



STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  POLICIES & PROCEDURES	SECTION: Administration		PAGE: Page 1 of 12
	CHAPTER: 200	NUMBER: 202.15	P&P TYPE: Public
	TITLE: Standards Of Conduct		
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POLICY:

It is the policy of the Department of Corrections (DOC) that in the daily performance of their duties, employees will demonstrate honesty, integrity, and respect for the worth and individuality of all persons. Department employees shall also demonstrate a strong commitment to professional and ethical correctional service.

APPLICATION:

This policy and procedure will apply to all Department employees.

DEFINITIONS:

As used in this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

Business Relationships:

A relationship between individuals or companies entered in to for commercial purposes and usually some kind of financial gain. Such relationships are sometimes formalized with legal contracts or agreements.

Conflict Of Interest:

A situation that has the potential to undermine the impartiality of a person because of the possibility of a clash between the person's self-interest and a competing professional or public interest.

SUPERCEDES POLICY DATED:	01/09/08
THIS POLICY NEXT DUE FOR REVIEW ON:	02/15/22

SECTION:	Administration		PAGE:	Page 2 of 12
CHAPTER:	200	NUMBER:	P&P TYPE:	Public
TITLE:	Standards Of Conduct			

Egregious Misconduct:

Misconduct that is extraordinary in some bad way, and includes but is not limited to, the definition of egregious misconduct found in applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Illegal Behavior:

Behavior that falls outside the law.

Investigations:

The formal or systematic examination or research of an event or person based on the study of factual information. There are various types of investigations including:

- **Official Investigations:**
Investigations that are conducted with the intent of being formally recorded. Such investigations usually follow a set format and would have an outcome that is documented in some official manner.
- **Internal Investigations:**
Investigations undertaken by the Department of Corrections and kept within the Department. Such investigations may not involve outside agencies and the outcome of the investigations would typically not be released outside of the Department.
- **Administrative Investigations:**
Investigations based on the possibility that the event or conduct of the person in question may have involved some form of misadministration (such as the breach of a policy), with the aim of corrective action or discipline when warranted.
- **Criminal Investigations:**
Investigations to determine whether the event or conduct of the person in question may have been criminal in nature.

Medical Information:

Any written, verbal or electronic information about a person's health status (past or present) or the provision of health care.

Professional Conduct:

Behavior befitting a person employed in a position of public trust.

Unethical Behavior:

Behavior that falls outside of what is considered morally right or proper for a person, profession or an industry, including behavior which conflicts with the Alaska Executive Branch Ethics Act (AS 39.52) or the Department's Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct (DOC P&P 202.01).

PROCEDURES:

The following rules and standards express in general terms the conduct expected of DOC employees. Violations

SUPERCEDES POLICY DATED:	01/09/08
THIS POLICY NEXT DUE FOR REVIEW ON:	02/15/22

SECTION: Administration		PAGE: Page 3 of 12
CHAPTER: 200	NUMBER: 202.15	P&P TYPE: Public
TITLE: Standards Of Conduct		

of these principles may result in corrective or disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Instances of egregious misconduct may result in immediate dismissal. The following list is not all-inclusive. In addition to generally accepted principles of employment (e.g., employees may not steal from their employers), the State of Alaska and each DOC office or institution has site specific policies and procedures, the violation of which may result in corrective or disciplinary action.

I. General Provisions:

- A. Employees shall comply with and obey all federal, state and municipal laws.
- B. Employees shall comply with and obey all DOC regulations, policies and procedures, operational memoranda, orders, and instruction. Employees shall not aid, abet, or incite another employee to violate these guidelines.
- C. Employees shall promptly obey directives given by supervisors. If a directive is in conflict with a previous directive, the employee shall inform the supervisor of the conflict. If the supervisor does not retract or alter the directive, it shall stand; however, employees shall not be compelled to obey any directive that would require them to commit or abet an unlawful act.
- D. Failure to obey an order lawfully issued by a supervisor or the use of abusive language toward a supervisor shall be deemed an act of insubordination.
- E. Unlawful discrimination, workplace harassment, or creating a disrespectful workplace will not be tolerated. Employees, offenders, and their families shall be treated professionally at all times regardless of their race, religion, color, creed, national origin, physical or mental disability, sex, marital status, changes in marital status, pregnancy, parenthood or age.
- F. The DOC complies with the State's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Act (AS 39.28) that prohibit retaliation against an employee in any aspect of employment including promotion, job assignment, or any other terms or conditions of employment because that employee filed a charge of discrimination, complained about illegal discrimination, or because they participated in an employment discrimination proceeding such as an investigation.
- G. When dealing with the public, offenders, and each other, employees shall be courteous and respectful. Employees shall not use violent, profane or abusive language or gestures.
- H. Employees shall be truthful and forthright in their statements and communications regarding other employees or offenders.
- I. Employees will avoid any conduct, on or off duty, which compromises their integrity and betrays the trust, faith, and public confidence in the DOC.
- J. Employees are obligated to be accountable and efficient in the use of state resources. Employees shall not use or allow the use of state time, supplies, or state-owned or leased property and equipment for their

