



PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINARY POLICY

From: People & Capability Manager

Date: February 2026

1. Introduction and Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to explain our approach to addressing performance and disciplinary issues.

Performance management is intended to assist employees achieve the required level of performance within our organisation. Performance management can be implemented in relation to job performance generally but also to help address conduct and behaviour issues with an employee.

Usually, disciplinary processes are intended to address particular incidents or events.

Depending on the circumstances, it may be that performance management and disciplinary processes operate at the same time.

This policy provides examples of the behaviours expected of all Horizons employees, as well as some examples of what we consider to be unacceptable performance, misconduct, serious misconduct and conduct detrimental to the best interest of Horizons. It also provides guidelines on the procedures that we will enter into in the event that it is alleged these behaviour standards may have been breached.

All new employees are required to read and electronically sign this policy via QJumpers. Employees should download a copy of this policy from QJumpers for their reference. Failure to sign the policy does not invalidate its application.

2. Formal Procedures

With the exception of summary dismissal, the formal procedures outlined below are intended to:

- Bring unacceptable behaviour or unsatisfactory performance to the employees attention;
- Provide the employee with the opportunity to correct such behaviour or improve performance; and
- Where required, ensure that any performance management and/or disciplinary action is taken in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

Managers and team leaders should seek advice from People & Capability prior to undertaking any action under this policy.

3. Performance Management

“Performance” relates to task or role responsibilities but also to attitude and engagement. An employee might be technically competent but detract from what the team is trying to achieve by displaying negative behaviour to customers and colleagues.

We are committed to achieving outstanding performance individually and as an organisation. We want everyone to perform to the best of their ability. We want to help everyone to achieve a standard of work which reflects Horizon’s vision, purpose and goals, and which is consistent with our values.

As a responsible organisation, we also have to think about the impact of poor performance on others in the team. We have a responsibility to address poor performance and have the tough conversations when we need to.

Performance management is a method of letting employees know what is expected of them, with the aim of assisting them to achieve or exceed our expectations. Managers/Team Leaders will review performance regularly and provide their employees with feedback. If we are sufficiently concerned about someone’s performance and initial measures and discussions do not prompt the performance improvement required, we will initiate the formal Performance Management process.

Where the Manager/Team Leader believes the employee is not meeting the required performance standards, and an informal process has not resulted in improved performance to the required standard, they will formally meet with the employee to discuss the concerns and make the employee aware of the standards and responsibilities required of their position. Specific examples of non-performance will be provided. The employee is entitled to bring along a representative or support person to this meeting.

At the meeting we will talk about the substance of our concerns and our expectations of the role. An attempt will be made to establish the reason behind the unacceptable level of performance. Consideration will be given to factors such as the job itself, personal problems or relationships with co-workers and any training provided. We will also invite the employee’s views on our concerns.

Once the Manager/Team Leader has heard the employee’s responses to the performance concerns raised, if required they will work with the employee to develop a ‘Performance Improvement Plan’ (PIP), which will be closely monitored throughout its term. This will outline the required performance objectives and the steps the employee must take to bring their performance to the required level. The performance improvement plan will also include timeframes in which the objectives must be achieved, any further support Horizons will provide and time frames for monitoring and review meetings. The PIP will be the key ‘action plan’ for the improvements we want to see achieved.

The PIP will be provided to the employee in writing. We will also let employees know about the possible outcomes should their performance not improve within the required timeframe, which may include bringing the employment relationship to an end.

3.1 Review Meetings

We will schedule regular review meetings during the PIP. Review meetings will be used to provide feedback on progress, including any further improvements required.

We will hold a final review meeting at the conclusion of the PIP. If the employee’s performance has improved to the required standard, we will confirm this at the end of the PIP timeframe and explain our expectation that the performance improvement be maintained.

If their performance has not improved to the required standard at the conclusion of the PIP, then we may initiate disciplinary proceedings based on a failure to achieve the required level of performance. This may result in employment being terminated.

3.2 Procedure for Unsatisfactory Performance

Where an employee has been engaged in a PIP, and has not met the required level of performance, then their employment may be terminated on notice following the appropriate process. Prior to this decision being made, the employee would be invited to a meeting to discuss the non-performance and proposed outcome with a support person and/or representative present.

As an alternative to termination, Managers also have the option of following the three-step written warning process outlined below, based on failure to meet the required level of performance.

4. Disciplinary Investigation Meetings / Disciplinary Meetings

We want our staff to work together as a team in a positive and professional environment. If we are aware of any behaviour by an employee which is unacceptable, we will take steps to address it.

If Managers/Team Leaders become aware of a potential breach of the [Standards of Integrity & Conduct](#) or other potential disciplinary incidents or events, they should consult with People & Capability in the first instance.

Where the nature of the allegations or other circumstances warrants it, a preliminary fact finding investigation may be carried out prior to the disciplinary process being initiated. This may be conducted by People & Capability or another nominated party. In other cases, this step may not be required, and a disciplinary investigation process may be initiated immediately.

