

Salton Community Services District
SPECIAL MEETING *Agenda*

April 15, 2026

**To run concurrently with the Closed Session on the Agenda for the Regular Meeting
scheduled on April 15, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.**

**1209 Van Buren Ave.
Salton City, CA 92275
www.saltoncsd.ca.gov**

THIS SPECIAL MEETING IS BEING CONDUCTED AT 1209 VAN BUREN AVE, SALTON CITY, CA 92275. ADDITIONALLY, THIS MEETING IS BEING CONDUCTED BY TELECONFERENCE AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATION: CHAPULTECATE 5 MENA MOCAMPO CENTRO VALLE SANTIAGO C.P. 38400 VALLE DE SANTIAGO, GTO, MEXICO, DIRECTOR RAMOS. PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54953(b), THE TELECONFERENCE LOCATION IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, AND ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC HAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE SCSD BOARD FROM A TELECONFERENCE LOCATION IN THE SAME MANNER AS IF THAT PERSON ATTENDED THE MEETING LOCATION. THE SCSD BOARD WILL CONTROL THE CONDUCT OF THE MEETING AND DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE ORDER AND TIME LIMITATIONS ON PUBLIC COMMENTS FROM THE TELECONFERENCE LOCATION.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Michael Friese, President
Oscar Ramirez, Vice President
Manuel Ramos, Director
Lidia A. Sierra, Director
David Reagle, Director

STAFF:

Emmanuel Ramos, General Manager
Christina Sutton, Finance Officer
Thania Garcia, Board Secretary
Jazmine Madrigal, Admin Assistant
Omar Ruiz, Field Foreman
Pascual Muniz, Park Supervisor
Lena Wade, Legal Counsel

1. CALL TO ORDER: 1:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 54954.3(3), members of the public may address the Board at this time on any item that has been described in the notice for the Special Meeting before or during consideration of that item. Those who wish to address the Board should come to the microphone. Members of the public will be given three (3) minutes to address the board on any items of public interest. Comments are not to be directed towards an individual or individuals but to the Board on a specific issue.

4. SPECIAL MEETING OPEN SESSION ITEM:

A. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE -DISMISSAL – RELEASE- COMPLAINT

– Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957

According to Government Code Section 549571, on April 13, 2026, Steven Rodriguez, by and through his Union Representative, Nick Gumbleton, provided written notice to the SCSD of Mr. Rodriguez’s election to have the complaint and/ or charges against him heard in open session.

5. Adjournment:

Sonia Thania Garcia, Secretary of the Board

Upon written request, this agenda will be made in an appropriate alternative format to persons with disabilities as required by Section 202 of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990. Any person with a disability who requires a modification or accommodation in order to participate in a meeting should direct such request to the Secretary of the Board at least 24 hours before the meeting. Any public record, relating to an open session agenda item, that is distributed within 24 hours prior to the meeting is available for public inspection at 1209 Van Buren St, Suite 1, Salton City, California 92275.

**SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS
STAFF REPORT**

DATE: April 15, 2026 Item No. Special Meeting 4.A.

SUBJECT: PUBLIC EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE - DISMISSAL - RELEASE- COMPLAINT
– Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957

FROM: Emmanuel Ramos, General Manager

SUMMARY:

According to Government Code Section 549571, on April 13, 2026, Steven Rodriguez, by and through his Union Representative, Nick Gumbleton, provided written notice to the District of Mr. Rodriguez's election to have the complaint and/ or charges against him heard in open session. Therefore, the complaint and/ or charges against Mr. Rodriguez will be heard in open session of the Special Meeting of the Board before the closed session on the Regular Meeting agenda. Following the hearing of the complaint and/ or charges against Mr. Rodriguez, this Special Meeting will be adjourned and the Board of Directors will then move to closed session as scheduled in the Regular Meeting agenda.

Article XXIII, Section 2.G. of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Salton Community Services District and Laborers' International Union of North America, Local No. 1184 Affiliated with the Southern California District of Council Laborers ("LiUNA") (January 1, 2024-December 31, 2026) provides:

If the employee is dissatisfied with the General Manager's or his/her designee's decision, he/she may request in writing a review by the Salton Community Services District Board within seven (7) calendar days following the receipt of the decision of the General Manager or his/her designee. The Board shall, within thirty (30) calendar days after it receives the employee's request for review, conduct a review. The decision of the Board shall be rendered, in writing, within thirty (30) calendar days of completion of the review. The decision of the Board shall be final and not subject to any further appeal.

ACTION UNDER CONSIDERATION:

1. Uphold the General Manager's determination to terminate the employee; or
2. Set aside the General Manager's determination to terminate the employee.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. April 13, 2026 email from Nick Gumbleton, LiUNA Representative, to Vee Sotelo, representative of the District, requesting that the complaint and/or charges against Mr. Rodriguez be heard in open session.
2. Discipline Packet

From: Nick Gumbleton <ngumbleton@local1184.com>
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 9:17 AM
To: Vee B. Sotelo <sotelo@sbemp.com>; 2015jrffcrew@gmail.com
Cc: Shelly Tholander-Turner <tholander-turner@sbemp.com>
Subject: Re: Salton CSD

Good morning,

Mr.Rodríguez would like to have this heard in open session remotely. I will be attending remotely as well.

Thank you,

Nick Gumbleton
Business Agent
Laborer's Local 1184
72732 Ramon Road
Thousand Palms, CA 92276
(760)996-2956

LiUNA! LABORERS
LOCAL 1184
YOUR WORKFORCE SOLUTION™

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Failure to Follow Departmental Policies and Procedures

PERFORMANCE CORRECTION NOTICE

Employee Name: Steven Rodriguez

Department: Sewer Maintenance Mechanic

Date Presented: 05-05-25

Supervisor: Emmanuel Ramos

Disciplinary Level

- Verbal Correction
- Written Warning/*Probation* –

1. Disregarded the District's policy and procedures by attending a Board meeting while still on the clock. Steven should have requested the time off, obtained permission from his supervisor, and clocked out to attend the Board meeting, but did not do so and attended a Board meeting while still on the clock. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for failing to obtain approval to leave work early and failing to notify a supervisor in advance of anticipated absence. The Handbook's Attendance and Punctuality policy states that "early departure or other unanticipated and unapproved absences from scheduled hours are disruptive and must be avoided."
2. Engaged in disruptive and unprofessional behavior at a meeting of the District's Board of Directors on February 19, 2025, by speaking over Board members after the close of the public comment period and disregarding and directive from the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel instructing Steven to stop talking because the public comment period had ended. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for "any form of insubordination" and "discourtesy, rudeness or unprofessional behavior toward a member of the public." In this case, Steven was rude and discourteous to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel, and the District finds the handbook provision to be equally applicable (if not more so) to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel.

Review of Union Memorandum of understanding and district handbook, possible termination if offense is repeated)

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

- Investigatory Leave –
- Final Written Warning
- Without decision-making leave
- With decision-making leave (Attach memo of instructions.)
- With unpaid suspension

Subject: *Failure to follow departmental policies and procedures*

Policy/Procedure Violation – Failed to notify supervisor prior to attending and attended meeting while on the clock; Stated he was there representing the Union as the Union Steward when he was not. The Employee Handbook’s Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for failing to obtain approval to leave work early and failing to notify a supervisor in advance of anticipated absence. The Handbook’s Attendance and Punctuality policy states that “early departure or other unanticipated and unapproved absences from scheduled hours are disruptive and must be avoided.”

Performance Transgression

Behavior/Conduct Infraction - Employee’s behavior at the February 19, 2025, and the March 19, 2025, Board of Directors meetings was unprofessional, insubordinate and in disregard of directives from the President of the Board and General Counsel. The Employee Handbook’s Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for “any form of insubordination” and “discourtesy, rudeness or unprofessional behavior toward a member of the public.” In this case, Steven was rude and discourteous to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel, and the District finds the handbook provision to be equally applicable (if not more so) to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel.

Absenteeism/Tardiness

Prior Notifications

<i>Level of Discipline</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>
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SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Verbal. 10/25/2023 Driving an SCSD vehicle while towing a trailer over the speed limit and in the far-left lane.

Written _____

Final Written _____

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Incident Description and Supporting Details:

Steven,

On Wednesday, February 19, 2025, you attended while on the clock, the District's Board of Directors' regular meeting without notifying your supervisor prior to attendance. You interrupted the Board President during the meeting after Public Comments had been closed and insisted on making comments in which you used your official title and position with the district, as well as stating you were there representing the Union as the Union Steward. You proceeded to then argue and disrespect the Board President and Legal Counsel. "I'm going to make my statement, and you're gonna hear it, either here or outside."

On Wednesday, March 19, 2025, you attended while on the clock, the District's Board of Directors' regular meeting without notifying your supervisor prior to attending. You again used your official title with the district and stated you were there representing the Union as the Union Steward. You again disrupted the meeting by demanding to make a second (2nd) Public Comment after you had been given the full three (3) minutes for your first (1st) comment during Public Comment, Legal Counsel had to instruct you to sit down.

On Wednesday, April 16th, 2025, you attended while on the clock, the District's Board of Directors' regular meeting without notifying your supervisor prior to attending.

After conducting a detailed investigation involving your conduct, I have determined that the following action needs to be addressed:

Finding (1) *How you chose to handle yourself was in direct conflict with the chain of command that you are to follow. Any grievance or complaint regarding your supervisor's General manager's conduct should have been brought directly to Human Resources. Your decision to be disruptive and conduct yourself in an unprofessional manner was inappropriate and against company policy.*

Finding (2) *You were not permitted by the Union to represent the Union in a capacity at the board meetings.*

Performance Improvement Plan

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

1. Measurable/Tangible Improvement Goals: *Steven, the district expects that you will familiarize yourself not only with this policy but with all policies and procedures outlined in the district's employee handbook and your Memorandum of Understanding. You must familiarize yourself with all district rules from this point forward. The district also expects that you reach out to your Union Representative with any questions regarding the MOU.*

2. Training or Special Direction to Be Provided: *I will email you, along with the rest of the staff, each section of the Employee Handbook for better understanding of the district's policies and procedures.*

3. Interim Performance Evaluation Necessary? *No*

4. In addition, I recognize that you may have certain ideas to improve your performance. Therefore, I encourage you to provide your own Personal Improvement Plan Input and Suggestions:

(Attach additional sheets if needed.)

Outcomes and Consequences

Positive: I will remain available to help you and discuss areas where you require additional support.

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

If you comply with the proper policy and procedures going forward, no further disciplinary action will be taken regarding this issue.

Negative: *You are now being placed on notice that if you ever again fail to follow established policies and procedures, you may be discharged. In addition, if you abuse any employment privileges or if you engage in any conduct that indicates a lack of responsibility or that violates any standards of performance and conduct in the next 90 days, you may be placed on a final written warning. Failure to follow policies and procedures during that final written warning period may result in your dismissal. A copy of this document will be placed in your personnel file.*

Scheduled Review Date:

Employee Comments and/or Rebuttal

(Attach additional sheets if needed.)

X _____


Employee Signature

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Employee Acknowledgment

I have received a copy of this notification. It has been discussed with me, and I have been advised to take time to consider it before I sign it. I accept full responsibility for my actions. *I understand that I must make substantial improvements in my performance to remain employed with the District.*

By signing this, I commit to follow the District's standards of performance and conduct.

_____	_____		<u>5.6.25</u>
Employee Signature	Date	Supervisor Signature	Date

Witness (if employee refuses to sign)

<u>Christina R. Sutton</u>	<u>05/06/2025</u>	<u>8:41 am</u>
Name	Date	Time in
conference		

Distribution of copies: Employer, Supervisor, Department Head, Human Resources

STEVEN Refuse to Sign.