SUPERCEDES POLICY DATED:	01/09/08
THIS POLICY NEXT DUE FOR REVIEW ON:	02/15/22

SECTION: Administration		PAGE: Page 4 of 12
CHAPTER: 200	NUMBER: 202.15	P&P TYPE: Public
TITLE: Standards Of Conduct		

personal gain. Use of state equipment and resources must not violate the State's Executive Branch Ethics Act (AS 39.52). Loss, misuse, misplacement, theft or destruction of state property must be reported to the appropriate supervisor immediately. Employees shall not appropriate any lost, found, evidential, or DOC property for their own use.

- K. Employees shall report fit for their duty assignment, punctually at the time and place directed. Employees are prohibited from engaging in unprofessional conduct which prohibits immediate response in case of emergency.
- L. Employees are required to remain alert and attentive during duty hours. Sleeping, or being distracted by non-job related activity that in itself constitutes an unprofessional use of state time is strictly forbidden. Examples of unprofessional use of state time include playing games, extended and recreational reading of newspapers, books and magazines; extended periods of non-work related internet use, including web surfing; engaging in lengthy personal phone calls and any other action which results in a failure to be attentive of the security and safety of the institution / office. This list is not all inclusive, and there are other activities that are non-job related which may also constitute an unprofessional use of state time warranting discipline, up to and including dismissal.
- M. Employees shall not knowingly falsify any document nor willfully depart from the truth in giving testimony or in connection with any official duty or investigation.
- N. Employees shall not interfere with any action or investigation assigned to another employee or interfere with DOC operations.
- O. Any level of intoxication or the use or possession of any kind of alcoholic beverage, legal intoxicant or illegal or non-prescribed controlled substance, or drug paraphernalia on the job or on DOC property is prohibited. Employees on duty are not to smell of or to be under the influence of alcohol or marijuana. Employees smelling of or appearing to be under the influence of alcohol or marijuana may be requested to be the subject of an alcohol / drug test. Nor may employees report for duty under the influence of any over-the-counter or prescription controlled substance if that substance adversely impacts the employee's ability to perform their duties.

II. Conflicts Of Interest:

- A. Employees shall avoid situations that give rise to a financial or personal conflict of interest, and shall abide by the provisions of the Alaska Executive Branch Ethics Act (AS 39.52).
- B. Employees shall refuse to accept any gifts, presents, subscriptions, favors, gratuities, scholarships, or promises that could be interpreted as being offered to the employee in order to cause a DOC employee to refrain from performing his or her official duties, or to provide special favor or status to offenders or contractors providing services to the DOC.
- C. Employees shall not accept private or special advantage from their official status as employees of the DOC. DOC credentials, uniforms, identification cards, or badges may not be used to coerce, intimidate,

SUPERCEDES POLICY DATED:	01/09/08
THIS POLICY NEXT DUE FOR REVIEW ON:	02/15/22

SECTION: Administration		PAGE: Page 5 of 12
CHAPTER: 200	NUMBER: 202.15	P&P TYPE: Public
TITLE: Standards Of Conduct		

or deceive others or to obtain any privilege or articles not otherwise authorized in the performance of official duties.

- D. Employees shall not engage in any other employment during scheduled work hours, nor shall any State resources be used in furtherance of off-duty employment (paid or unpaid), volunteer, or business activities. Time off for volunteer activities (emergency search and rescue, volunteer fire service, etc.) is subject to the normal leave provisions. This restriction shall not apply to employees involved in legitimate military service, such as the AK State Defense Force or Army National Guard.
- E. Employees shall accept no position, paid or unpaid, that conflicts with their duty to report wrongdoing by offenders, volunteers, staff or members of the public.

