics/ Alcohol	Violation of the Board of Education drug and alcohol policies (See Board of Education Policy 4114.12 and 4114.121). The use, possession, distribution, dispensing, manufacturing or purchase of alcohol, illegal drugs and/or narcotics by school district employees is strictly prohibited while working on the property, in a building, or in a vehicle owned by the Columbus City School District or when on duty.
Perform Job Responsibilities in the Highest Quality Manner	Misuse and/or Destruction of School District Property	Intentional destruction, willful damage, misuse or sabotage of property belonging to the school district, or to another employee, student, or visitor; any employee who damages District property and does not report same.
Perform Job Responsibilities in the Highest Quality Manner	Assault/Fighting/ Workplace Violence	Fighting on District property or while on duty is strictly forbidden. A "zero tolerance" is in place. Employees who engage in any violence in the workplace, or threaten violence in the workplace are subject to termination of employment. Acts of violence include, but are not limited to: physical (the use of force in order to harm); threats (expressions of intent to inflict injury); harassment (words, gestures, and actions which tend to annoy, alarm, or abuse another person); property damage (intentional damage to property owned by the District, employees, students, visitors, vendors).

(more...)

# Level 1 - Code of Conduct Violation Examples

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EXPECTED BEHAVIOR	EXAMPLES of VIOLATIONS	DESCRIPTION
Conduct Activities Professionally and with Integrity	<b>Criminal Convictions</b>	Criminal convictions or other alternative dispositions as related to Ohio Revised Code 3319.39 and defined in the Ohio Administrative Code 3301-20-01 and 3301-83-23.
Comply with All Laws, Regulations, Board Policies, and CCS Procedures	<b>Sexual Misconduct</b>	Acts of a sexual nature and/or indecent exposure while on duty and/or on District property.
Comply with All Laws, Regulations, Board Policies, and CCS Procedures	<b>Employment of Relatives</b>	An anti-nepotism policy is defined in Board of Education Policy 4112.4 and 4312.4. Violations of Board Policy or the failure to disclose information concerning relatives employed with the District are subject to dismissal for those employees involved.
Conduct Activities Professionally and with Integrity	<b>Unauthorized Use of Identification Badge</b>	Allowing another person to use an employee identification pass or using alternate means to circumvent authorized access to facilities, time clock(s), security access scans, and computers.
Comply with All Laws, Regulations, Board Policies, and CCS Procedures	<b>Unauthorized Use of District Property</b>	Allowing unauthorized individuals to use District property and/or operate a District vehicle. Transporting unauthorized individuals in District vehicles. Use of District property, monies, materials, technology by employees for their personal use.
Conduct Activities Professionally and with Integrity	<b>Sleeping on Duty</b>	Sleeping or dozing on duty while operating a District vehicle or while working in a safety-sensitive position. Preventable accidents; Board owned vehicle accident/incidents unreported accidents/incidents.
Comply with All Laws, Regulations, Board Policies, and CCS Procedures	<b>Operating Board Vehicle without Valid Operator's License</b>	Failure to have a valid state driver's license or a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) where required.
Conduct Activities Professionally and with Integrity	<b>Outside Employment</b>	Outside employment that interferes or prohibits employee from carrying out job duties. Conducting non-CCS business while on duty/during the work day.
Conduct Activities Professionally and with Integrity	<b>Outside Assigned Work Areas</b>	Traveling, stopping and/or deviating outside assigned work areas or outside District boundaries in a Board vehicle without supervisory instruction or authorization.

**NOTE:** The aforementioned listing is not a complete directory of violations that are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Other violations not listed may warrant discipline/termination of employment depending upon the nature and severity of the offense(s).



## Level 2 - Code of Conduct Violation Examples

*Violations are subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, termination of employment.*

EXPECTED BEHAVIOR	EXAMPLES of VIOLATIONS	DESCRIPTION
Conduct Activities Professionally and with Integrity	<b>Insubordination</b>	Refusal to obey direct orders issued by properly identified District official, principal, or supervisor. Noncompliance with instructions.
Conduct Activities Professionally and with Integrity	<b>Conduct Unbecoming a School District Employee</b>	Conduct unbecoming a District employee exhibited toward District officials, supervisors, administrators, customer, students, other employees, vendors while on duty and/or on/off District property including vehicles. This includes but is not limited to the use of profane or obscene language, threats, intimidation, coercion, altercations, obscene or vulgar gestures or suggestions and racial, sexual or ethnic slurs or other disparaging and inciting remarks. Depending on the severity of the offense, employees may face termination of employment.
Perform Job Responsibilities in the Highest Quality Manner	<b>Absent Without Official Leave (AWOL)</b>	When an employee fails to report for a duty, misses an assignment, fails to call-off work, leaves work or the workplace without authorization or without notifying the appropriate District official, he/she shall be considered AWOL. Failure to report to work in a timely manner (tardiness), to meet contract or department obligations in arriving at the work site, or continued tardiness to work or returning from break or lunch.
Perform Job Responsibilities in the Highest Quality Manner	<b>Accidents/Incidents</b>	Preventable accidents; Board owned vehicle accident/incidents; unreported accidents/incidents.
Perform Job Responsibilities in the Highest Quality Manner	<b>Commercial Driver's License (CDL) or State Driver's License</b>	Failure to carry a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) or state driver's license each work day where required.
Conduct Activities Professionally and with Integrity	<b>Gambling on Premises</b>	Gambling is prohibited in any form on District premises, whether on or off duty.
Perform Job Responsibilities in the Highest Quality Manner	<b>Unsafe Operations of District Vehicles/Equipment</b>	Unsafe operation of vehicles on District property. Unsafe operation of Board vehicles. Examples of unsafe operation include but are not limited to speeding, failure to maintain assured clear distance, improper parking (blocking traffic lanes, loading areas, fire safety lanes), cutting off other motorists, and/or failing to yield to pedestrians.
Perform Job Responsibilities in the Highest Quality Manner	<b>Neglect of Duty</b>	Failure or refusal to perform duties, obligations, chores, tasks, and responsibilities assigned or contained in employment contract or job description. Performing at an unsatisfactory level in meeting work standards, duties, and obligations. Depending upon the nature of severity of offense(s), a first offense may result in termination of employment. Failure to report defects, potential problems, faulty equipment, maintenance problems, misconduct, violations, and/or crimes.
Perform Job Responsibilities in the Highest Quality Manner	<b>Improper Operation</b>	Improper, inappropriate, malicious, unreasonable, unconventional, wrongful use or application of technology, equipment, machinery, supplies, facilities.