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Failure to Follow Departmental Policies and Procedures

PERFORMANCE CORRECTION NOTICE

Employee Name: Steven Rodriguez

Department: Mechanic

Date Presented: July 21, 2025

Supervisor: Emmanuel Ramos

Disciplinary Level

- Verbal Correction
- Written Warning/Probation
- Investigatory Leave
- Final Written Warning
 - Without decision-making leave
 - With decision-making leave (Attach memo of instructions.)
 - With unpaid suspension

Subject: *Violation of District policy prohibiting bullying of co-workers*

- Policy/Procedure Violation
- Performance Transgression
- Behavior/Conduct Infraction –

Workplace Bullying

Verbal Bullying: The District's Employee Handbook prohibits verbal bullying of employees. "Verbal bullying" is described in the handbook, in part, as: "slandering, ridiculing, or maligning" colleagues and supervisors. (See Employee Handbook's Policy Against Bullying, Exhibit A) On 6/30/25, you violated the District's policy against bullying by engaging with a colleague in an unprofessional and condescending manner. Specifically, while the colleague, Oracio Lemus, was working on an issue concerning the new time clock, you stated to him, in the presence of other employees: "The time clock is worthless, just like you."

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

This comment was a gratuitous, mean-spirited personal attack of the other employee, without provocation. The comment constitutes verbal bullying in violation of the District's policies.

Steven has a history of engaging other District employees and even Board members in a rude and unprofessional manner. As detailed below, on 2/19/25, Steven attended a meeting of the District's Board of Directors and started speaking out of turn. When the Board President and General Counsel informed him that the public comment period had ended, Steven forcefully responded: "I'm going to make my statement, and you're gonna hear it, either here or outside."

On 7/1/25, Steven sent an email to the District's Finance Officer/HR Director about hours he believes he was shorted on his paycheck by stating: "Good afternoon, I just checked my timecard on ADP, and I was shorted 8 hours for last Monday, 6/23/25. I expect to have this corrected. ASAP." When the Finance Director informed Steven that the District would not have known to pay him sick leave for the absence because he did not report a reason for the absence and did not request a sick day, Steven continued to be aggressive and refused to take responsibility for reporting his own absences. Steven's aggressiveness continued even after the Finance Director reminded him of several verbal and written communications they have had regarding employees' responsibility for reporting their absences to HR and requesting substitution of accrued paid leave for any unpaid absence. Steven's behavior in this situation not only constituted bullying of the Finance Director, it demonstrates Steven's unwillingness to work with other District employees in a cooperative and collaborative manner. Steven seems more eager to create conflict in the workplace than to resolve issues.

- Absenteeism/Tardiness

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Prior Notifications

<i>Level of Discipline</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>
Verbal	<u>10/25/23</u>	<u>Driving a SCSD Vehicle while towing a trailer over the speed limit and in the far-left lane.</u>
Written	<u>05/05/25</u>	<u>Disregarded the District's policy and procedures by attending a Board meeting while still on the clock. Steven should have requested the time off, obtained permission from his supervisor, and clocked out to attend the Board meeting, but did not do so and attended a Board meeting while still on the clock. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for failing to obtain approval to leave work early and failing to notify a supervisor in advance of anticipated absence. The Handbook's Attendance and Punctuality policy states that "early departure or other unanticipated and unapproved absences from scheduled hours are disruptive and must be avoided."</u> <u>Engaged in disruptive and unprofessional behavior at a meeting of the District's Board of Directors on February 19, 2025, by speaking over Board members after the close of the public comment period and disregarding and directive from the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel instructing Steven to stop talking because the public comment period had ended. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for "any form of insubordination" and "discourtesy, rudeness or unprofessional behavior toward a member of the public." In this case, Steven was rude and discourteous to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel, and the District finds the handbook provision to be equally applicable (if not more so) to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel.</u> <u>Review of Union Memorandum of understanding and district handbook, possible termination if offense is repeated)</u>
Final Written	_____	_____

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Incident Description and Supporting Details:

Steven,

On Monday, June 30, 2025, you were in the new crew breakroom where fellow employees, Mr. Lemus, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Allen were present. Mr. Lemus was speaking to Mr. Allen when you proceeded to state to Mr. Lemus, who was working on addressing the time clock issues, that "The time clock does not belong in here, and that time clock is worthless just like you."

Performance Improvement Plan

1. Measurable/Tangible Improvement Goals: *Steven, I expect that you will familiarize yourself not only with this policy but with all policies and procedures outlined in the SCSD employee handbook. You must familiarize yourself with all District rules from this point forward.*

2. Training or Special Direction to Be Provided:

3. Interim Performance Evaluation Necessary? *No*

4. In addition, I recognize that you may have certain ideas to improve your performance. Therefore, I encourage you to provide your own Personal Improvement Plan Input and Suggestions:

(Attach additional sheets if needed.)

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Outcomes and Consequences

Positive:

Negative: As of 05/05/2025, you were notified that you were placed on a final written warning.

Scheduled Review Date:

Employee Comments and/or Rebuttal

(Attach additional sheets if needed.)

X _____

Employee Signature

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Employee Acknowledgment

I have received a copy of this notification. It has been discussed with me, and I have been advised to take time to consider it before I sign it. I accept full responsibility for my actions. I understand that I must make substantial improvements in my performance to remain employed with the District.

By signing this, I commit to follow the District's standards of performance and conduct.

Refused to sign

Employee Signature

Date



Supervisor Signature

7/21/25

Date

Witness (if employee refuses to sign)

Omar Ruiz

Name
conference

7/21/25



Date Time in

Christina R. Sutton

07/21/2025

8:41 am

Distribution of copies: Employer Supervisor Department Head Human Resources

EXHIBIT A

F. Workplace Bullying

The District defines bullying as repeated inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment. All employees must be treated with dignity and respect.

The purpose of this policy is to communicate to all employees, including supervisors and managers that the District will not tolerate bullying behavior. Employees found in violation of this policy will be disciplined, up to and including termination. The District considers the following types of behavior examples of bullying:

Verbal Bullying: slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or their family, persistent name calling which is hurtful, insulting or humiliating; using a person as a butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks; malicious gossip; yelling, screaming, threatening, and other demeaning behavior and/or comments.

Physical Bullying: pushing; shoving; kicking; poking; tripping; assault, or threat of physical assault; damage to a person's work area or property.

Gesture Bullying: non-verbal threatening gestures; glances which can convey threatening messages.

Cyber Bullying: willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones and other electronic devices.

Exclusion: socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work-related activities.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

The District takes seriously, and is concerned about the use of alcohol, illegal drugs under state or federal law, or controlled substances as it affects the workplace. Use of these substances, whether on or off the job can detract from an employee's work performance, efficiency, safety, and health, and seriously impair District operations. In addition, the use or possession of these substances on the job constitutes a potential danger to the welfare and safety of other employees and exposes the District to the risks of property loss or damage, or injury to other persons.

The District does not discriminate against individuals in hiring, termination, or any term or condition of employment, or otherwise penalize any employee, intern, volunteer or applicant on the basis of the individual's use of cannabis off the job and away from the workplace. However, employees, interns, volunteers or applicants who are subject to federal laws and regulations with respect to marijuana use, consumption and testing will be treated in accordance with federal law, under which marijuana is considered an illegal controlled substance.

Furthermore, the use of prescription drugs and/or over-the-counter drugs also may affect an employee's job performance and may seriously impair the employee's value to the District.

Any employee who is using prescription or over-the-counter drugs that may impair the employee's ability to safely perform the job, or affect the safety or well-being of others, must notify a supervisor of such use immediately before starting or resuming work.

The following rules and standards of conduct apply to all employees while on District property, at work or working on District business. The following are strictly prohibited by District policy:

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT


Employee Acknowledgment

I have received a copy of this notification. It has been discussed with me, and I have been advised to take time to consider it before I sign it. I accept full responsibility for my actions. I understand that I must make substantial improvements in my performance to remain employed with the District.

By signing this, I commit to follow the District's standards of performance and conduct.


Employee Signature

Date


Supervisor Signature

7/21/25
Date

Witness (if employee refuses to sign)

Onat Ruiz 7/21/25 
Name Date Time in
conference

Distribution of copies: Employer Supervisor Department Head Human Resources

Christina R. Sutton

07/21/2025

8:41 am

Exhibit B

Omar Ruiz

From: Omar Ruiz
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2025 12:00 PM
To: Steven Rodriguez
Cc: Emmanuel Ramos
Subject: Reminder

Greetings

At your next available time

- can we get a service to generator station 24
- Service the carburetor of the portable generator
- get a replacement air filter, spark plug and sediment screen for portable water tank(Honda gx160 motor)
- truck hood straps
- AC in big red
- spark plugs for big red(noticed some stumbling well under load)

Thank you

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Omar Ruiz

From: Omar Ruiz
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 7:41 AM
To: Emmanuel Ramos
Cc: Steven Rodríguez
Subject: Boat

Greetings

Can we get a replacement winch for the boat.

We are currently taking samples and there is no proper way to secure the boat to the trailer. On the topic I have also noticed that none of our trailer have any safety pins for the ball latches. It would be much appreciated if we can get those items as soon as possible to avoid any future safety a issues or DOT violations

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Omar Ruiz

From: Steven Rodriguez
Sent: Monday, May 19, 2025 10:23 AM
To: Omar Ruiz
Subject: Re: update

I am waiting for tools I ordered from amazon to come in to complete the removal of transmission. Okay. The loader needs to be brought to the shop to be repaired and unit 10 will have to be looked at again. No. I checked all the vital lubricants and they look fine. Id like to get more time to look for the last time it was serviced so were not overlapping maintenance.

From: Omar Ruiz <oruiz@saltoncsd.ca.gov>
Sent: Monday, May 19, 2025 9:18 AM
To: Steven Rodriguez <srodriguez@saltoncsd.ca.gov>
Cc: Emmanuel Ramos <eramos@saltoncsd.ca.gov>; Erick Allen <eallen@saltoncsd.ca.gov>
Subject: update

Greetings Steven ,

Please let me know what day would be best for you for us to assign help for the sewer jet trans drop.

Also just a reminder unit 10 and John Deere loader are having AC trouble.

Did the generator at station #24 get serviced?

Omar Ruiz

From: Erick Allen
Sent: Friday, June 6, 2025 7:28 AM
To: Omar Ruiz; Steven Rodriguez
Subject: Trash pump at 24
Attachments: original-f7f85022-1ca9-477d-afdd-a4ab39d64394.mp4

This morning, I ran the trash pump at station 24 and found it's leaking.

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Exhibit C

TERMINATION, DISCIPLINE, AND RULES OF CONDUCT

I. Termination

A. Voluntary Termination

The District will consider an employee to have voluntarily terminated his or her employment if an employee does any of the following:

- (1) Elects to resign from the District;
- (2) Fails to return from an approved leave of absence on the date specified by the District;
or
- (3) Fails to report for work without notice to the District for three consecutive days.

B. Involuntary Termination

An employee may be terminated involuntarily for reasons that may include poor performance, misconduct, or other violations of the District's rules of conduct as set forth below. Notwithstanding this list of rules, the District reserves the right to discharge or demote any employee with or without cause and with or without prior notice.

C. Termination Due to Reorganizations, Economics, or Lack of Work

From time to time, the District may need to terminate an employee as a consequence of reorganizations, job eliminations, economic downturns in business, or lack of work. Should the District consider such terminations necessary, the District will attempt to provide all affected employees with advance notice when practical. Layoff benefits associated with such terminations, if any, will be as specified in the notice.

II. Discipline and Rules of Conduct

Employees are expected to observe certain standards of job performance and good conduct. When performance or conduct does not meet District standards, the employee will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

The rules set forth below are intended to provide employees with notice of what is expected of them. Necessarily, however, such rules cannot identify every type of unacceptable conduct and performance. Therefore, employees should be aware that conduct not specifically listed below but which the District determines adversely affects or is otherwise detrimental to the interests of the District, other employees, or customers, may also result in disciplinary action.

A. Job Performance

Employees may be disciplined for poor job performance, including but not limited to the following:

- (1) Unsatisfactory work quality or quantity;
- (2) Excessive absenteeism, tardiness, or abuse of rest break and meal period policies;
- (3) Failure to follow instructions or District procedures; or
- (4) Failure to follow established safety regulations.

