

PERSONNEL

SUBJECT: Civil and Legal Rights

The personal life of an employee is not an appropriate concern of the County Office of Education, except as it may directly relate to the employee's performance of his/her duties or responsibilities.

An employee's religious or political activities, or lack thereof, shall not be grounds for any discrimination or disciplinary action by the County Office of Education, provided that these activities do not violate law, County Office of Education policy or administrative regulation.

(cf. 4030 - Nondiscrimination in Employment)
(cf. 4119.21/4219.21/4319.21 - Professional Standards)
(cf. 4119.25/4219.25/4319.25 - Political Activities of Employees)

A teacher shall have the right to refuse to submit to any evaluation or survey conducted by the County Office of Education concerning personal values, attitudes and beliefs; sexual orientation; political affiliations or opinions; critical appraisals of other individuals with whom the teacher has a family relationship; or religious affiliations or beliefs. (Education Code 49091.24)

Whistleblower Protection

An employee shall have the right to disclose improper governmental activities to a school administrator, a member of the County Board of Education, County Superintendent of Schools, or the Superintendent of Public Instruction. An improper governmental activity is an activity by the County Office of Education or a County Office of Education employee that violates state or federal law, is economically wasteful, or involves gross misconduct, incompetency or inefficiency. (Education Code 44111, 44112)

No employee shall use or attempt to use his/her official authority or influence to intimidate, threaten, coerce or command another employee for the purpose of interfering with that employee's right to disclose improper governmental activity. (Education Code 44113)

(cf. 4118 - Suspension/Disciplinary Action)
(cf. 4218 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action)

An employee who has disclosed improper governmental activity and believes that he/she has subsequently been subjected to acts or attempted acts of reprisal shall file a written complaint in accordance with the County Office of Education's complaint procedures.

After filing a complaint with the County Office of Education, he/she may also file a copy of the complaint with local law enforcement in accordance with Education Code 44114.

(cf. 1312.1 - Complaints Concerning County Office of Education Personnel)
(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)
(cf. 4144/4244/4344 – Employee Complaints)

Protection Against Liability

No employee shall be liable for harm caused by his/her act or omission when acting within the scope of employment or County Office of Education responsibilities. For the protection against liability to apply, the act or omission must be in conformity with federal, state and local laws and must be in furtherance of an effort to control, discipline, expel or suspend a student, or to maintain order or control in the classroom or school. (20 USC 6736)

(cf. 9260 - Legal Protection)

The protection against liability shall not apply when: (20 USC 6736)

1. The employee acted with willful or criminal misconduct, gross negligence, recklessness, or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the harmed person's right to safety
2. The employee caused harm by operating a motor vehicle
3. The employee was not properly licensed, if required, by state law for such activities
4. The employee was found by a court to have violated a federal or state civil rights law
5. The employee was under the influence of alcohol or any drug at the time of the misconduct
6. The misconduct constituted a crime of violence pursuant to 18 USC 16 or an act of terrorism for which the employee has been convicted in a court
7. The misconduct involved a sexual offense for which the employee has been convicted in a court

(cf. 4030 - Nondiscrimination in Employment)
(cf. 4119.11/4219.11/4319.11 - Sexual Harassment)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

200-262.4 Prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex

7050-7058 Political activities of school officers and employees

44040 Unlawful to discriminate solely because of employee's appearance before certain boards or committees

44110-44114 Reporting by school employees of improper governmental activity

49091.24 Teacher rights to refuse evaluation/survey of personal life

CIVIL CODE

51 Unruh Civil Rights Act

GOVERNMENT CODE

815.3 Intentional torts

820-823 Tort Claims Act

825.6 Indemnification of public entity

3540.1 Public employment definitions

3543.5 Interference with employee's rights prohibited

12940-12951 Discrimination prohibited; unlawful practices

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

6731-6738 Teacher liability protection

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42

2000d-2000d-7 Title VI, Civil Rights Act

2000e-2000e-17 Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended

2000h-2000h-6 Title IX, 1972 Education Act Amendments

12101-12213 Americans with Disabilities Act