III. Relationships Between Supervisors And Subordinates And Relationships Between Peers:

- A. Dating, romantic, sexual relations, or engaging in joint business relationships between supervisors and subordinates when the subordinates are within the direct supervisory chain of command of the supervisor is prohibited. If such a relationship exists or develops, the employees involved shall report it to the office or institution manager to discuss the arrangements that must be made (e.g., shift or supervisory reassignments) to comply with this policy. Exceptions to the policy require written approval by the Commissioner. It is understood that a transfer of one party may be the result of such a relationship and that such an action shall not be considered an act of discipline.
- B. Dating, romantic, sexual relations, or engaging in joint business relationships between employees and a supervisor in their chain-of-command at any level is also prohibited. If such a relationship exists or develops, the employees involved shall report it to the appropriate Division Director and duty reassignments may be made to comply with this policy.
- C. Dating, romancing, sexual relations, engaging in joint business or the ending of such relationships with a coworker shall not interfere with the performance of the employee's duties nor create a hostile workplace for co-workers.
- D. Supervisors shall not give, accept or solicit gifts, money, or favors to or from peers or employees under their supervision. Gifts of minor monetary value (e.g., Christmas, birthday, and retirement presents) or collections for flowers or gifts on occasions of grief or celebration are not considered contrary to the spirit of this policy. At no time shall such gifts be purchased with State funds.
- E. Supervisors shall not use abusive or obscene language toward a subordinate nor shall subordinates use abusive or obscene language toward a supervisor.
- F. At no time shall a supervisor show undue favoritism to a subordinate. Undue favoritism is a conflict of interest with an employee's obligation to exercise fairness and professional judgment in the conduct of State business. Employees shall avoid participation in situations that may create undue favoritism.

IV. Relationships With Offenders And Family Members Of Offenders:

SUPERCEDES POLICY DATED:	01/09/08
THIS POLICY NEXT DUE FOR REVIEW ON:	02/15/22

SECTION: Administration		PAGE: Page 6 of 12
CHAPTER: 200	NUMBER: 202.15	P&P TYPE: Public
TITLE: Standards Of Conduct		

- A. Brutality, physical violence, or verbal abuse of offenders by employees will not be permitted. Employees are authorized to use only that level of force necessary to control an offender or to enforce legitimate and legal commands as provided in the Department's use of force policy.
- B. Employees will not exchange special treatment or favors, or make threats to obtain information from offenders.
- C. Except as set out in D. below, employees may not knowingly maintain social, sexual, business or financial associations with offenders that are under the supervision of the DOC, or a member of the offender's immediate family. This prohibition applies to any state or federal offender under the supervision of the DOC, whether the offender is actively detained or incarcerated at a DOC institution, or whether the offender is not incarcerated but is on probation, parole, or furlough supervised by the DOC. This includes, but is not limited to, telephone calls, letters, notes, social media communications or other communications outside the normal scope of employment. Business relationships do not include the purchase of merchandise or groceries from a legitimate retail outlet or the purchase of services from a legal business. Exceptions to this rule include pretrial defendants released on bail unless the defendant is under the supervision of a probation office and those employees who are actively involved in common pro-social activities with offenders such as work, school, treatment programs, sports leagues and supportive re-entry efforts.
- D. Employees shall not directly or indirectly give to, or accept from any offender or member of the offender's family anything in the nature of a gift or promise of a gift.
- E. Employees shall not engage in any unauthorized game, contest, sport, or betting with any offender. Exceptions to this rule include pro-social, organized sports activities.
- F. During the performance of their duties or while acting as representatives of the DOC, employees may not sign any petition, letter, or recommendation to the courts or to representatives of the courts regarding leniency, pardon, probation, parole or any other form of criminal case disposition on behalf of an offender unless:
 - 1. To do so is a requirement of his or her position; or
 - 2. The employee has received authorization from the institution or office manager.
- G. Regardless of where the employee works in the DOC, in cases where a close personal relationship with an offender or offender's family member existed prior to the offender coming under the supervision of the DOC, the employee shall notify their chain-of-command in writing immediately. The institution or office manager shall determine the appropriate parameters of the employee's conduct toward the offender or offender's family. It is understood that a transfer of one party may be the appropriate reaction to such circumstance and will not be considered disciplinary.
- H. Employees shall not discuss their personal life or another employee's personal life with offenders.