B. Misconduct

Employees may be disciplined for misconduct, including but not limited to, the following:

- (1) Failure or refusal to perform a work-related task, or any form of insubordination;
- (2) Dishonesty;

- (3) Theft;
- (4) Discourtesy, rudeness, or unprofessional behavior toward a customer or member of the public;
- (5) Disparaging, rude, or condescending behavior toward a coworker;
- (6) Harming or destroying District property or the property of another on District premises;
- (7) Violating conflict of interest rules;
- (8) Disclosing or using confidential and/or proprietary information, such as the District's trade secrets, without authorization;
- (9) Falsifying or altering District records, including an application for employment or timekeeping records;
- (10) Interfering with the work performance of others;
- (11) Violating the District's rules against unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, or rules against workplace violence;
- (12) Being under the influence of, manufacturing, dispensing, distributing, using, or possessing alcohol or illegal or controlled substances on District property or while conducting District business;
- (13) Gambling on District premises or while conducting District business;
- (14) Sleeping on the job or leaving your work location/work site without authorization for a purpose other than a legally protected activity;
- (15) Possessing a firearm or other dangerous weapon on District property or while conducting District business;
- (16) Being convicted of a crime that indicates unfitness for the job or raises a threat to the safety or well-being of the District, its employees, customers, or property;
- (17) Working for another employer or entity while on a leave of absence from the District, without prior written notice and agreement by the District;
- (18) Failing to report to the District, within five days, any conviction under any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace.

C. Attendance

In addition to the general rules stated above, employees may be disciplined for failing to observe the following specific requirements relating to attendance:

- (1) Reporting to work on time, observing rest break and meal period policies, recording all time worked, and obtaining approval to leave work early; and
- (2) Notifying the supervisor in advance of anticipated tardiness or absence.

D. Discipline Procedure

Except as set forth below, discharge or demotion for poor performance ordinarily will be preceded by an oral warning and a written warning.

The District reserves the right to proceed directly to a written warning, demotion, or termination for misconduct or performance deficiency, without resort to prior disciplinary steps, when the District deems such action appropriate.

III. Exit Interview

Employees who leave the District for any reason may be asked to participate in an exit interview. This interview is intended to permit terminating employees the opportunity to communicate their views regarding their work with the District, including job duties, job training, job supervision, and job benefits.

Steven Refuse to Sign

NOTICE OF INTENT TO TERMINATE

Date: July 21, 2025

To: Steven Rodriguez

From: Emmanuel Ramos, GM

Mr. Rodriguez:

This is to advise you that Salton Community Services District ("District") intends to terminate you from your position of mechanic. Effective immediately, you will be placed on paid administrative leave, and you will remain on leave pending completion of pre-disciplinary procedures.

This action is proposed to be taken based on a determination that you have engaged in conduct that is subject to discipline pursuant to the District's Employee Handbook, Termination, Discipline, and Rules of Conduct, Section II.B. Specifically, the District has determined that you have engaged in disparaging, rude or condescending behavior toward a coworker.

Disciplinary History and Facts Supporting Termination

This action is the latest in a series of disciplinary issues which include the following:

- On February 19, 2025, the District documented an incident wherein you attended a meeting of the District's Board of Directors while on the clock and without obtaining permission from your supervisor. At the Board of Directors meeting, you were rude and unprofessional when you interrupted the Board President and General Counsel. When they informed you that the public comment period had ended, you responded: "I'm going to make my statement, and you're gonna hear it, either here or outside." (See Exhibit A)
- On March 19, 2025, you again attended a meeting of the District's Board of Directors while on the clock and without obtaining permission from your supervisor. At this meeting, you lied and stated that you were attending the meeting as a representative of the union because you are the union steward. Your union has confirmed that you are not the union steward and not authorized to represent the union at Board meetings. (See Exhibit A)
- On April 16, 2025, you again attended a meeting of the District's Board of Directors while on the clock and without obtaining permission from your supervisor. (See Exhibit A)
- On May 5, 2025, the District issued a written warning to you for disregarding the District's policy and procedures by attending Board meetings while still on the clock and without obtaining permission from your supervisor. (See Exhibit A)
- On May 5, 2025, the District also disciplined you for "disruptive and unprofessional behavior at the meeting of the Board of Directors on February 19, 2025, by speaking over

Board members after the close of the public comment period and disregarding a directive from the President of the Board of the Directors and General counsel for you to stop talking.

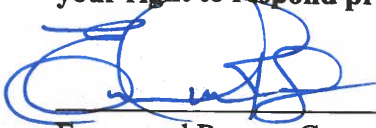
- As part of the May 5th discipline, you were expressly reminded that “You are now being placed on notice that if you ever again fail to follow established policies and procedures, you may be discharged.”
- On July 17, 2025, you were issued a final written warning for unprofessional and rude conduct toward a colleague, Oracio Lemus. While Ms. Lemus was in the breakroom on June 30, 2025, trying to address an issue with the new time clock, you interjected into the conversation Mr. Allen and Mr. Lemus were having and stated: “The time clock should not be in here, and the time clock is worthless just like you.” This statement is rude, demeaning, condescending, and unprofessional. This conduct is subject to discipline pursuant to the District’s Employee Handbook, Termination, Discipline, and Rules of Conduct, Section II.B., which allows the District to discipline, up to and including terminating, for such statements.

Your history of disregard for the District’s policies, as well as your continued rudeness and unprofessionalism towards the District’s Board members and employees, is no longer tolerable. The District intends to terminate your employment for the reasons stated above.

You have the right to respond to this proposed action, either verbally and/or in writing, within 15 calendar days of receipt of this Notice. If you wish to respond in writing, please submit your written response to Board Secretary Thania Garcia by 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 5, 2025. Ms. Garcia will serve as the Skelly Officer for this matter. If you wish to respond verbally, you must contact Ms. Garcia to schedule an appointment to meet with her. Such a meeting must occur no later than August 5, 2025, unless you and Ms. Garcia agree to a later time and date. Ms. Garcia may be contacted via email at tgarcia@saltoncsd.ca.gov or via telephone at 760-394-4446.

You have a right to have a representative present at your meeting with Ms. Garcia if you choose to respond verbally.

Please be advised that the failure to respond to this notice shall constitute a waiver of your right to respond prior to termination.


Emmanuel Ramos, General Manager

7/21/25

I acknowledge that this Notice has been discussed with me. I understand my signature indicates I have received a copy of this Notice of Intent to Terminate Employment.

Steven Rodriguez

Exhibit A

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Failure to Follow Departmental Policies and Procedures

PERFORMANCE CORRECTION NOTICE

Employee Name: Steven Rodriguez

Department: Sewer Maintenance Mechanic

Date Presented: 05-05-25

Supervisor: Emmanuel Ramos

Disciplinary Level

- Verbal Correction
- Written Warning/*Probation* –

1. Disregarded the District's policy and procedures by attending a Board meeting while still on the clock. Steven should have requested the time off, obtained permission from his supervisor, and clocked out to attend the Board meeting, but did not do so and attended a Board meeting while still on the clock. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for failing to obtain approval to leave work early and failing to notify a supervisor in advance of anticipated absence. The Handbook's Attendance and Punctuality policy states that "early departure or other unanticipated and unapproved absences from scheduled hours are disruptive and must be avoided."
2. Engaged in disruptive and unprofessional behavior at a meeting of the District's Board of Directors on February 19, 2025, by speaking over Board members after the close of the public comment period and disregarding and directive from the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel instructing Steven to stop talking because the public comment period had ended. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for "any form of insubordination" and "discourtesy, rudeness or unprofessional behavior toward a member of the public." In this case, Steven was rude and discourteous to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel, and the District finds the handbook provision to be equally applicable (if not more so) to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel.

Review of Union Memorandum of understanding and district handbook, possible termination if offense is repeated)

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

- Investigatory Leave –
- Final Written Warning
- Without decision-making leave
- With decision-making leave (Attach memo of instructions.)
- With unpaid suspension

Subject: *Failure to follow departmental policies and procedures*

Policy/Procedure Violation – Failed to notify supervisor prior to attending and attended meeting while on the clock; Stated he was there representing the Union as the Union Steward when he was not. The Employee Handbook’s Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for failing to obtain approval to leave work early and failing to notify a supervisor in advance of anticipated absence. The Handbook’s Attendance and Punctuality policy states that “early departure or other unanticipated and unapproved absences from scheduled hours are disruptive and must be avoided.”

Performance Transgression

Behavior/Conduct Infraction - Employee’s behavior at the February 19, 2025, and the March 19, 2025, Board of Directors meetings was unprofessional, insubordinate and in disregard of directives from the President of the Board and General Counsel. The Employee Handbook’s Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for “any form of insubordination” and “discourtesy, rudeness or unprofessional behavior toward a member of the public.” In this case, Steven was rude and discourteous to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel, and the District finds the handbook provision to be equally applicable (if not more so) to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel.

Absenteeism/Tardiness

Prior Notifications

<i>Level of Discipline</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>
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SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Verbal. 10/25/2023
speed limit and in the far-left lane.

Driving an SCSD vehicle while towing a trailer over the

Written

Final Written

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Incident Description and Supporting Details:

Steven,

On Wednesday, February 19, 2025, you attended while on the clock, the District's Board of Directors' regular meeting without notifying your supervisor prior to attendance. You interrupted the Board President during the meeting after Public Comments had been closed and insisted on making comments in which you used your official title and position with the district, as well as stating you were there representing the Union as the Union Steward. You proceeded to then argue and disrespect the Board President and Legal Counsel. "I'm going to make my statement, and you're gonna hear it, either here or outside."

On Wednesday, March 19, 2025, you attended while on the clock, the District's Board of Directors' regular meeting without notifying your supervisor prior to attending. You again used your official title with the district and stated you were there representing the Union as the Union Steward. You again disrupted the meeting by demanding to make a second (2nd) Public Comment after you had been given the full three (3) minutes for your first (1st) comment during Public Comment, Legal Counsel had to instruct you to sit down.

On Wednesday, April 16th, 2025, you attended while on the clock, the District's Board of Directors' regular meeting without notifying your supervisor prior to attending.

After conducting a detailed investigation involving your conduct, I have determined that the following action needs to be addressed:

Finding (1) *How you chose to handle yourself was in direct conflict with the chain of command that you are to follow. Any grievance or complaint regarding your supervisor's General manager's conduct should have been brought directly to Human Resources. Your decision to be disruptive and conduct yourself in an unprofessional manner was inappropriate and against company policy.*

Finding (2) *You were not permitted by the Union to represent the Union in a capacity at the board meetings.*

Performance Improvement Plan

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

1. Measurable/Tangible Improvement Goals: *Steven, the district expects that you will familiarize yourself not only with this policy but with all policies and procedures outlined in the district's employee handbook and your Memorandum of Understanding. You must familiarize yourself with all district rules from this point forward. The district also expects that you reach out to your Union Representative with any questions regarding the MOU.*

2. Training or Special Direction to Be Provided: *I will email you, along with the rest of the staff, each section of the Employee Handbook for better understanding of the district's policies and procedures.*

3. Interim Performance Evaluation Necessary? *No*

4. In addition, I recognize that you may have certain ideas to improve your performance. Therefore, I encourage you to provide your own **Personal Improvement Plan Input and Suggestions:**

(Attach additional sheets if needed.)

Outcomes and Consequences

Positive: I will remain available to help you and discuss areas where you require additional support.

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

If you comply with the proper policy and procedures going forward, no further disciplinary action will be taken regarding this issue.

Negative: *You are now being placed on notice that if you ever again fail to follow established policies and procedures, you may be discharged. In addition, if you abuse any employment privileges or if you engage in any conduct that indicates a lack of responsibility or that violates any standards of performance and conduct in the next 90 days, you may be placed on a final written warning. Failure to follow policies and procedures during that final written warning period may result in your dismissal. A copy of this document will be placed in your personnel file.*

Scheduled Review Date:

Employee Comments and/or Rebuttal

(Attach additional sheets if needed.)

