



careersourcefloridacrown.com

March 6, 2023

Mr. Ronald Jones
4488 Gray Hawk St
Orange Park, FL 32065
Hand Delivered

Re: Written Reprimand for Misconduct in Office

Mr. Jones:

This is a letter of reprimand which will become part of your personnel file.

As you are aware, the Florida Crown Workforce Board, Inc. d/b/a CareerSource Florida Crown ("Agency") received a complaint from a former employee not under your direct supervision, but within your area of oversight and managerial responsibilities alleging that you exhibited behavior that may violate Agency Policy.

Specifically, at the request of the former employee the Agency provided an exit interview at which the former employee ("Claimant") advised the Executive Director, Robert Jones, our Equal Opportunity Officer, Jeff Geering and our Office Manager, Vanquiece Brown of multiple acts by you characterized by the Claimant as sexual harassment. Due to the serious nature of the Claimant's allegations, the Agency initiated an investigation into the claims and placed you on administrative leave with pay pending the completion of the investigation and disposition of this personnel issue. Once the interviews were complete, you were reassigned to normal duties pending completion of the investigation.

The Agency engaged Mr. Don Kennedy, a retired investigator formerly employed by the Third Judicial Circuit Public Defender, to conduct the investigation. Mr. Kennedy conducted interviews with you, the Claimant, and other Agency current and former personnel deemed to have knowledge of the Claimant's allegations based upon the interviews with you and the Claimant.

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1389 US Hwy 90 West, Suite 170 | Lake City, FL 32055

p: 386.755.9026 | f: 386.487.1218



As your immediate supervisor, I have closely reviewed the interview reports submitted by the investigator and consulted with the Executive Board regarding the nature of the allegations and employment action that I deem appropriate under the circumstances presented.

While I do not find that your conduct complained of by the Claimant and others constitutes sexual harassment within the workforce which is defined generally as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature from any person directed towards or in the presence of an employee or applicant during the course of your employment, there is significant, substantiated evidence of your use of your managerial authority in a manner, sometimes involving sexual overtones, but in numerous incidents which are unprofessional, inappropriate under any circumstances in the workplace, and which involves mismanagement of a nature that constitutes misconduct in office.

It has been substantiated with multiple witnesses that you have engaged in unprofessional conduct while attending conferences as an employee of the Agency, including at times with students present. While it is not prohibited for an Agency employee to consume alcoholic beverages, or to bring alcoholic beverages for personal consumption while attending conferences or otherwise, it is unprofessional and inappropriate under any circumstances to consume alcoholic beverages to a level of intoxication at conferences as you are present as a representative of the Agency. It is also unprofessional and inappropriate in the workplace to invite other employees, particularly subordinate employees of the Agency, to your hotel room for the stated purpose of consuming alcoholic beverages. Such conduct is particularly unprofessional and inappropriate under any circumstances in the workplace when the subordinate employee could reasonably perceive the invitation as personal to that employee and not to the entire group of Agency employees or others present at the conference.

It has also been substantiated with multiple interviewees that you engaged in unprofessional conduct while attending conferences as an employee of the Agency at times when students were present by consuming alcoholic beverages in the presence of the students, being intoxicated in the presence of the students, and making comments to subordinate employees involving sexual innuendo which is unprofessional and inappropriate under any circumstances in the workplace, but particularly in situations in which such comments may have been overheard by students and which would reasonably be perceived as offensive, demeaning, embarrassing or intimidating to any reasonable subordinate employee. Such conduct is particularly unprofessional and inappropriate in the workplace in the presence of students whom we serve.



Further, it is reported to the investigator that you, on multiple occasions, are flirtatious with female employees of the Agency, particularly subordinate single female employees. This misconduct has included inappropriate touching of female employees or inappropriate invasion of their personal space in a manner which is unprofessional and inappropriate under any circumstances in the workplace when the subordinate employee could reasonably perceive the inappropriate touching or inappropriate invasion of their personal space as sexual advance which could reasonably be perceived as offensive, demeaning, embarrassing or intimidating to any reasonable subordinate employee.

