

Connection's Academy East
HUMAN RESOURCE PROCEDURES
FOR PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC EXTERNS

Revised: August 2016

DUE PROCESS: GENERAL GUIDELINES

Due process ensures that decisions about Externs are not arbitrary or personally based. It requires that the Training Program identify specific evaluative procedures which are applied to all Externs, and provide appropriate appeal procedures available to the Extern. All steps need to be appropriately documented and implemented. General due process guidelines include:

1. During the orientation period, the Externs will be presented, in writing, with the program's expectations related to professional functioning. These expectations will be discussed in both group and individual settings.
2. Procedures for evaluation will also be discussed, including when and how evaluations will be conducted. Such evaluations will occur at meaningful intervals
3. The various procedures and actions involved in making decisions regarding the problematic behavior will be articulated.
4. Communication, early and often, with graduate programs about any suspected difficulties with Externs is expected. In addition, Supervisory Personnel should also seek input from these academic programs about how to address such difficulties, when necessary.
5. Remediation Plans, should be instituted, when appropriate, for identified inadequacies.
6. These should include a time frame for expected remediation and the consequences of not rectifying identified inadequacies.
7. Input from multiple professional sources will be used when making decisions or recommendations regarding the Extern's performance.
8. Documenting, in writing, to all relevant parties, the actions taken by the program and its rationale.
9. It will be ensured that Externs have sufficient time to respond to any action taken by the program.

ADDRESSING & REMEDIATING PROBLEMATIC EXTERN BEHAVIOR

Definition of Problematic Behavior

Problematic Behavior is defined broadly as an interference in professional functioning, which is reflected in one or more of the following ways:

1. An inability and/or unwillingness to acquire and integrate professional standards into one's repertoire of professional behavior.

2. An inability to acquire professional skills in order to reach an acceptable level of competency.
3. An inability to control personal stress, strong emotional reactions, and/or other behaviors which are deemed to interfere with professional functioning.

It is a professional judgment by the Clinical Director or other Supervisory Personnel as to when an Extern's behavior becomes problematic. Externs may exhibit behaviors, attitudes or characteristics that, while of concern and requiring remediation, are not unexpected or excessive for professionals in training. Behavior is typically identified as problematic when it includes one or more of the following characteristics:

1. The Extern does not acknowledge, understand, or address the problem when it is identified.
2. The problem is not merely a reflection of a skill deficit which can be rectified by academic or didactic training.
3. The quality of services delivered by the Extern is sufficiently negatively affected.
4. The problem is not restricted to one area of professional functioning.
5. A disproportionate amount of attention by training personnel is required.
6. The Extern's behavior does not change as a function of feedback, remediation efforts, and/or time.

Remediation & Sanction Alternatives

Connection's Academy East may elect to address problematic behavior, once it has been identified, by utilizing any of the steps listed below, without regard for the order in which they appear:

Verbal Warning to the Extern emphasizes the need to discontinue the inappropriate behavior under discussion. No record of this action is kept.

Written Acknowledgment to the Extern formally acknowledges that:

- the Clinical Director is aware of, and concerned with, the Extern's performance;
- the concern has been brought to the attention of the Extern;
- the Clinical Director will work with the Extern to rectify the problem or skill deficits;
- the concerning behaviors are not significant enough to warrant more serious action.

This written acknowledgment will be removed from the Extern's file when s/he responds to the concerns and successfully completes the Externship.

Written Warning to the Extern indicates the need to discontinue the inappropriate action or behavior. This document may contain:

- a description of the Extern's unsatisfactory performance;
- actions the Extern is expected to take to correct the unsatisfactory behavior;

- a time line for correcting the problem;
- what action will be taken if the problem is not corrected;
- notification that the Extern has the right to request a review of this action.

A copy of this Written Warning will be kept in the Extern's file and will be shared with the Extern's academic program.

Probationary Period with a Remediation Plan is a time-limited, remediation-oriented, closely supervised period of training, designed to return the Extern to a more fully functioning state, and support her/him to complete the Externship program. The Extern, and her/his academic program, is informed of this in a written statement which may include:

- the specific behaviors of concern;
- the recommendations for rectifying the problem;
- the time frame for the probation during which the problem is expected to be ameliorated;
- the procedures to ascertain whether the problem has been appropriately rectified.

The Remediation Plan may include:

- increasing the amount of supervision, either with the same, or other, Supervisors;
- change in the format, emphasis and/or focus of supervision;
- recommendation for personal therapy;
- reducing the Extern's clinical or other workload;
- requiring specific academic coursework.

The Clinical Director will determine the length of the Probationary period, in consultation with other Supervisory Personnel and CAE Administration. If, after this period of time, it is determined that there has not been sufficient improvement in the Extern's behavior to remove the Extern's Probationary Status, this will be communicated in writing to the Extern and her/his academic program; and may lead to a Suspension of Direct Service Activities for a specific period.