SUPERCEDES POLICY DATED:	01/09/08
THIS POLICY NEXT DUE FOR REVIEW ON:	02/15/22

SECTION: Administration		PAGE: Page 7 of 12
CHAPTER: 200	NUMBER: 202.15	P&P TYPE: Public
TITLE: Standards Of Conduct		

I. Employees shall not bring into or carry out of any DOC institution any items for offenders. All items received or purchased from offenders or given to offenders will be through official sanctioned channels and will have prior approval of the office or institution manager. The introduction of any items of contraband onto the grounds of any secure institution is prohibited.

V. Illegal or Unethical Behavior:

- A. Employees are expected to obey all federal, state, and local laws. Neither the absence of a criminal complaint or conviction, nor the dismissal of or acquittal on a criminal charge, shall preclude internal administrative investigation and discipline regarding allegations of illegal or unethical conduct, on or off duty.
- B. DOC employees have an affirmative obligation to report immediately in writing to their office or institution manager any knowledge of criminal activity or unethical action on the part of other employees while on duty or on DOC premises.
- C. When an employee is the subject of an external criminal investigation, has been arrested for, charged with, or convicted of any felony or misdemeanor (except minor traffic violations), or is required to appear as a defendant in any criminal court, that employee shall immediately inform and provide a written report to the employee's chain-of-command. The officer or institution manager shall inform the Director of the division in which the employee is a member and the appropriate Human Resource Manager.
- D. While off duty, employees shall not associate or deal with persons who are known to be involved in illegal activities.

VI. Reports and Investigations:

- A. Reports and logs submitted by employees shall be truthful and complete. No employee shall knowingly enter or cause to be entered any inaccurate, false or improper information, nor shall they fail to include pertinent information known to them regarding the matter at issue.
- B. Employees shall not convert to their own use, conceal, falsify, destroy, remove, tamper with, or withhold any property or evidence.
- C. During the course of an official investigation an employee can be ordered to cooperate in an internal / administrative investigation and must truthfully answer questions that are specifically, directly and narrowly related to the employee's official conduct, to include providing a signed statement or affidavit if requested. Statements made pursuant to an order to cooperate in an internal / administrative investigation and evidence that is derived from the statements cannot be used against the employee in any criminal proceeding.

An employee will not be compelled in any criminal investigation to be a witness against themselves. Employees interviewed in conjunction with a criminal investigation will be afforded all rights under

SUPERCEDES POLICY DATED:	01/09/08
THIS POLICY NEXT DUE FOR REVIEW ON:	02/15/22

SECTION: Administration		PAGE: Page 8 of 12
CHAPTER: 200	NUMBER: 202.15	P&P TYPE: Public
TITLE: Standards Of Conduct		

Miranda v. Arizona (1966) and the Fifth Amendment of the US Constitution.

VII. Medical Information:

- A. Employees are reminded that medical information that the DOC gathers and maintains is protected by federal and state laws and regulations, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- B. All medical information (including mental health and substance abuse information) is considered confidential and employees may not disseminate or release any medical information without first ensuring that:
 - 1. The release is authorized by law or the person whose information it is; and
 - 2. The person (or entity) requesting the information is authorized to receive it.
- C. Employees are expected to handle medical information in a way that preserves its confidentiality at all times. This means restricting access to stored medical information, not leaving medical information accessible when it is not being used and transmitting medical information in a secure manner so that it may not be viewed or intercepted by those not authorized to view or receive it.
- D. Employees who come in to contact with medical information indirectly, such as officers escorting offenders to medical appointments or clerical staff working in clinics, are also expected to keep the information confidential. Any medical information that employees may see or hear as part of their normal duties should be handled appropriately and kept confidential.
- E. If an employee is witness to any misuse or mishandling of medical information they shall immediately report it to their supervisor. Reports of misuse or mishandling of medical information will be taken seriously and will be investigated. Employees found to have misused or mishandled medical information may face discipline.