X _____


Employee Signature

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Employee Acknowledgment

I have received a copy of this notification. It has been discussed with me, and I have been advised to take time to consider it before I sign it. I accept full responsibility for my actions. *I understand that I must make substantial improvements in my performance to remain employed with the District.*

By signing this, I commit to follow the District's standards of performance and conduct.

_____	_____		<u>5.6.25</u>
Employee Signature	Date	Supervisor Signature	Date

Witness (if employee refuses to sign)

<u>Christina R. Sutton</u>	<u>05/06/2025</u>	<u>8:41 am</u>
Name	Date	Time in
conference		

Distribution of copies: Employer, Supervisor, Department Head, Human Resources

AMENDED NOTICE OF INTENT TO TERMINATE

Date: August 26, 2025

To: Steven Rodriguez

From: Emmanuel Ramos, GM

Mr. Rodriguez:

As you know, Salton Community Services District (“District”) has withdrawn the Notice of Intent to Terminate your employment, issued on July 21, 2025, and is now issuing this Amended Notice of Intent to Terminate your employment (“Amended Notice”). During your paid administrative leave, the District uncovered additional performance deficiencies to support its decision to terminate you from your position of mechanic and addresses the deficiencies in this Amended Notice.

You will remain on leave pending completion of pre-disciplinary procedures based on this Amended Notice.

This action is proposed to be taken based on a determination that you have engaged in conduct that is subject to discipline pursuant to the District’s Employee Handbook, Termination, Discipline, and Rules of Conduct, Section II.B. Specifically, the District has determined that (a) you have engaged in disparaging, rude or condescending behavior toward a coworker, (b) your work quality or quantity is unsatisfactory, and (c) you have failed to perform work-related tasks.

Disciplinary History and Facts Supporting Termination

This action is the latest in a series of disciplinary issues which include the following:

- On February 19, 2025, the District documented an incident wherein you attended a meeting of the District’s Board of Directors while on the clock and without obtaining permission from your supervisor. At the Board of Directors meeting, you were rude and unprofessional when you interrupted the Board President and General Counsel. When they informed you that the public comment period had ended, you responded: “I’m going to make my statement, and you’re gonna hear it, either here or outside.” (See Exhibit A)
- On March 19, 2025, you again attended a meeting of the District’s Board of Directors while on the clock and without obtaining permission from your supervisor. At this meeting, you lied and stated that you were attending the meeting as a representative of the union because you are the union steward. Your union has confirmed that you are not the union steward and not authorized to represent the union at Board meetings. (See Exhibit A)
- On April 16, 2025, you again attended a meeting of the District’s Board of Directors while on the clock and without obtaining permission from your supervisor. (See Exhibit A)

- On May 5, 2025, the District issued a written warning to you for disregarding the District's policy and procedures by attending Board meetings while still on the clock and without obtaining permission from your supervisor. (See Exhibit A)
- On May 5, 2025, the District also disciplined you for "disruptive and unprofessional behavior at the meeting of the Board of Directors on February 19, 2025, by speaking over Board members after the close of the public comment period and disregarding a directive from the President of the Board of the Directors and General counsel for you to stop talking.
- As part of the May 5th discipline, you were expressly reminded that "You are now being placed on notice that if you ever again fail to follow established policies and procedures, you may be discharged."
- On July 17, 2025, you were issued a final written warning for unprofessional and rude conduct toward a colleague, Oracio Lemus. While Ms. Lemus was in the breakroom on June 30, 2025, trying to address an issue with the new time clock, you interjected into the conversation between Mr. Lemus and Erick Allen and stated: "The time clock should not be in here, and the time clock is worthless just like you." This statement is rude, demeaning, condescending, and unprofessional. This conduct is subject to discipline pursuant to the District's Employee Handbook, Termination, Discipline, and Rules of Conduct, Section II.B., which allows the District to discipline, up to and including terminating, for such statements. (Exhibit A)
- Since July 21, 2025, the District has discovered that you have consistently failed to complete repair jobs assigned to you or have simply disregarded the work altogether. The District's review and audit of repair jobs assigned to you for completion reveals the following:
 - On April 24, 2025, Interim Field Foreman, Omar Ruiz, asked you to (a) service the generator at Station 24 and the carburetor of the portable generator; (b) get a replacement air filter, spark plug, and sediment screen for the portable water tank; (c) fix the truck hood straps; (d) fix the air conditioner in "big red"; and (d) fix or replace the spark plugs for "big red." As of the date you went on leave (July 21, 2025), none of these tasks were completed. (See Exhibit B)
 - On May 7, 2025, Mr. Ruiz asked you to get a replacement winch for the boat in order to secure the boat to the trailer. He also asked you to get safety pins for the ball latches. In his email requesting these items, Mr. Ruiz stated: "It would be much appreciated if we can get those times as soon as possible to avoid any future safety issues or DOT violations." As of the date you went on leave (July 21, 2025), none of these tasks were completed. (See Exhibit B)
 - On May 19, 2025, Mr. Ruiz reminded you to address the "AC trouble" in unit 10 and the John Deere loader. He also asked if you serviced the generator at station 24. You responded that that loader needed to be brought back to the shop for you to look at it again. You asked for more time to review prior service. As of the date

- you went on leave (July 21, 2025), these tasks remained unfinished. (See Exhibit B)
- On June 6, 2025, employee Erick Allen reported to you that the trash pump at station 24 was leaking. As of the date you went on leave (July 21, 2025), the issue had still not been addressed. (See Exhibit B)
 - Additionally, the District's audit of the tasks under your purview confirms that you failed to do your job with respect to the following issues:
 - The motorgrader door is malfunctioning and will not start.
 - The water truck has major leaks that were never fixed.
 - The green sewer transmission has not been fixed.
 - The camera truck outlets do not work and have not been fixed.
 - The 410g backhoe fuse problem never got resolved.
 - The man lift never got fixed.
 - The skeed steer oil leak has not been fixed.
 - The diesel power pressure washer has not been fixed.
 - The haul truck hydraulic fittings and tires never got fixed.
 - The unit 2 problems have not been resolved.
 - The hood straps for the big trucks never got installed.

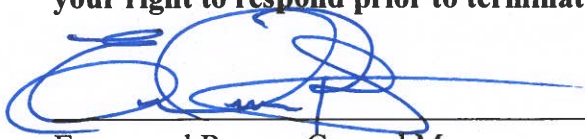
Your history of disregard for the District's policies, your continued rudeness and unprofessionalism towards the District's Board members and employees, and your failure to perform the duties assigned to you, are no longer tolerable. The District intends to terminate your employment for the reasons stated above.

The specific grounds for termination are as follows: (a) Your rude and belittling comment to Oracio Lemus on June 30, 2025 violated the District's Employee Handbook, Termination, Discipline, and Rules of Conduct, Section II.B, subdivisions 4 and 5, and you were previously warned that another instance of discourteous, rude or unprofessional behavior with employees or Board members would subject you to discipline, up to and including termination; and (b) your failure to perform your work as discovered by the District during your paid administrative leave violated the District's Employee Handbook, Termination, Discipline, and Rules of Conduct, Section II.A, subdivision 1 and Section II.B, subdivision 1. A copy of the District's Employee Handbook, Termination, Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy is attached hereto as Exhibit C.

You have the right to respond to this proposed action, either verbally and/or in writing, within 15 calendar days of receipt of this Notice. If you wish to respond in writing, please submit your written response to Board Secretary Thania Garcia by 4:00 p.m. on September 10, 2025. Ms. Garcia will serve as the Skelly Officer for this matter. If you wish to respond verbally, you must contact Ms. Garcia to schedule an appointment to meet with her. Such a meeting must occur no later than September 10, 2025, unless you and Ms. Garcia agree to a later time and date. Ms. Garcia may be contacted via email at tgarcia@saltoncsd.ca.gov or via telephone at 760-394-4446.

You have a right to have a representative present at your meeting with Ms. Garcia if you choose to respond verbally.

Please be advised that the failure to respond to this notice shall constitute a waiver of your right to respond prior to termination.



Emmanuel Ramos, General Manager

I acknowledge that this Notice has been discussed with me. I understand my signature indicates I have received a copy of this Notice of Intent to Terminate Employment.

Steven Rodriguez

Exhibit A

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Failure to Follow Departmental Policies and Procedures

PERFORMANCE CORRECTION NOTICE

Employee Name: Steven Rodriguez

Department: Sewer Maintenance Mechanic

Date Presented: 05-05-25

Supervisor: Emmanuel Ramos

Disciplinary Level

- Verbal Correction
- Written Warning/Probation –

1. Disregarded the District's policy and procedures by attending a Board meeting while still on the clock. Steven should have requested the time off, obtained permission from his supervisor, and clocked out to attend the Board meeting, but did not do so and attended a Board meeting while still on the clock. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for failing to obtain approval to leave work early and failing to notify a supervisor in advance of anticipated absence. The Handbook's Attendance and Punctuality policy states that "early departure or other unanticipated and unapproved absences from scheduled hours are disruptive and must be avoided."
2. Engaged in disruptive and unprofessional behavior at a meeting of the District's Board of Directors on February 19, 2025, by speaking over Board members after the close of the public comment period and disregarding and directive from the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel instructing Steven to stop talking because the public comment period had ended. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for "any form of insubordination" and "discourtesy, rudeness or unprofessional behavior toward a member of the public." In this case, Steven was rude and discourteous to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel, and the District finds the handbook provision to be equally applicable (if not more so) to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel.

Review of Union Memorandum of understanding and district handbook, possible termination if offense is repeated)

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

- Investigatory Leave –
- Final Written Warning
- Without decision-making leave
- With decision-making leave (Attach memo of instructions.)
- With unpaid suspension

Subject: *Failure to follow departmental policies and procedures*

Policy/Procedure Violation – Failed to notify supervisor prior to attending and attended meeting while on the clock; Stated he was there representing the Union as the Union Steward when he was not. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for failing to obtain approval to leave work early and failing to notify a supervisor in advance of anticipated absence. The Handbook's Attendance and Punctuality policy states that "early departure or other unanticipated and unapproved absences from scheduled hours are disruptive and must be avoided."

Performance Transgression

Behavior/Conduct Infraction - Employee's behavior at the February 19, 2025, and the March 19, 2025, Board of Directors meetings was unprofessional, insubordinate and in disregard of directives from the President of the Board and General Counsel. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for "any form of insubordination" and "discourtesy, rudeness or unprofessional behavior toward a member of the public." In this case, Steven was rude and discourteous to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel, and the District finds the handbook provision to be equally applicable (if not more so) to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel.

Absenteeism/Tardiness

Prior Notifications

<i>Level of Discipline</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>
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SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Verbal. 10/25/2023 Driving an SCSD vehicle while towing a trailer over the speed limit and in the far-left lane.

Written

Final Written

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Incident Description and Supporting Details:

Steven,

On Wednesday, February 19, 2025, you attended while on the clock, the District's Board of Directors' regular meeting without notifying your supervisor prior to attendance. You interrupted the Board President during the meeting after Public Comments had been closed and insisted on making comments in which you used your official title and position with the district, as well as stating you were there representing the Union as the Union Steward. You proceeded to then argue and disrespect the Board President and Legal Counsel. "I'm going to make my statement, and you're gonna hear it, either here or outside."

On Wednesday, March 19, 2025, you attended while on the clock, the District's Board of Directors' regular meeting without notifying your supervisor prior to attending. You again used your official title with the district and stated you were there representing the Union as the Union Steward. You again disrupted the meeting by demanding to make a second (2nd) Public Comment after you had been given the full three (3) minutes for your first (1st) comment during Public Comment, Legal Counsel had to instruct you to sit down.

On Wednesday, April 16th, 2025, you attended while on the clock, the District's Board of Directors' regular meeting without notifying your supervisor prior to attending.