When an investigation process is initiated, the employee will be invited to attend a formal investigation meeting to establish the substance of the allegations, and determine further courses of action. The investigation meeting may or may not result in a disciplinary outcome, depending on the explanation provided. Prior to an investigation meeting, the employee will be informed, in writing, of the allegations, their entitlement to have a support person and/or representative present at the meeting, and the potential outcomes of the meeting, should the allegation(s) be substantiated. In addition, any other supporting documentation or evidence will be provided to the employee in advance of the meeting. People & Capability should be contacted to assist with the drafting of this.

The decision maker must be present at the disciplinary investigation meeting, along with People & Capability and/or another nominated representative. Providing they have authority, or delegated authority to do so, and unless there is a conflict of interest, an appropriate decision maker is the employee's manager or group manager in line with the [Delegations Manual](#).

During the meeting the allegations and any supporting evidence will be discussed with the employee, and the employee will be given the opportunity to explain, mitigate or refute the allegation(s). The decision maker will consider the employees responses prior to making any decisions regarding a possible outcome. This may mean adjourning the meeting and/or conducting further investigation.

If the decision maker is considering disciplinary action, this will be communicated to the employee by the decision maker. The employee will be given a further opportunity to comment on this preliminary decision. Any warning(s) subsequently issued will be confirmed in writing by the decision maker. If the decision is made to dismiss the employee, then this may occur either with notice or effective immediately (summary dismissal). The decision maker for dismissal is in accordance with the [Delegations Manual](#).

5. Disciplinary Procedures

The following procedures will apply in cases of misconduct, serious misconduct, or conduct detrimental to the best interest of Horizons.

5.1 Procedure for Misconduct

In cases where misconduct is substantiated, the following warning procedure is likely to be followed. Where misconduct is considered serious enough, a final warning may be issued without a prior warning being issued:

- A first offence is likely to result in a first written warning
- A second offence is likely to result in a final written warning
- A third offence is likely to result in termination of employment on notice.

Unless the decision maker determines otherwise, first and final written warnings will usually remain active and may be relied upon for disciplinary purposes for a period of twelve months from date of issue.

5.2 Procedure for Serious Misconduct

Offences that constitute serious misconduct may result in summary dismissal (dismissal without notice) without prior warnings being issued. A lesser disciplinary action than dismissal may be given at the decision maker's sole discretion.

5.3 Procedure for Conduct Detrimental to the Best Interests of Horizons

Offences that constitute conduct detrimental to the best interest of Horizons may be treated as misconduct or serious misconduct depending on the nature and severity of the violation.

6. Suspension

Depending on the nature of the alleged misconduct or serious misconduct, an employee may be suspended on pay pending the outcome of the investigation. This would normally only occur when the presence of the employee may hinder the investigation, or where the safety or other staff or the public are at risk, or where there is the potential for damage or loss to Horizons.

Prior to suspension, the employee will be informed of the alleged misconduct and will be given an opportunity to comment on the matter of the suspension. In extraordinary circumstances, such as a criminal investigation which prolongs the process, or where the process is unreasonably protracted by the employee, the employee, may, after consultation, be suspended without pay.

The nature and conditions of the suspension will be given to the employee in writing.

7. Misconduct and Serious Misconduct

'Misconduct' is when an employee engages in incidents of behaviour or conducts themselves in a way that is unacceptable. Serious misconduct is misconduct at a more serious level.

7.1 Examples of Misconduct

The following are examples of the type of actions and behaviour that Horizons considers misconduct. They are likely to result in formal warnings and if repeated, dismissal. This list is not exhaustive. Where an act is carried out by an employee that is not specifically covered by the examples below, the employer reserves the right to apply disciplinary actions as it deems appropriate. Additionally, depending on the circumstances, misconduct may also amount to serious misconduct and be dealt with accordingly, depending on the seriousness of the incident.

1. Abusive or offensive language that causes offence to another person.
2. Carrying out duties in a manner that is negligent, careless, inefficient or incompetent, or failing to perform work to the required standards.
3. Frivolous wasting of time or materials.
4. Smoking in a non-smoking area.
5. Disruptive, boisterous or unruly behaviour.

6. Interfering with or preventing another employee carrying out their duties.
7. Frequent lateness or absenteeism, or failing to report at the time required without notifying the Manager/Team Leader/Supervisor.
8. Leaving the workplace during working hours without good reason or authority.
9. Misuse or major or minor damage to property belonging to Horizons, a member of the public or another employee, through negligence or misuse.
10. Failure to promptly report a fire, accident or other workplace accident or incident.
11. Failure to observe health and safety requirements, working in an unsafe manner or failing to make proper use of safety equipment or personal protective equipment.
12. Posting of unauthorised notices within Horizons.
13. Any act which could diminish the reputation of Horizons in the community.
14. Acting in an unprofessional and/or discourteous manner towards a customer, staff member or member of the community.
15. Failure to follow Horizons procedures, or any other lawful and reasonable instruction.
16. Acts falling within the category of serious misconduct, but where the particular case is such as to fall short of requiring dismissal in the particular instance.