In addition, Agency employees have described your managerial style as overbearing, belittling and condescending, creating an intimidating work environment among some subordinate employees. Multiple subordinate employees have described the workplace environment under your direct supervision as toxic. For example, it was reported to the investigator that you attempted to prevent the exit interview by the Claimant and informed the Claimant and others that there would be no exit interview. While you certainly must exercise managerial authority in the workplace to ensure that our Agency staff are performing their employment duties, your conduct in doing so should always be professional, respectful, dignified and conducted with unquestioned integrity.

There is, in my opinion, sufficient corroboration among the information reported to the investigator, together with other corroborating evidence, to determine that you were not entirely truthful with the investigator and that the information received from the interviewees is credible.

As a result of the foregoing, I find that you have:

- Engaged in unprofessional and inappropriate communications with subordinate employees which were reasonably perceived as offensive, demeaning, embarrassing or intimidating. Going forward you shall make reasonable efforts to avoid communications with Agency employees which could be reasonably perceived as unprofessional, disrespectful or lacking in integrity toward the Agency employee.
- Engaged in unprofessional and inappropriate actions by consuming alcohol in the presence of students while acting in your capacity as an employee of the agency on conferences and by being intoxicated in the presence of students while acting in your capacity as an employee of the agency on conferences. Going forward you shall make reasonable efforts to avoid consumption of alcoholic beverages at conferences in the presence of any Agency employee or student and act at all times in a professional and respectful manner.



- Engaged in unprofessional and inappropriate actions, such as inappropriate physical contact, which intentionally exposed subordinate employees to demeaning, embarrassing and intimidating circumstances which is inappropriate under any circumstances in the workplace. Going forward you shall make reasonable efforts to avoid physical contact with Agency employees and others in the workplace, and conduct yourself at all times in a professional and respectful manner in your interactions with employees, students and others served by or working with the Agency.
- Harassed and discriminated against subordinate employees of the Agency, primarily upon the basis of sex, marital status and social and family background. Going forward you shall make reasonable efforts to assure that each subordinate employee and student associated with the Agency is protected from any such harassment or discrimination.
- Engaged in harassment or discriminatory conduct which unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance of professional or work responsibilities or with the orderly processes of the work of the Agency which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive environment. Going forward you shall make reasonable efforts to assure that each individual associated with the Agency is protected from such harassment or discrimination. No retaliation against any employee of the Agency, particularly any that may have participated in this investigation in any way, will be tolerated.

The language used and conduct exhibited by you will not be tolerated from employees of this Agency, and its workplace, whether within or outside the confines of an Agency office. Your managerial responsibilities will be closely monitored by me over the next 6 months to ensure that you are creating a professional, productive, non-abusive, non-intimidating work environment at all times and you will be afforded resources to improve your professional development in this regard.

At any time that you are asked or directed to attend a conference as an employee of the Agency you are to refrain from the use of alcohol in the presence of any Agency employee or student and your conduct at all times must be professional and above reproach. You are prohibited from attending any conferences on behalf of the Agency during the next six months, thorough the end of August, 2023. Thereafter, attendance at any conferences will require the prior written approval of the Executive Director through December 31, 2024.

As a result of the findings set forth above, but in recognition of the significant delay in the reporting of many of the complaints asserted against you and the fact that your prior employment history with the Agency has been without blemish, I have determined



that the appropriate disposition of this personnel complaint is this written reprimand and directive concerning your conduct as an employee of the Agency going forward. Please be advised, however, that any future incident of this nature or of a similar nature, including any verified reports of retaliatory conduct against any employees, will result in further, more serious disciplinary action, including possible termination from the Agency. This letter of reprimand shall constitute the conclusion of the Agency's investigation into this matter and will be part of your personnel file.

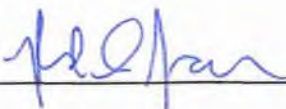
Finally, you are hereby notified that you may make a written response to the findings and disciplinary action stated in this letter of reprimand within ten (10) days of your receipt thereof. Your response will not be considered as an appeal, nor will any action be taken against you or against others as a result of your written response. Your response will, however, also be placed in your personnel file.

Sincerely,



Robert L. Jones
Executive Director
Florida Crown Workforce Board, Inc.
d/b/a CareerSource Florida Crown

My signature below acknowledges only that I have received a copy of this letter of reprimand and been notified that it has been placed in my personnel file, regardless of whether I agree with the letter's content.

Employee Signature  _____

Date 6 MAR 23

