

Things to know before agreeing to the Employee Standards of Conduct

At the beginning of every year admin will ask all employees to read over AP 428 and AP 425 and indicate that you have read and understood the documents. Signing the document does not stop you from exercising your Collective Agreement rights. You are not signing that you agree with the procedure, only that you are aware and understand. If you don't understand the procedure, feel free to ask questions of your Principal. We also recommend you call the NDTA office prior to sharing your own personal situation as it pertains to the AP. This FACT Sheet provides some advice to members about the District Policy.

Expectations for Staff

The AP states that there “may be consequences including disciplinary actions for failure to comply with these Standards of Conduct.” It is important to remember that there may be consequences for failing to comply with any Board Policy or Administrative Procedure. Any member facing discipline in any matter is entitled to the rights outlined in the Collective Agreement (Article C.27), including the right to representation at all meetings with the District.

The AP also states that employees who have questions about the AP are to discuss the matter with their direct supervisor.

The NDTA would remind you that the BCTF Code of Ethics and Letter of Understanding with CUPE applies when you have concerns about another NDTA or CUPE colleague. You must speak directly with the colleague first and share your concerns with them. If the concern is not addressed, you may, after privately informing the colleague in writing of your intent to do, direct the criticism in confidence to the appropriate individuals who can offer advice and assistance.

There are exceptions. You are legally required to report child protection issues, if you feel that there is neglect or child abuse, such that a child or children may be in danger of harm. You are also legally required to report situations where worker safety is an issue.

Drug, Alcohol, and Medication Use

The AP tries to prohibit the possession, use or consumption of medications at work, particularly if they have an “impairing affect [sic]”, unless it is prescribed by a doctor, in which case you are to report your usage to the Health and Wellness Consultant (currently Zoe Mikelic-Strazza, who works for HR, not the BCTF Health and Wellness provider).

The NDTA advises that any medication use you are concerned about be discussed with the NDTA prior to discussing it with the District.

The District is required to limit the collection of information to the minimum amount necessary for the purpose. If you can do your job and are not a danger to yourself and others, they don't need to know. For example, if you took a Tylenol at lunch for your headache.

Impairment from medication use should be measured by whether the side effects could cause danger to yourself or others or hamper your ability to perform certain aspects of your job. You have a duty to work safely.

If the medication you are taking may cause you to be a danger to yourself or others, you should take sick leave. Call the NDTA office for help with this process. If the medication you are taking could hamper your ability to perform certain aspects of your job, you will need to report that you are using medication, but not the medication type or the purpose. You will need to have your doctor write a note to the District explaining that you are unable to perform certain aspects of your job due to the use of medication, and possibly suggestions about how the District can support you to work. This is a medical accommodation, and the District is required to accommodate you, to the point of undue hardship on their part.

The AP does not prohibit staff parties but prohibits cannabis use on District property or at District hosted events.

Substance Use Disorders

The District is not requiring you to disclose an addiction or substance use disorder. The NDTA recommends that you only disclose what is necessary for the District to accommodate you in your job, as a substance use disorder is recognized as disability that must be accommodated, to the point of undue hardship.

Criminal Conduct and Compliance with the Law

NDTA members who are not sure whether to disclose a particular charge should err on the side of caution and seek advice from the NDTA, who can in turn seek advice from the BCTF legal team.

Professional Qualifications

The NDTA strongly advises you to read the Professional Standards for BC Educators, available on the Ministry website, as these are expectations for your practice.

The Employee Standards of Conduct cannot be applied in an unfair and unreasonable manner and cannot contravene the Collective Agreement or other rights you have under the law. Should you be accused of failing to comply with these standards, we recommend that you call the NDTA office at 250- 756-1237.