VIII. Criminal Justice Information:

- A. Employees are reminded that criminal justice information that the DOC gathers and maintains (whether hand written or electronic) is protected by federal and state laws and regulations, such as the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Security Policy and Alaska Statute 12.62.160.
- B. According to the FBI (CJIS Security Policy, Appendix A) and Alaska Statute (AS 12.62.900) criminal justice information may include:
 - 1. Biometric data;
 - 2. Identity history;
 - 3. Person data;
 - 4. Organization data;

SUPERCEDES POLICY DATED:	01/09/08
THIS POLICY NEXT DUE FOR REVIEW ON:	02/15/22

SECTION: Administration		PAGE: Page 9 of 12
CHAPTER: 200	NUMBER: 202.15	P&P TYPE: Public
TITLE: Standards Of Conduct		

5. Property (when accompanied by any personally identifiable information) data;
6. Case / incident history data;
7. Non-conviction information;
8. Correctional treatment information; and
9. Information relating to a person to be located, whether or not that person is wanted in connection with the commission of a crime.

C. The DOC makes use of several different repositories for criminal justice information including the Alaska Public Safety Information Network (APSIN) operated by the Department of Public Safety and the DOC's own Alaska Corrections Offender Management System (ACOMS). This policy shall apply to any additional criminal justice information systems that are either created or adopted in the future for DOC use.

D. Access to these databases is restricted and employees shall only access information in these databases when a legitimate business need exists. No employee shall access these databases for personal use.

E. DOC employees are also prohibited from altering or deleting any documentation or criminal justice information entered in to a criminal justice information system (such as the DOC offender management system) by another person, without first securing the approval of their Superintendent, Chief Probation Officer or equivalent supervisor or their designee. Before granting approval for an employee to alter or delete documentation or criminal justice information entered by another person, the supervisor or designee shall be satisfied that the alteration / deletion is legitimate and necessary for business needs.

F. All criminal justice information is considered confidential and employees may not disseminate or release any criminal justice information without first ensuring that:

1. The release is authorized by law or the person whose information it is; and
2. The person (or entity) requesting the information is authorized to receive it.

G. Employees are expected to handle criminal justice information in a way that preserves its confidentiality at all times. This means restricting access to stored criminal justice information, not leaving criminal justice information accessible when it is not being used and transmitting criminal justice information in a secure manner so that it may not be viewed or intercepted by those not authorized to view or receive it.

H. If an employee is witness to any misuse or mishandling of criminal justice information they shall immediately report it to their supervisor. Reports of misuse or mishandling of criminal justice information will be taken seriously and will be investigated. Employees found to have misused or mishandled criminal justice information may face discipline, as well as legal action.

IX. Public Statements and Disclosure of Information:

A. All official statements for public release concerning the affairs of the DOC must be authorized by the Commissioner, a Deputy Commissioner, a Division Director, or designee.

SUPERCEDES POLICY DATED:	01/09/08
THIS POLICY NEXT DUE FOR REVIEW ON:	02/15/22

SECTION: Administration		PAGE: Page 10 of 12
CHAPTER: 200	NUMBER: 202.15	P&P TYPE: Public
TITLE: Standards Of Conduct		

- B. In any public statement, employees will clearly distinguish between those that are positions of the DOC and those that are personal views. Employees are responsible for the accuracy of their statements.
- C. Employees shall not disclose confidential information (ranging from personal data concerning employees and offenders to information that would breach security or endanger any person) unless authorized in policy or having been directed to do so by the employee's Director or designee. Employees who receive such a request for information will refer the inquiring party to the office or institution manager.
- D. Social Media:
1. When identifying yourself as a DOC employee on social media **or** if you have a position for which your DOC association is known to the general public, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself as a professional employee, appropriate with the state and public trust associated with your position. DOC employees shall have no expectation of privacy when using social media tools.
 2. All posts or comments on social media that may be related, directly or indirectly, to your employment by the State of Alaska and the Department of Corrections shall be preceded by a disclaimer that clearly states that the opinions or views expressed are yours alone and do not represent the views of the DOC or your institution or office.
 3. Without written permission from the Commissioner, or designee, the use of any image or photograph of images that belong to the DOC is prohibited, including:
 - a. Department shoulder patch;
 - b. Department official logo;
 - c. Photographs or any graphic rendition of any DOC building, office, institution, or grounds; and
 - d. Any image of an offender (with or without permission).
 4. Without written permission from the Lieutenant Governor, the use of the state seal is prohibited.
 5. In a publicly accessible forum, employees shall not discuss any DOC related information that is not already considered public information. The discussion of sensitive, privileged or protected information is strictly prohibited. This rule applies even in circumstances where password or other privacy controls are implemented.
- E. Employees are prohibited from accessing official records of any kind unless doing so is a part of the employees' job requirements.
- F. Employees shall not remove any documents or other items from files or make copies of records or documents, except in accordance with established procedures or upon proper authorization. Employees shall not use, or release for use, official information for private purposes.