After conducting a detailed investigation involving your conduct, I have determined that the following action needs to be addressed:

***Finding (1)** How you chose to handle yourself was in direct conflict with the chain of command that you are to follow. Any grievance or complaint regarding your supervisor's General manager's conduct should have been brought directly to Human Resources. Your decision to be disruptive and conduct yourself in an unprofessional manner was inappropriate and against company policy.*

***Finding (2)** You were not permitted by the Union to represent the Union in a capacity at the board meetings.*

Performance Improvement Plan

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

1. Measurable/Tangible Improvement Goals: *Steven, the district expects that you will familiarize yourself not only with this policy but with all policies and procedures outlined in the district's employee handbook and your Memorandum of Understanding. You must familiarize yourself with all district rules from this point forward. The district also expects that you reach out to your Union Representative with any questions regarding the MOU.*

2. Training or Special Direction to Be Provided: *I will email you, along with the rest of the staff, each section of the Employee Handbook for better understanding of the district's policies and procedures.*

3. Interim Performance Evaluation Necessary? *No*

4. In addition, I recognize that you may have certain ideas to improve your performance. Therefore, I encourage you to provide your own Personal Improvement Plan Input and Suggestions:

(Attach additional sheets if needed.)

Outcomes and Consequences

Positive: *I will remain available to help you and discuss areas where you require additional support.*

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

If you comply with the proper policy and procedures going forward, no further disciplinary action will be taken regarding this issue.

Negative: *You are now being placed on notice that if you ever again fail to follow established policies and procedures, you may be discharged. In addition, if you abuse any employment privileges or if you engage in any conduct that indicates a lack of responsibility or that violates any standards of performance and conduct in the next 90 days, you may be placed on a final written warning. Failure to follow policies and procedures during that final written warning period may result in your dismissal. A copy of this document will be placed in your personnel file.*

Scheduled Review Date:

Employee Comments and/or Rebuttal

(Attach additional sheets if needed.)

X _____

Employee Signature


6 | Page

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Employee Acknowledgment

I have received a copy of this notification. It has been discussed with me, and I have been advised to take time to consider it before I sign it. I accept full responsibility for my actions. *I understand that I must make substantial improvements in my performance to remain employed with the District.*

By signing this, I commit to follow the District's standards of performance and conduct.

_____	_____		<u>5.6.25</u>
Employee Signature	Date	Supervisor Signature	Date

Witness (if employee refuses to sign)

<u>Christina R. Sutton</u>	<u>05/06/2025</u>	<u>8:41 am</u>
Name	Date	Time in
conference		

Distribution of copies: Employer, Supervisor, Department Head, Human Resources

STEVEN Refuse to Sign.

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Failure to Follow Departmental Policies and Procedures

PERFORMANCE CORRECTION NOTICE

Employee Name: Steven Rodriguez

Department: Mechanic

Date Presented: July 21, 2025

Supervisor: Emmanuel Ramos

Disciplinary Level

- Verbal Correction
- Written Warning/*Probation*
- Investigatory Leave
- Final Written Warning
 - Without decision-making leave
 - With decision-making leave (Attach memo of instructions.)
 - With unpaid suspension

Subject: *Violation of District policy prohibiting bullying of co-workers*

- Policy/Procedure Violation
- Performance Transgression
- Behavior/Conduct Infraction –

Workplace Bullying

Verbal Bullying: The District's Employee Handbook prohibits verbal bullying of employees. "Verbal bullying" is described in the handbook, in part, as: "slandering, ridiculing, or maligning" colleagues and supervisors. (See Employee Handbook's Policy Against Bullying, Exhibit A) On 6/30/25, you violated the District's policy against bullying by engaging with a colleague in an unprofessional and condescending manner. Specifically, while the colleague, Oracio Lemus, was working on an issue concerning the new time clock, you stated to him, in the presence of other employees: "The time clock is worthless, just like you."

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

This comment was a gratuitous, mean-spirited personal attack of the other employee, without provocation. The comment constitutes verbal bullying in violation of the District's policies.

Steven has a history of engaging other District employees and even Board members in a rude and unprofessional manner. As detailed below, on 2/19/25, Steven attended a meeting of the District's Board of Directors and started speaking out of turn. When the Board President and General Counsel informed him that the public comment period had ended, Steven forcefully responded: "I'm going to make my statement, and you're gonna hear it, either here or outside."

On 7/1/25, Steven sent an email to the District's Finance Officer/HR Director about hours he believes he was shorted on his paycheck by stating: "Good afternoon, I just checked my timecard on ADP, and I was shorted 8 hours for last Monday, 6/23/25. I expect to have this corrected. ASAP." When the Finance Director informed Steven that the District would not have known to pay him sick leave for the absence because he did not report a reason for the absence and did not request a sick day, Steven continued to be aggressive and refused to take responsibility for reporting his own absences. Steven's aggressiveness continued even after the Finance Director reminded him of several verbal and written communications they have had regarding employees' responsibility for reporting their absences to HR and requesting substitution of accrued paid leave for any unpaid absence. Steven's behavior in this situation not only constituted bullying of the Finance Director, it demonstrates Steven's unwillingness to work with other District employees in a cooperative and collaborative manner. Steven seems more eager to create conflict in the workplace than to resolve issues.

- Absenteeism/Tardiness

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Prior Notifications

<i>Level of Discipline</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>
Verbal	<u>10/25/23</u>	<u>Driving a SCSD Vehicle while towing a trailer over the speed limit and in the far-left lane.</u>
Written	<u>05/05/25</u>	<u>Disregarded the District's policy and procedures by attending a Board meeting while still on the clock. Steven should have requested the time off, obtained permission from his supervisor, and clocked out to attend the Board meeting, but did not do so and attended a Board meeting while still on the clock. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for failing to obtain approval to leave work early and failing to notify a supervisor in advance of anticipated absence. The Handbook's Attendance and Punctuality policy states that "early departure or other unanticipated and unapproved absences from scheduled hours are disruptive and must be avoided."</u> <u>Engaged in disruptive and unprofessional behavior at a meeting of the District's Board of Directors on February 19, 2025, by speaking over Board members after the close of the public comment period and disregarding and directive from the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel instructing Steven to stop talking because the public comment period had ended. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for "any form of insubordination" and "discourtesy, rudeness or unprofessional behavior toward a member of the public." In this case, Steven was rude and discourteous to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel, and the District finds the handbook provision to be equally applicable (if not more so) to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel.</u> <u>Review of Union Memorandum of understanding and district handbook, possible termination if offense is repeated)</u>

Final Written _____

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Incident Description and Supporting Details:

Steven,

On Monday, June 30, 2025, you were in the new crew breakroom where fellow employees, Mr. Lemus, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Allen were present. Mr. Lemus was speaking to Mr. Allen when you proceeded to state to Mr. Lemus, who was working on addressing the time clock issues, that "The time clock does not belong in here, and that time clock is worthless just like you."

Performance Improvement Plan

1. Measurable/Tangible Improvement Goals: *Steven, I expect that you will familiarize yourself not only with this policy but with all policies and procedures outlined in the SCSD employee handbook. You must familiarize yourself with all District rules from this point forward.*

2. Training or Special Direction to Be Provided:

3. Interim Performance Evaluation Necessary? *No*

4. In addition, I recognize that you may have certain ideas to improve your performance. Therefore, I encourage you to provide your own **Personal Improvement Plan Input and Suggestions:**

(Attach additional sheets if needed.)

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Outcomes and Consequences

Positive:

Negative: As of 05/05/2025, you were notified that you were placed on a final written warning.

Scheduled Review Date:

Employee Comments and/or Rebuttal

(Attach additional sheets if needed.)

X _____

Employee Signature

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Employee Acknowledgment

I have received a copy of this notification. It has been discussed with me, and I have been advised to take time to consider it before I sign it. I accept full responsibility for my actions. I understand that I must make substantial improvements in my performance to remain employed with the District.

By signing this, I commit to follow the District's standards of performance and conduct.

Refused to sign

Employee Signature

Date



Supervisor Signature

7/21/25

Date

Witness (if employee refuses to sign)

Onat Ruiz

Name
conference

7/21/25



Date Time in

Christina R. Sutton

07/21/2025

8:41 am

Distribution of copies: Employer Supervisor Department Head Human Resources

EXHIBIT A

F. Workplace Bullying

The District defines bullying as repeated inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment. All employees must be treated with dignity and respect.

The purpose of this policy is to communicate to all employees, including supervisors and managers that the District will not tolerate bullying behavior. Employees found in violation of this policy will be disciplined, up to and including termination. The District considers the following types of behavior examples of bullying:

Verbal Bullying: slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or their family, persistent name calling which is hurtful, insulting or humiliating; using a person as a butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks; malicious gossip; yelling, screaming, threatening, and other demeaning behavior and/or comments.

Physical Bullying: pushing; shoving; kicking; poking; tripping; assault, or threat of physical assault; damage to a person's work area or property.

Gesture Bullying: non-verbal threatening gestures; glances which can convey threatening messages.

Cyber Bullying: willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones and other electronic devices.

Exclusion: socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work-related activities.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

The District takes seriously, and is concerned about the use of alcohol, illegal drugs under state or federal law, or controlled substances as it affects the workplace. Use of these substances, whether on or off the job can detract from an employee's work performance, efficiency, safety, and health, and seriously impair District operations. In addition, the use or possession of these substances on the job constitutes a potential danger to the welfare and safety of other employees and exposes the District to the risks of property loss or damage, or injury to other persons.

The District does not discriminate against individuals in hiring, termination, or any term or condition of employment, or otherwise penalize any employee, intern, volunteer or applicant on the basis of the individual's use of cannabis off the job and away from the workplace. However, employees, interns, volunteers or applicants who are subject to federal laws and regulations with respect to marijuana use, consumption and testing will be treated in accordance with federal law, under which marijuana is considered an illegal controlled substance.

Furthermore, the use of prescription drugs and/or over-the-counter drugs also may affect an employee's job performance and may seriously impair the employee's value to the District.

Any employee who is using prescription or over-the-counter drugs that may impair the employee's ability to safely perform the job, or affect the safety or well-being of others, must notify a supervisor of such use immediately before starting or resuming work.

The following rules and standards of conduct apply to all employees while on District property, at work or working on District business. The following are strictly prohibited by District policy:

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Employee Acknowledgment

I have received a copy of this notification. It has been discussed with me, and I have been advised to take time to consider it before I sign it. I accept full responsibility for my actions. I understand that I must make substantial improvements in my performance to remain employed with the District.

By signing this, I commit to follow the District's standards of performance and conduct.

Employee Signature

Date



Supervisor Signature

7/21/25

Date

Witness (if employee refuses to sign)

Ornat Ruiz

7/21/25



Name
conference

Date Time in

Distribution of copies: Employer Supervisor Department Head Human Resources

Christina R. Sutton

07/21/2025

8:41 am

Exhibit B

Omar Ruiz

From: Omar Ruiz
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2025 12:00 PM
To: Steven Rodríguez
Cc: Emmanuel Ramos
Subject: Reminder

Greetings

At your next available time

-can we get a service to generator station 24

-Service the carburetor of the portable generator

-get a replacement air filter, spark plug and sediment screen for portable water tank(Honda gx160 motor)

-truck hood straps

-AC in big red

-spark plugs for big red(noticed some stumbling well under load)

Thank you

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Omar Ruiz

From: Omar Ruiz
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 7:41 AM
To: Emmanuel Ramos
Cc: Steven Rodríguez
Subject: Boat

Greetings

Can we get a replacement winch for the boat.
We are currently taking samples and there is no proper way to secure the boat to the trailer. On the topic I have also noticed that none of our trailer have any safety pins for the ball latches. It would be much appreciated if we can get those items as soon as possible to avoid any future safety a issues or DOT violations

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Omar Ruiz

From: Steven Rodriguez
Sent: Monday, May 19, 2025 10:23 AM
To: Omar Ruiz
Subject: Re: update

I am waiting for tools I ordered from amazon to come in to complete the removal of transmission. Okay. The loader needs to be brought to the shop to be repaired and unit 10 will have to be looked at again. No. I checked all the vital lubricants and they look fine. Id like to get more time to look for the last time it was serviced so were not overlapping maintenance.