7.2 Examples of Serious Misconduct

The following are examples of the type of actions/behaviour that Horizons considers serious misconduct, and are likely to lead to dismissal without notice or formal warning. This list is not exhaustive. Where an act is carried out by an employee that is not specifically covered by the examples below, the employer reserves the right to apply disciplinary actions as it deems appropriate.

1. Dishonesty, including falsification of any record or document, including timesheets, payment authorisations, submitting false expense claims, or committing fraud.
2. Misappropriation or unauthorised use of Horizons funds.
3. Failure to account for cash or failure to follow Horizons procedures for handling cash.
4. Gambling on the premises or during working hours without management consent.
5. Misrepresentation of an employee's, or Horizons position, whether or not for personal gain.
6. Wilfully disregarding or refusing to carry out a lawful and reasonable instruction, or walking off the job without good reason.
7. Sexual, racial or other harassment; or bullying, intimidation or unwelcome behaviour towards employees, customers or members of the community.
8. Gross incompetence or negligence in the performance of duties.
9. Reporting to work, or being at work, under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
10. The unauthorised use of alcohol, or being in possession of or using non prescription drugs or drug paraphernalia while on Horizons premises or carrying out Horizons business.

11. Without good reason, sleeping during working hours.
12. Copying, removal or unauthorised disclosure of confidential information.
13. Deliberate or careless activities that result or could result in the injury of another person, or damage to Horizons' or personal property.
14. Unauthorised possession of any gun, firearm, knife or other offensive or dangerous weapon or material on Horizons premises or while carrying out Horizons business.
15. Unauthorised or irresponsible use of fire protection or safety equipment.
16. Actual or threatened physical or verbal violence against another person or persons, including employees, customers or members of the community during work hours or during any out of work hours function or event.
17. Being absent from work for three consecutive days without reporting (except in extenuating circumstances).
18. Unauthorised absence from work, including misleading the employer as to the nature of an approved absence.
19. Unauthorised possession of, use or removal of property belonging to Horizons, customers, the public at large or another employee.
20. Misrepresenting or withholding criminal convictions, health or employment history or qualifications pertinent to the employers decision to hire or promote an employee.
21. Failure to report to Horizons any criminal conviction or serious traffic offence (such as loss of licence) obtained while employed by Horizons.
22. Failing to report to Horizons any traffic infringements, road accidents or vehicle damage while driving Horizons vehicles.
23. Being convicted of a criminal offence which impacts the employee's ability to perform their work function or is of such seriousness that the employment relationship is no longer tenable.
24. Breach of Horizons email, internet and/or computer policies, including (but not limited to) downloading, saving, printing or forwarding pornographic, offensive or objectionable material.
25. Acts or behaviours detrimental to the quality and/or efficiency of Horizons business, safety of Horizons staff, customers or the community.
26. Accepting a personal fee or remuneration other than normal salary/wages or lump sum payment for any service provided in the normal course of duty.
27. Signing any document or making a statement on behalf of Horizons without proper authorisation.
28. Bringing Horizons into disrepute or acting in a way that has the potential to bring Horizons into disrepute, or damage the interests or integrity of Horizons.
29. Any behaviour listed as misconduct which Horizons in its sole discretion considers to be of sufficient seriousness to warrant consideration as Serious Misconduct.

7.3 Conduct Detrimental to the Best Interest of Horizons Regional Council

Other conduct may also be detrimental to the best interest of Horizons and therefore amount to misconduct or serious misconduct. We will investigate where appropriate and disciplinary action may follow.

Conduct detrimental to the best interest of Horizons includes:

1. Any conviction in a Court of Law for an offence which has the potential to adversely impact on the reputation of Horizons or brings the standing of the employee into disrepute.
2. An employees behaviour (whether during or outside working hours) that brings Horizons or the standing of the employee into disrepute.

8. Linked Documents

- [Standards of Integrity Conduct](#)
- [Delegations Manual](#)

9. Review of this Policy

This policy may be reviewed from time to time by Horizons at its sole discretion, and in any event will be reviewed biennially. To be clear however, this policy remains valid and in force, irrespective of whether the review date has passed. Horizons will notify employees of any changes made; and may, at its sole discretion, consult employees prior to making any such changes.

The next review will be in February 2028.

Signed  Date 2/2/26
Michael McCartney
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Employee Declaration

I _____ (name) confirm that I have read and understand the Standards of Integrity & Conduct as well as this Performance Management and Disciplinary Policy. I understand Horizons may update these policies from time to time, and I will be notified of any changes.

Signed: _____

Date: _____