SUPERCEDES POLICY DATED:	01/09/08
THIS POLICY NEXT DUE FOR REVIEW ON:	02/15/22

SECTION: Administration		PAGE: Page 11 of 12
CHAPTER: 200	NUMBER: 202.15	P&P TYPE: Public
TITLE: Standards Of Conduct		

G. Former employees will be granted access only to DOC information available to other members of the public, and will have no greater standing than members of the public.

X. Clothing and Uniforms:

While on duty all employees will adhere to the DOC's policies on uniforms and appearance.

XI. Egregious Misconduct:

Egregious misconduct may warrant immediate dismissal on a first offense. The following lists are not all inclusive. Executive Branch employees are subject to additional statutes, regulations, policies, and other directives, the violation of which may result in dismissal for a first offense. Also, the totality of circumstances in a given circumstance may warrant immediate dismissal on a first offense whether or not a specific violation is listed below.

A. All DOC employees are prohibited from:

1. Engaging in unlawful discrimination or harassment;
2. Engaging in dishonesty, including dishonesty during an investigation into misconduct alleged to have been committed by the employee or by the employee's co-workers;
3. Theft of State time or resources;
4. Gross disobedience or insubordination;
5. Use, possession or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal controlled substance on DOC's time or premises;
6. Engaging in physical assault or misconduct, abusive, or lewd behavior;
7. Abandonment of duties;
8. Involvement in illegal activities, including but not limited to conviction of a felony or misdemeanor when the activity or offense giving rise to the conviction or the conviction itself (including a conviction based on a plea of no contest), could adversely affect the employee's availability, ability, or fitness to perform the employee's duties, or adversely impacts the DOC's ability to carry out its mission;
9. Intentionally aiding or abetting on offender's escape or attempted escape;
10. Introducing contraband onto the grounds of a secure institution;
11. Using excessive force on an offender;

SUPERCEDES POLICY DATED:	01/09/08
THIS POLICY NEXT DUE FOR REVIEW ON:	02/15/22

SECTION: Administration		PAGE: Page 12 of 12
CHAPTER: 200	NUMBER: 202.15	P&P TYPE: Public
TITLE: Standards Of Conduct		

12. Engaging in undue familiarity, including but not limited to sexual contact, with an offender;
13. Intentionally or negligently endangering or breaching security, including releasing of confidential information when such release has the effect of endangering security; and
14. Being involved in illegal activities, on or off duty, regardless of whether charged or convicted of a crime.

B. Egregious misconduct includes:

1. Conviction of any felony; and
2. Conviction of a misdemeanor when the activity or offense giving rise to the conviction or the conviction itself (including a conviction based on a plea of no contest) adversely affects the employee's availability, ability or fitness to perform the employee's duties, or may adversely impact the DOC's reputation or ability to carry out its mission. Misdemeanor convictions involving domestic violence (whether or not charged as a crime of domestic violence), DUI, refusal of chemical breath test, sexual assault or abuse, or the illegal possession, use, transport, transfer or sale of a controlled substance, by their nature may subject an employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

XII. Responsibilities:

- A. Division Directors shall ensure dissemination, posting, training, and enforcement of this policy.
- B. Office and institution managers and supervisors shall ensure that all employees or persons from other agencies, whose assignment is primarily on the premises of DOC institutions or offices, have read, understand, and adhere to this policy. Failure of managers or supervisors to do so may result in discipline up to and including dismissal.
- C. Failure on the part of any employee to implement this policy may constitute grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from public service.
- D. The Human Resources Office shall provide all new employees with a copy of this policy as part of the new employee information packet.
- E. All employees shall sign the *Standards Of Conduct Certificate Of Review And Compliance* (Attachment A), which will be placed in the employee's permanent personnel record. If an employee does not understand any section of this policy, it is the employee's responsibility to obtain clarification from the employee's supervisor prior to signing the Certificate.
- F. Any variance from this policy must have prior written authorization from the Commissioner or their designee.

SUPERCEDES POLICY DATED:	01/09/08
THIS POLICY NEXT DUE FOR REVIEW ON:	02/15/22