From: Omar Ruiz <oruiz@saltoncsd.ca.gov>
Sent: Monday, May 19, 2025 9:18 AM
To: Steven Rodriguez <srodriguez@saltoncsd.ca.gov>
Cc: Emmanuel Ramos <eramos@saltoncsd.ca.gov>; Erick Allen <eallen@saltoncsd.ca.gov>
Subject: update

Greetings Steven ,

Please let me know what day would be best for you for us to assign help for the sewer jet trans drop.

Also just a reminder unit 10 and John Deere loader are having AC trouble.

Did the generator at station #24 get serviced?

Omar Ruiz

From: Erick Allen
Sent: Friday, June 6, 2025 7:28 AM
To: Omar Ruiz; Steven Rodríguez
Subject: Trash pump at 24
Attachments: original-f7f85022-1ca9-477d-afdd-a4ab39d64394.mp4

This morning, I ran the trash pump at station 24 and found it's leaking.

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Exhibit C

TERMINATION, DISCIPLINE, AND RULES OF CONDUCT

I. Termination

A. Voluntary Termination

The District will consider an employee to have voluntarily terminated his or her employment if an employee does any of the following:

- (1) Elects to resign from the District;
- (2) Fails to return from an approved leave of absence on the date specified by the District;
or
- (3) Fails to report for work without notice to the District for three consecutive days.

B. Involuntary Termination

An employee may be terminated involuntarily for reasons that may include poor performance, misconduct, or other violations of the District's rules of conduct as set forth below. Notwithstanding this list of rules, the District reserves the right to discharge or demote any employee with or without cause and with or without prior notice.

C. Termination Due to Reorganizations, Economics, or Lack of Work

From time to time, the District may need to terminate an employee as a consequence of reorganizations, job eliminations, economic downturns in business, or lack of work. Should the District consider such terminations necessary, the District will attempt to provide all affected employees with advance notice when practical. Layoff benefits associated with such terminations, if any, will be as specified in the notice.

II. Discipline and Rules of Conduct

Employees are expected to observe certain standards of job performance and good conduct. When performance or conduct does not meet District standards, the employee will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

The rules set forth below are intended to provide employees with notice of what is expected of them. Necessarily, however, such rules cannot identify every type of unacceptable conduct and performance. Therefore, employees should be aware that conduct not specifically listed below but which the District determines adversely affects or is otherwise detrimental to the interests of the District, other employees, or customers, may also result in disciplinary action.

A. Job Performance

Employees may be disciplined for poor job performance, including but not limited to the following:

- (1) Unsatisfactory work quality or quantity;
- (2) Excessive absenteeism, tardiness, or abuse of rest break and meal period policies;
- (3) Failure to follow instructions or District procedures; or
- (4) Failure to follow established safety regulations.

B. Misconduct

Employees may be disciplined for misconduct, including but not limited to, the following:

- (1) Failure or refusal to perform a work-related task, or any form of insubordination;
- (2) Dishonesty;

- (3) Theft;
- (4) Discourtesy, rudeness, or unprofessional behavior toward a customer or member of the public;
- (5) Disparaging, rude, or condescending behavior toward a coworker;
- (6) Harming or destroying District property or the property of another on District premises;
- (7) Violating conflict of interest rules;
- (8) Disclosing or using confidential and/or proprietary information, such as the District's trade secrets, without authorization;
- (9) Falsifying or altering District records, including an application for employment or timekeeping records;
- (10) Interfering with the work performance of others;
- (11) Violating the District's rules against unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, or rules against workplace violence;
- (12) Being under the influence of, manufacturing, dispensing, distributing, using, or possessing alcohol or illegal or controlled substances on District property or while conducting District business;
- (13) Gambling on District premises or while conducting District business;
- (14) Sleeping on the job or leaving your work location/work site without authorization for a purpose other than a legally protected activity;
- (15) Possessing a firearm or other dangerous weapon on District property or while conducting District business;
- (16) Being convicted of a crime that indicates unfitness for the job or raises a threat to the safety or well-being of the District, its employees, customers, or property;
- (17) Working for another employer or entity while on a leave of absence from the District, without prior written notice and agreement by the District;
- (18) Failing to report to the District, within five days, any conviction under any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace.

C. Attendance

In addition to the general rules stated above, employees may be disciplined for failing to observe the following specific requirements relating to attendance:

- (1) Reporting to work on time, observing rest break and meal period policies, recording all time worked, and obtaining approval to leave work early; and
- (2) Notifying the supervisor in advance of anticipated tardiness or absence.

D. Discipline Procedure

Except as set forth below, discharge or demotion for poor performance ordinarily will be preceded by an oral warning and a written warning.

The District reserves the right to proceed directly to a written warning, demotion, or termination for misconduct or performance deficiency, without resort to prior disciplinary steps, when the District deems such action appropriate.

III. Exit Interview

Employees who leave the District for any reason may be asked to participate in an exit interview. This interview is intended to permit terminating employees the opportunity to communicate their views regarding their work with the District, including job duties, job training, job supervision, and job benefits.

To: Steven Rodriguez; Emmanuel Ramos

Cc: Nick Gumbleton

From: Thania Garcia, Skelly Officer

Date: 11-06-2025

Re: Skelly Ruling

On September 10, 2025, Mr. Rodriguez and his union representative, Nick Gumbleton, appeared (via Teams) for the Skelly conference regarding Salton Community Service District's ("District") Notice of Intent to Terminate Mr. Rodriguez's employment for performance deficiencies and unprofessional conduct. Christina Sutton appeared on behalf of the District.

The Skelly Conference was held to provide Mr. Rodriguez the opportunity to respond to the two misconduct issues for which the District proposed to terminate Mr. Rodriguez's employment, namely:

- (a) Engaging in disparaging, rude or condescending behavior toward a co-worker, in violation of the District's policy; and
- (b) Unsatisfactory work quality or quantity.

At the Skelly Conference, among other things, Mr. Rodriguez alleged that he had difficulties performing his job duties because the District had limited funds and, as a result, he was required to purchase parts and tools for District use out of his own pocket. Additionally, Mr. Rodriguez denied making a derogatory comment about co-worker. (Mr. Rodriguez raised other contentions, but, for purposes of this ruling, I am focused on and address only the issues involving Mr. Rodriguez allegedly having to personally pay the District's business expenses and the disparaging comment he allegedly made about a co-worker.)

As a result of these allegations, I decided to give Mr. Rodriguez additional time to submit documentation supporting his claim of having to purchase parts and tools for District use out of his own pocket and to give the District time to review the documentation provided by Mr. Rodriguez and respond to the same.

Subsequently, Mr. Rodriguez submitted a number of receipts which he claims substantiate his contention that he had to purchase parts and tools for the District out of his own pocket. Upon review of the receipts, I noticed the following discrepancies:

- Nearly all of the items purchased were sent to a residential address. If these items were purchased for the District, why were they not sent to the District?
-
-

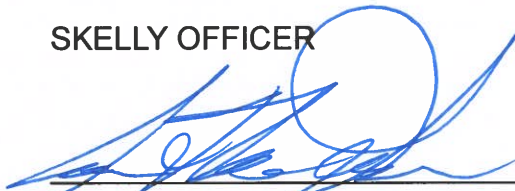
- District supervisor, Omar Ruiz, investigated and determined that, other than one item, the rest of the items shown on the receipts could not be located on District premises or property.
- Some of the receipts show the purchaser as a business or organization called "Full Force 4WD." If these items were purchased for the District and paid for by Steven Rodriguez, it seems strange that the receipts reflect an entity called "Full Force 4WD."
- The District produced documentation showing Mr. Rodriguez receiving reimbursement from the District, on numerous occasions in the past, for purchases which he made on the District's behalf. Mr. Rodriguez knows the procedure for requesting reimbursement of business expenses. It seems strange that he did not use that procedure to request reimbursement of the purchases shown on the receipts he produced.

As to Mr. Rodriguez's claim that he did not make a disparaging comment about a co-worker, I do not find his contention credible. The District learned of the disparaging comment because a third-party employee (not the employee about whom the disparaging comment was made) witnessed Mr. Rodriguez making the comment and reported the comment to the District. Subsequently, Mr. Rodriguez repeated the comment in the presence of another employee, who confirmed with the District that he heard Mr. Rodriguez make the disparaging comment a second time.

Generally, I find that Mr. Rodriguez did not accept accountability for any of his actions and engaged in a pattern of deflecting blame on others. I believe this behavior causes disruption in the workplace. Specifically, I find that the receipts submitted by Mr. Rodriguez do not support his contention that he was forced to personally pay for parts and equipment for the District. Rather, the receipts raise further questions regarding why Mr. Rodriguez failed to follow District procedures to request reimbursement for these expenses. The District investigated the whereabouts of these parts and equipment and could not find any of these items, other than one, on District premises or property.

Based on the above findings, I conclude that the District's decision to terminate Mr. Rodriguez's employment for performance deficiencies and unprofessional conduct to be reasonable and supported by the evidence in this case.

SKELLY OFFICER



Sonia Thania Garcia

Dated: 11-06-2025

NOTICE OF TERMINATION

Date: 11/06, 2025
To: Steven Rodriguez
Cc: Nick Gumbleton
From: Emmanuel Ramos, GM

Mr. Rodriguez:

The Salton Community Services District (“District”) hereby notifies you that your employment with the District is terminated, effective immediately.

This action is taken based on a determination that you have engaged in conduct that is subject to discipline pursuant to the District’s Employee Handbook, Termination, Discipline, and Rules of Conduct, Section II.B. Specifically, the District has determined that (a) you have engaged in disparaging, rude or condescending behavior toward a coworker, (b) your work quality or quantity is unsatisfactory, and (c) you have failed to perform work-related tasks.

Disciplinary History and Facts Supporting Termination

This action is the latest in a series of disciplinary issues which include the following:

- On February 19, 2025, the District documented an incident wherein you attended a meeting of the District’s Board of Directors while on the clock and without obtaining permission from your supervisor. At the Board of Directors meeting, you were rude and unprofessional when you interrupted the Board President and General Counsel. When they informed you that the public comment period had ended, you responded: “I’m going to make my statement, and you’re gonna hear it, either here or outside.” (See Exhibit A)
- On March 19, 2025, you again attended a meeting of the District’s Board of Directors while on the clock and without obtaining permission from your supervisor. At this meeting, you lied and stated that you were attending the meeting as a representative of the union because you are the union steward. Your union has confirmed that you are not the union steward and not authorized to represent the union at Board meetings. (See Exhibit A)
- On April 16, 2025, you again attended a meeting of the District’s Board of Directors while on the clock and without obtaining permission from your supervisor. (See Exhibit A)
- On May 5, 2025, the District issued a written warning to you for disregarding the District’s policy and procedures by attending Board meetings while still on the clock and without obtaining permission from your supervisor. (See Exhibit A)
- On May 5, 2025, the District also disciplined you for “disruptive and unprofessional behavior at the meeting of the Board of Directors on February 19, 2025, by speaking over

Board members after the close of the public comment period and disregarding a directive from the President of the Board of the Directors and General counsel for you to stop talking.