## Level 2 - Code of Conduct Violation Examples

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EXPECTED BEHAVIOR	EXAMPLES of VIOLATIONS	DESCRIPTION
Perform Job Responsibilities in the Highest Quality Manner	Dress Standard Violation	Failure to wear prescribed uniform/attire; reporting for duty in improper, inappropriate, unsafe, ill-fitted, soiled, un-kept, or offensive dress.
Comply with All Laws, Regulations, Board Policies, and CCS Procedures	Smoking/Use of Tobacco	Smoking is prohibited on all property and inside all facilities and vehicles owned or leased by the District (See BOE Policy 3223.41). The use of smokeless or chewing tobacco is prohibited on school property, in Board vehicles, in school buildings, or while on duty.
Comply with All Laws, Regulations, Board Policies, and CCS Procedures	Unauthorized Telephone Usage (land-lines, cellular, two-ways) and Technology Usage	Board of Education Policy 2411 (Employee Acceptable Use) and 2410 (district issued phones) establishes standards and rules. Employees shall comply with these policies. The use of personal or District-owned/issued technology (e.g., land-lines, cell phones, Blackberry-type equipment, laptop computers, I pads or other Tablets, iPods, etc.) shall not interrupt the work/duty of an employee or disturb, disrupt, or interfere with district/school/classroom operations. Employees are to use these technologies legally, responsibly, and prudently.
Comply with All Laws, Regulations, Board Policies, and CCS Procedures	Unauthorized Personnel in Board Vehicles, in Buildings, on Property	Permitting (or bringing) personal visitors, children, guests without proper authorization and granting access to District property, buildings, vehicles is forbidden. Other than employees and officially enrolled students (and their parents/guardians), no other individual is permitted access or entry to the property or buildings owned or leased by the District without proper authorization of District officials.
Perform Job Responsibilities in the Highest Quality Manner	Physical/Medical Condition	Failure to immediately report any condition that prevents employee from properly performing the essential function(s) of his/her job. To ensure confidentiality, an employee should communicate such medical condition to the Board of Education physician, to the Director of HR Administration or to the Superintendent's Designee.
Perform Job Responsibilities in the Highest Quality Manner	Absenteeism	Employees will be disciplined in accordance with attendance procedures.
Conduct Activities Professionally and with Integrity	Harassment	Board of Education Policy 4114.122 (Anti-Harassment), 4114.123 (Bullying), 4114.221 (Non-Discrimination) establishes standards and rules. Employees shall comply with these policies.
Perform Job Responsibilities in the Highest Quality Manner	Sleeping/Loitering on Job	An employee shall not sleep, doze, or loiter while on duty.
Comply with All Laws, Regulations, Board Policies, and CCS Procedures	Failure or Refusal to Follow Safety Rules	Non-compliance with fire safety regulations or instructions from fire safety personnel. Failure to comply with building evacuations, emergency procedures, safety personnel. Failure or refusal to wear safety glasses, safety shoes, safety equipment or follow specified safety practices. Noncompliance with sanitation requirements. Improper handling of food and/or food preparation.

## Level 2 - Code of Conduct Violation Examples

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EXPECTED BEHAVIOR	EXAMPLES of VIOLATIONS	DESCRIPTION
<b>Perform Job Responsibilities in the Highest Quality Manner</b>	<b>Abuse of Breaks</b>	Abuse of personal breaks or improper use of time, including taking breaks or lunch periods prior to designated times; unauthorized extension of break periods. Employees must not violate duration of time regarding scheduled breaks or lunch. Employees shall comply with the local site rules specific to breaks and lunch.
<b>Conduct Activities Professionally and with Integrity</b>	<b>Damage to School District Property</b>	Employees are required to report damage, destruction, misuse or sabotage of property belonging to the school district, or to another employee, student, or visitor.
<b>Conduct Activities Professionally and with Integrity</b>	<b>Unauthorized Use of Audio/Video/Computer Equipment</b>	Unapproved, unlawful, inappropriate, wrongful, banned use of audio, video, computer technology, and other technology is prohibited. Use of audio devices with/without earphones/headset and video devices while on duty.
<b>Perform Job Responsibilities in the Highest Quality Manner</b>	<b>Leaving Property/Work Areas during Working Hours without Proper Authorization</b>	Departure from the work area or the workplace without authorization or without notifying the appropriate District official.
<b>Perform Job Responsibilities in the Highest Quality Manner</b>	<b>Failure to Perform Work Assignment Satisfactorily</b>	Not meeting work performance standards; incomplete tasks, chores, projects; deteriorating work performance; abandoning or disregarding work performance; insufficient operations; not meeting timelines; poor time on-task; improper use of tools/equipment.

**NOTE:** The aforementioned listing is not a complete list of violations that are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Other violations not listed may warrant discipline/termination of employment depending upon the nature and severity of the offense(s).