Suspension of Direct Service Activities for a Specific Period, as determined by the Clinical Director, in consultation with other Supervisory Personnel and CAE Administration. At the end of this Suspension period, the Clinical Director and other Supervisory Personnel will assess the Extern's capacity for effective functioning and determine when direct service can be resumed. If the Suspension of Direct Service Activities interferes with the successful completion of the training hours needed for completion of the Externship, this will be noted in the Extern's file and the Extern's academic program will be informed. In addition, the Clinical Director will inform the Extern of the effects this Suspension will have on her/his stipend.

Dismissal from the Externship involves the permanent withdrawal of all responsibilities and privileges. When specific interventions do not, after a reasonable time period, rectify the problematic behavior and/or the Extern seems unwilling or unable to alter the problematic behavior, the Clinical Director will, in conjunction with the Supervisory Personnel and CAE Administration, Dismiss the Extern from the clinical training program. When an Extern has been

dismissed from the Externship, the Clinical Director will communicate this information in writing to the Extern and her/his academic program.

Procedures for Responding to Inadequate Performance by an Extern

If problematic behavior is identified in an Extern, by either the Clinical Director, other Supervisory Personnel, the Clinical Director will inform the Extern, in writing, and will meet with the Extern to review the concern(s). This meeting may include other Supervisory Personnel and CAE Administration. If the Extern acknowledges the concern(s) being presented, any formal action taken by the Clinical Director will be communicated in writing to the Extern and her/his academic program. This notification will indicate the nature of the concern(s), and the specific strategies implemented to address the concern(s).

The Extern may choose to accept the intervention or challenge the action. The procedures for challenging the action are presented below.

ADDRESSING & REMEDIATING EXTERN GRIEVANCES

Hearing

If the Extern does not accept all, or any portion, of the initial finding that his/her behavior is problematic, then the Extern may request a hearing. Said request shall be made in writing and delivered to the Clinical Director within five (5) business days from the date of the disciplinary meeting referred to above. The request shall be delivered to the Clinical Director and shall contain a specific request for a hearing setting forth the portion(s) of the decision s/he wishes to have heard. If such a request is not made within five (5) business days, the Extern shall have waived said request.

If a request for hearing is made within the allotted timeframe, the Clinical Director shall schedule such hearing on a date no more than ten (10) business days from the date of the request. The Hearing Panel shall include the school Principal, Clinical Director, other Supervisory Personnel and CAE Administrators.

The Extern shall be permitted to make any oral presentation s/he feels is appropriate and relevant to the finding of problematic behavior, and may submit supporting written materials, if any. The Clinical Director and/or other designated Staff Member or Supervisory Personnel may also make an oral presentation. All parties shall be able to call witnesses, if necessary. Written materials shall be exchanged between the Extern and the Hearing Panel no later than three (3) business days prior to the hearing. Following the hearing, the Principal shall issue the final disciplinary

decision of the Panel within three (3) business days and a written copy shall be delivered to Extern.

Appeal

The Extern may appeal the decision of the Hearing Panel by providing a written request for appeal, along with any supporting documents, to Betty Lindquist and Sol Rappaport (CAE Founders) within ten (10) business days the Hearing Panel's decision. If such a request is not made within that time, any appeal by the Extern shall be deemed waived.

The Appeal Board shall consist of Betty Lindquist and Sol Rappaport, Ph.D. (CAE Founders & Administrators). All appeals shall be conducted solely in writing, unless the Appeal Board determines that an additional hearing is required in order to render its decision. The Extern's written appeal shall include a description of the identified problematic behavior and the Extern's explanation and/or argument as to why the decision of the Hearing Panel should be modified or overturned.

The Appeal Board may, at its own discretion, choose to interview the Extern or any other Staff Member regarding the charged problematic behavior. Thereafter, the Board shall render its decision, in writing, to uphold, modify or overturn the decision of the Hearing Panel. The decision of the Board is final.

Grievance Procedures

In the event that an Extern encounters any difficulties or problems (e.g. poor supervision, unavailability of Supervisor, evaluations perceived as unfair, workload issues, personality clashes, other Staff conflict(s) during his/her training experiences, an Extern can:

1. Informally discuss the issue with the staff member(s) involved;
2. Consult with the Clinical Director;
3. If the issue cannot be resolved with an informal discussion, or consultation with the Clinical Director, the Extern may seek resolution of the concern by submitting the request, in writing, along with all supporting documents to the Clinical Director. The Clinical Director, along with other Supervisory Personnel and CAE Administration shall thereafter investigate the concerns and take appropriate, discretionary action, if necessary.

In the event that a CAE Staff Member has a specific concern about an Extern, or suspects problematic behavior, the Staff Member should:

1. Informally discuss the issue with the Extern involved;
2. Consult with the Clinical Director;

3. If the issue cannot be resolved with an informal discussion, or consultation with the Clinical Director, the Staff Member may seek resolution of the concern by submitting the request, in writing, along with all supporting documents to the Clinical Director. The Clinical Director, along with other Supervisory Personnel and CAE Administration shall thereafter investigate the concerns and take appropriate, discretionary action, if necessary.

***Please Note:** The basic structure of this Due Process document was retrieved from the “Examples of Due Process Documents” section of the APPIC website (www.appic.org).*