- As part of the May 5th discipline, you were expressly reminded that “You are now being placed on notice that if you ever again fail to follow established policies and procedures, you may be discharged.”
- On July 17, 2025, you were issued a final written warning for unprofessional and rude conduct toward a colleague, Oracio Lemus. While Ms. Lemus was in the breakroom on June 30, 2025, trying to address an issue with the new time clock, you interjected into the conversation between Mr. Lemus and Erick Allen and stated: “The time clock should not be in here, and the time clock is worthless just like you.” This statement is rude, demeaning, condescending, and unprofessional. This conduct is subject to discipline pursuant to the District’s Employee Handbook, Termination, Discipline, and Rules of Conduct, Section II.B., which allows the District to discipline, up to and including terminating, for such statements. (Exhibit A)
- Since July 21, 2025, the District has discovered that you have consistently failed to complete repair jobs assigned to you or have simply disregarded the work altogether. The District’s review and audit of repair jobs assigned to you for completion reveals the following:
 - On April 24, 2025, Interim Field Foreman, Omar Ruiz, asked you to (a) service the generator at Station 24 and the carburetor of the portable generator; (b) get a replacement air filter, spark plug, and sediment screen for the portable water tank; (c) fix the truck hood straps; (d) fix the air conditioner in “big red”; and (d) fix or replace the spark plugs for “big red.” As of the date you went on leave (July 21, 2025), none of these tasks were completed. (See Exhibit B)
 - On May 7, 2025, Mr. Ruiz asked you to get a replacement winch for the boat in order to secure the boat to the trailer. He also asked you to get safety pins for the ball latches. In his email requesting these items, Mr. Ruiz stated: “It would be much appreciated if we can get those times as soon as possible to avoid any future safety issues or DOT violations.” As of the date you went on leave (July 21, 2025), none of these tasks were completed. (See Exhibit B)
 - On May 19, 2025, Mr. Ruiz reminded you to address the “AC trouble” in unit 10 and the John Deere loader. He also asked if you serviced the generator at station 24. You responded that that loader needed to be brought back to the shop for you to look at it again. You asked for more time to review prior service. As of the date you went on leave (July 21, 2025), these tasks remained unfinished. (See Exhibit B)
 - On June 6, 2025, employee Erick Allen reported to you that the trash pump at station 24 was leaking. As of the date you went on leave (July 21, 2025), the issue had still not been addressed. (See Exhibit B)

- Additionally, the District's audit of the tasks under your purview confirms that you failed to do your job with respect to the following issues:
 - The motorgrader door is malfunctioning and will not start.
 - The water truck has major leaks that were never fixed.
 - The green sewer transmission has not been fixed.
 - The camera truck outlets do not work and have not been fixed.
 - The 410g backhoe fuse problem never got resolved.
 - The man lift never got fixed.
 - The skeed steer oil leak has not been fixed.
 - The diesel power pressure washer has not been fixed.
 - The haul truck hydraulic fittings and tires never got fixed.
 - The unit 2 problems have not been resolved.
 - The hood straps for the big trucks never got installed.

Your history of disregard for the District's policies, your continued rudeness and unprofessionalism towards the District's Board members and employees, and your failure to perform the duties assigned to you, are no longer tolerable. The District is terminating your employment for the reasons stated above.

The specific grounds for termination are as follows: (a) Your rude and belittling comment to Oracio Lemus on June 30, 2025 violated the District's Employee Handbook, Termination, Discipline, and Rules of Conduct, Section II.B, subdivisions 4 and 5, and you were previously warned that another instance of discourteous, rude or unprofessional behavior with employees or Board members would subject you to discipline, up to and including termination; and (b) your failure to perform your work as discovered by the District during your paid administrative leave violated the District's Employee Handbook, Termination, Discipline, and Rules of Conduct, Section II.A, subdivision 1 and Section II.B, subdivision 1. A copy of the District's Employee Handbook, Termination, Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy is attached hereto as Exhibit C.



Emmanuel Ramos, General Manager

I acknowledge that this Notice has been discussed with me. I understand my signature indicates I have received a copy of this Notice of Intent to Terminate Employment.

Steven Rodriguez

Exhibit A

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT
Failure to Follow Departmental Policies and Procedures

PERFORMANCE CORRECTION NOTICE

Employee Name: Steven Rodriguez **Department: Sewer Maintenance Mechanic**

Date Presented: 05-05-25 **Supervisor: Emmanuel Ramos**

Disciplinary Level

- Verbal Correction
- Written Warning/Probation -*

1. Disregarded the District's policy and procedures by attending a Board meeting while still on the clock. Steven should have requested the time off, obtained permission from his supervisor, and clocked out to attend the Board meeting, but did not do so and attended a Board meeting while still on the clock. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for failing to obtain approval to leave work early and failing to notify a supervisor in advance of anticipated absence. The Handbook's Attendance and Punctuality policy states that "early departure or other unanticipated and unapproved absences from scheduled hours are disruptive and must be avoided."
2. Engaged in disruptive and unprofessional behavior at a meeting of the District's Board of Directors on February 19, 2025, by speaking over Board members after the close of the public comment period and disregarding and directive from the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel instructing Steven to stop talking because the public comment period had ended. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for "any form of insubordination" and "discourtesy, rudeness or unprofessional behavior toward a member of the public." In this case, Steven was rude and discourteous to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel, and the District finds the handbook provision to be equally applicable (if not more so) to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel.

Review of Union Memorandum of understanding and district handbook, possible termination if offense is repeated)

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

- Investigatory Leave –
- Final Written Warning
- Without decision-making leave
- With decision-making leave (Attach memo of instructions.)
- With unpaid suspension

Subject: *Failure to follow departmental policies and procedures*

Policy/Procedure Violation – Failed to notify supervisor prior to attending and attended meeting while on the clock; Stated he was there representing the Union as the Union Steward when he was not. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for failing to obtain approval to leave work early and failing to notify a supervisor in advance of anticipated absence. The Handbook's Attendance and Punctuality policy states that "early departure or other unanticipated and unapproved absences from scheduled hours are disruptive and must be avoided."

Performance Transgression

Behavior/Conduct Infraction - Employee's behavior at the February 19, 2025, and the March 19, 2025, Board of Directors meetings was unprofessional, insubordinate and in disregard of directives from the President of the Board and General Counsel. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for "any form of insubordination" and "discourtesy, rudeness or unprofessional behavior toward a member of the public." In this case, Steven was rude and discourteous to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel, and the District finds the handbook provision to be equally applicable (if not more so) to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel.

Absenteeism/Tardiness

Prior Notifications

<i>Level of Discipline</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>
----------------------------	-------------	----------------

2 | Page

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Verbal. 10/25/2023 Driving an SCSD vehicle while towing a trailer over the
speed limit and in the far-left lane.

Written _____

Final Written _____

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Incident Description and Supporting Details:

Steven,

On Wednesday, February 19, 2025, you attended while on the clock, the District's Board of Directors' regular meeting without notifying your supervisor prior to attendance. You interrupted the Board President during the meeting after Public Comments had been closed and insisted on making comments in which you used your official title and position with the district, as well as stating you were there representing the Union as the Union Steward. You proceeded to then argue and disrespect the Board President and Legal Counsel. "I'm going to make my statement, and you're gonna hear it, either here or outside."

On Wednesday, March 19, 2025, you attended while on the clock, the District's Board of Directors' regular meeting without notifying your supervisor prior to attending. You again used your official title with the district and stated you were there representing the Union as the Union Steward. You again disrupted the meeting by demanding to make a second (2nd) Public Comment after you had been given the full three (3) minutes for your first (1st) comment during Public Comment, Legal Counsel had to instruct you to sit down.

On Wednesday, April 16th, 2025, you attended while on the clock, the District's Board of Directors' regular meeting without notifying your supervisor prior to attending.

After conducting a detailed investigation involving your conduct, I have determined that the following action needs to be addressed:

Finding (1) How you chose to handle yourself was in direct conflict with the chain of command that you are to follow. Any grievance or complaint regarding your supervisor's General manager's conduct should have been brought directly to Human Resources. Your decision to be disruptive and conduct yourself in an unprofessional manner was inappropriate and against company policy.

Finding (2) You were not permitted by the Union to represent the Union in a capacity at the board meetings.

Performance Improvement Plan

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

1. Measurable/Tangible Improvement Goals: *Steven, the district expects that you will familiarize yourself not only with this policy but with all policies and procedures outlined in the district's employee handbook and your Memorandum of Understanding. You must familiarize yourself with all district rules from this point forward. The district also expects that you reach out to your Union Representative with any questions regarding the MOU.*

2. Training or Special Direction to Be Provided: *I will email you, along with the rest of the staff, each section of the Employee Handbook for better understanding of the district's policies and procedures.*

3. Interim Performance Evaluation Necessary? *No*

4. In addition, I recognize that you may have certain ideas to improve your performance. Therefore, I encourage you to provide your own Personal Improvement Plan Input and Suggestions:

(Attach additional sheets if needed.)

Outcomes and Consequences

Positive: *I will remain available to help you and discuss areas where you require additional support.*

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

If you comply with the proper policy and procedures going forward, no further disciplinary action will be taken regarding this issue.

Negative: *You are now being placed on notice that if you ever again fail to follow established policies and procedures, you may be discharged. In addition, if you abuse any employment privileges or if you engage in any conduct that indicates a lack of responsibility or that violates any standards of performance and conduct in the next 90 days, you may be placed on a final written warning. Failure to follow policies and procedures during that final written warning period may result in your dismissal. A copy of this document will be placed in your personnel file.*

Scheduled Review Date:

Employee Comments and/or Rebuttal

(Attach additional sheets if needed.)

X _____

Employee Signature


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SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Employee Acknowledgment

I have received a copy of this notification. It has been discussed with me, and I have been advised to take time to consider it before I sign it. I accept full responsibility for my actions. *I understand that I must make substantial improvements in my performance to remain employed with the District.*

By signing this, I commit to follow the District's standards of performance and conduct.

_____	_____		<u>5.6.25</u>
Employee Signature	Date	Supervisor Signature	Date

Witness (if employee refuses to sign)

<u>Christina R. Sutton</u>	<u>05/06/2025</u>	<u>8:41 am</u>
Name	Date	Time in
conference		

Distribution of copies: Employer, Supervisor, Department Head, Human Resources

STEVEN Refuse to Sign.

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Failure to Follow Departmental Policies and Procedures

PERFORMANCE CORRECTION NOTICE

Employee Name: Steven Rodriguez

Department: Mechanic

Date Presented: July 21, 2025

Supervisor: Emmanuel Ramos

Disciplinary Level

- Verbal Correction
- Written Warning/*Probation*
- Investigatory Leave
- Final Written Warning
 - Without decision-making leave
 - With decision-making leave (Attach memo of instructions.)
 - With unpaid suspension

Subject: *Violation of District policy prohibiting bullying of co-workers*

- Policy/Procedure Violation
- Performance Transgression
- Behavior/Conduct Infraction –

Workplace Bullying

Verbal Bullying: The District's Employee Handbook prohibits verbal bullying of employees. "Verbal bullying" is described in the handbook, in part, as: "slandering, ridiculing, or maligning" colleagues and supervisors. (See Employee Handbook's Policy Against Bullying, Exhibit A) On 6/30/25, you violated the District's policy against bullying by engaging with a colleague in an unprofessional and condescending manner. Specifically, while the colleague, Oracio Lemus, was working on an issue concerning the new time clock, you stated to him, in the presence of other employees: "The time clock is worthless, just like you."

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

This comment was a gratuitous, mean-spirited personal attack of the other employee, without provocation. The comment constitutes verbal bullying in violation of the District's policies.

Steven has a history of engaging other District employees and even Board members in a rude and unprofessional manner. As detailed below, on 2/19/25, Steven attended a meeting of the District's Board of Directors and started speaking out of turn. When the Board President and General Counsel informed him that the public comment period had ended, Steven forcefully responded: "I'm going to make my statement, and you're gonna hear it, either here or outside."

On 7/1/25, Steven sent an email to the District's Finance Officer/HR Director about hours he believes he was shorted on his paycheck by stating: "Good afternoon, I just checked my timecard on ADP, and I was shorted 8 hours for last Monday, 6/23/25. I expect to have this corrected. ASAP." When the Finance Director informed Steven that the District would not have known to pay him sick leave for the absence because he did not report a reason for the absence and did not request a sick day, Steven continued to be aggressive and refused to take responsibility for reporting his own absences. Steven's aggressiveness continued even after the Finance Director reminded him of several verbal and written communications they have had regarding employees' responsibility for reporting their absences to HR and requesting substitution of accrued paid leave for any unpaid absence. Steven's behavior in this situation not only constituted bullying of the Finance Director, it demonstrates Steven's unwillingness to work with other District employees in a cooperative and collaborative manner. Steven seems more eager to create conflict in the workplace than to resolve issues.

- Absenteeism/Tardiness

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Prior Notifications

<i>Level of Discipline</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>
Verbal	<u>10/25/23</u>	<u>Driving a SCSD Vehicle while towing a trailer over the speed limit and in the far-left lane.</u>
Written	<u>05/05/25</u>	<u>Disregarded the District's policy and procedures by attending a Board meeting while still on the clock. Steven should have requested the time off, obtained permission from his supervisor, and clocked out to attend the Board meeting, but did not do so and attended a Board meeting while still on the clock. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for failing to obtain approval to leave work early and failing to notify a supervisor in advance of anticipated absence. The Handbook's Attendance and Punctuality policy states that "early departure or other unanticipated and unapproved absences from scheduled hours are disruptive and must be avoided."</u> <u>Engaged in disruptive and unprofessional behavior at a meeting of the District's Board of Directors on February 19, 2025, by speaking over Board members after the close of the public comment period and disregarding and directive from the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel instructing Steven to stop talking because the public comment period had ended. The Employee Handbook's Discipline and Rules of Conduct policy states that employees may be disciplined for "any form of insubordination" and "discourtesy, rudeness or unprofessional behavior toward a member of the public." In this case, Steven was rude and discourteous to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel, and the District finds the handbook provision to be equally applicable (if not more so) to the President of the Board of Directors and General Counsel.</u> <u>Review of Union Memorandum of understanding and district handbook, possible termination if offense is repeated)</u>

Final Written _____

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Incident Description and Supporting Details:

Steven,

On Monday, June 30, 2025, you were in the new crew breakroom where fellow employees, Mr. Lemus, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Allen were present. Mr. Lemus was speaking to Mr. Allen when you proceeded to state to Mr. Lemus, who was working on addressing the time clock issues, that "The time clock does not belong in here, and that time clock is worthless just like you."

Performance Improvement Plan

1. Measurable/Tangible Improvement Goals: *Steven, I expect that you will familiarize yourself not only with this policy but with all policies and procedures outlined in the SCSD employee handbook. You must familiarize yourself with all District rules from this point forward.*

2. Training or Special Direction to Be Provided:

3. Interim Performance Evaluation Necessary? *No*

4. In addition, I recognize that you may have certain ideas to improve your performance. Therefore, I encourage you to provide your own Personal Improvement Plan Input and Suggestions:

(Attach additional sheets if needed.)

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Outcomes and Consequences

Positive:

Negative: As of 05/05/2025, you were notified that you were placed on a final written warning.

Scheduled Review Date:

Employee Comments and/or Rebuttal

(Attach additional sheets if needed.)

X _____

Employee Signature

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Employee Acknowledgment

I have received a copy of this notification. It has been discussed with me, and I have been advised to take time to consider it before I sign it. I accept full responsibility for my actions. I understand that I must make substantial improvements in my performance to remain employed with the District.

By signing this, I commit to follow the District's standards of performance and conduct.

Refused to sign

Employee Signature

Date



Supervisor Signature

7/21/25

Date

Witness (if employee refuses to sign)

Omar Ruiz

Name
conference

7/21/25



Date Time in

Christina R. Sutton

07/21/2025

8:41 am

Distribution of copies: Employer Supervisor Department Head Human Resources

EXHIBIT A

F. Workplace Bullying

The District defines bullying as repeated inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment. All employees must be treated with dignity and respect.

The purpose of this policy is to communicate to all employees, including supervisors and managers that the District will not tolerate bullying behavior. Employees found in violation of this policy will be disciplined, up to and including termination. The District considers the following types of behavior examples of bullying:

Verbal Bullying: slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or their family, persistent name calling which is hurtful, insulting or humiliating; using a person as a butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks; malicious gossip; yelling, screaming, threatening, and other demeaning behavior and/or comments.

Physical Bullying: pushing; shoving; kicking; poking; tripping; assault, or threat of physical assault; damage to a person's work area or property.

Gesture Bullying: non-verbal threatening gestures; glances which can convey threatening messages.

Cyber Bullying: willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones and other electronic devices.

Exclusion: socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work-related activities.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

The District takes seriously, and is concerned about the use of alcohol, illegal drugs under state or federal law, or controlled substances as it affects the workplace. Use of these substances, whether on or off the job can detract from an employee's work performance, efficiency, safety, and health, and seriously impair District operations. In addition, the use or possession of these substances on the job constitutes a potential danger to the welfare and safety of other employees and exposes the District to the risks of property loss or damage, or injury to other persons.

The District does not discriminate against individuals in hiring, termination, or any term or condition of employment, or otherwise penalize any employee, intern, volunteer or applicant on the basis of the individual's use of cannabis off the job and away from the workplace. However, employees, interns, volunteers or applicants who are subject to federal laws and regulations with respect to marijuana use, consumption and testing will be treated in accordance with federal law, under which marijuana is considered an illegal controlled substance.

Furthermore, the use of prescription drugs and/or over-the-counter drugs also may affect an employee's job performance and may seriously impair the employee's value to the District.

Any employee who is using prescription or over-the-counter drugs that may impair the employee's ability to safely perform the job, or affect the safety or well-being of others, must notify a supervisor of such use immediately before starting or resuming work.

The following rules and standards of conduct apply to all employees while on District property, at work or working on District business. The following are strictly prohibited by District policy:

SALTON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Employee Acknowledgment

I have received a copy of this notification. It has been discussed with me, and I have been advised to take time to consider it before I sign it. I accept full responsibility for my actions. I understand that I must make substantial improvements in my performance to remain employed with the District.

By signing this, I commit to follow the District's standards of performance and conduct.

Employee Signature

Date



Supervisor Signature

7/21/25
Date

Date

Witness (if employee refuses to sign)

Omar Ruiz
Name

7/21/25
Date



Time in

conference

Distribution of copies: Employer Supervisor Department Head Human Resources

Christina R. Sutton

07/21/2025

8:41 am

Exhibit B

Omar Ruiz

From: Omar Ruiz
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2025 12:00 PM
To: Steven Rodriguez
Cc: Emmanuel Ramos
Subject: Reminder

Greetings

At your next available time

-can we get a service to generator station 24

-Service the carburetor of the portable generator

-get a replacement air filter, spark plug and sediment screen for portable water tank(Honda gx160 motor)

-truck hood straps

-AC in big red

-spark plugs for big red(noticed some stumbling well under load)

Thank you

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Omar Ruiz

From: Omar Ruiz
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 7:41 AM
To: Emmanuel Ramos
Cc: Steven Rodriguez
Subject: Boat

Greetings

Can we get a replacement winch for the boat.

We are currently taking samples and there is no proper way to secure the boat to the trailer. On the topic I have also noticed that none of our trailer have any safety pins for the ball latches. It would be much appreciated if we can get those items as soon as possible to avoid any future safety a issues or DOT violations

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Omar Ruiz

From: Steven Rodriguez
Sent: Monday, May 19, 2025 10:23 AM
To: Omar Ruiz
Subject: Re: update

I am waiting for tools I ordered from amazon to come in to complete the removal of transmission. Okay. The loader needs to be brought to the shop to be repaired and unit 10 will have to be looked at again. No. I checked all the vital lubricants and they look fine. Id like to get more time to look for the last time it was serviced so were not overlapping maintenance.

From: Omar Ruiz <oruiz@saltoncsd.ca.gov>
Sent: Monday, May 19, 2025 9:18 AM
To: Steven Rodriguez <srodriguez@saltoncsd.ca.gov>
Cc: Emmanuel Ramos <eramos@saltoncsd.ca.gov>; Erick Allen <eallen@saltoncsd.ca.gov>
Subject: update

Greetings Steven ,

Please let me know what day would be best for you for us to assign help for the sewer jet trans drop.

Also just a reminder unit 10 and John Deere loader are having AC trouble.

Did the generator at station #24 get serviced?

Omar Ruiz

From: Erick Allen
Sent: Friday, June 6, 2025 7:28 AM
To: Omar Ruiz; Steven Rodriguez
Subject: Trash pump at 24
Attachments: original-f7f85022-1ca9-477d-afdd-a4ab39d64394.mp4

This morning, I ran the trash pump at station 24 and found it's leaking.

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Exhibit C

TERMINATION, DISCIPLINE, AND RULES OF CONDUCT

I. Termination

A. Voluntary Termination

The District will consider an employee to have voluntarily terminated his or her employment if an employee does any of the following:

- (1) Elects to resign from the District;
- (2) Fails to return from an approved leave of absence on the date specified by the District;
or
- (3) Fails to report for work without notice to the District for three consecutive days.

B. Involuntary Termination

An employee may be terminated involuntarily for reasons that may include poor performance, misconduct, or other violations of the District's rules of conduct as set forth below. Notwithstanding this list of rules, the District reserves the right to discharge or demote any employee with or without cause and with or without prior notice.

C. Termination Due to Reorganizations, Economics, or Lack of Work

From time to time, the District may need to terminate an employee as a consequence of reorganizations, job eliminations, economic downturns in business, or lack of work. Should the District consider such terminations necessary, the District will attempt to provide all affected employees with advance notice when practical. Layoff benefits associated with such terminations, if any, will be as specified in the notice.

II. Discipline and Rules of Conduct

Employees are expected to observe certain standards of job performance and good conduct. When performance or conduct does not meet District standards, the employee will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

The rules set forth below are intended to provide employees with notice of what is expected of them. Necessarily, however, such rules cannot identify every type of unacceptable conduct and performance. Therefore, employees should be aware that conduct not specifically listed below but which the District determines adversely affects or is otherwise detrimental to the interests of the District, other employees, or customers, may also result in disciplinary action.

A. Job Performance

Employees may be disciplined for poor job performance, including but not limited to the following:

- (1) Unsatisfactory work quality or quantity;
- (2) Excessive absenteeism, tardiness, or abuse of rest break and meal period policies;
- (3) Failure to follow instructions or District procedures; or
- (4) Failure to follow established safety regulations.

B. Misconduct

Employees may be disciplined for misconduct, including but not limited to, the following:

- (1) Failure or refusal to perform a work-related task, or any form of insubordination;
- (2) Dishonesty;

- (3) Theft;
- (4) Discourtesy, rudeness, or unprofessional behavior toward a customer or member of the public;
- (5) Disparaging, rude, or condescending behavior toward a coworker;
- (6) Harming or destroying District property or the property of another on District premises;
- (7) Violating conflict of interest rules;
- (8) Disclosing or using confidential and/or proprietary information, such as the District's trade secrets, without authorization;
- (9) Falsifying or altering District records, including an application for employment or timekeeping records;
- (10) Interfering with the work performance of others;
- (11) Violating the District's rules against unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, or rules against workplace violence;
- (12) Being under the influence of, manufacturing, dispensing, distributing, using, or possessing alcohol or illegal or controlled substances on District property or while conducting District business;
- (13) Gambling on District premises or while conducting District business;
- (14) Sleeping on the job or leaving your work location/work site without authorization for a purpose other than a legally protected activity;
- (15) Possessing a firearm or other dangerous weapon on District property or while conducting District business;
- (16) Being convicted of a crime that indicates unfitness for the job or raises a threat to the safety or well-being of the District, its employees, customers, or property;
- (17) Working for another employer or entity while on a leave of absence from the District, without prior written notice and agreement by the District;
- (18) Failing to report to the District, within five days, any conviction under any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace.

C. Attendance

In addition to the general rules stated above, employees may be disciplined for failing to observe the following specific requirements relating to attendance:

- (1) Reporting to work on time, observing rest break and meal period policies, recording all time worked, and obtaining approval to leave work early; and
- (2) Notifying the supervisor in advance of anticipated tardiness or absence.

D. Discipline Procedure

Except as set forth below, discharge or demotion for poor performance ordinarily will be preceded by an oral warning and a written warning.

The District reserves the right to proceed directly to a written warning, demotion, or termination for misconduct or performance deficiency, without resort to prior disciplinary steps, when the District deems such action appropriate.

III. Exit Interview

Employees who leave the District for any reason may be asked to participate in an exit interview. This interview is intended to permit terminating employees the opportunity to communicate their views regarding their work with the District, including job duties, job training, job supervision, and job benefits.