

Written Rebuttals

You have just received a notice of proposed discipline or a performance evaluation that you do not agree with. Now what do you do? Contact CCEA to ensure that you understand and preserve your rights! If you receive a notice of proposed discipline it is critical that you contact the Association immediately since there is limited time to prepare a response.

Employees have the right to respond in writing to any information contained in their official personnel file(s). This reply will become a permanent part of the personnel file. Employees should respond to any negative material, counseling memos, reprimands or performance evaluations. The objective of a written rebuttal should be to present accurate information in support of the employee's performance or actions and/or to refute inaccurate or misleading information. Following are some guidelines to keep in mind when composing a rebuttal.

Be direct and to the point. A clear, concise rebuttal will be more effective in helping the reader understand your point of view. The main objective is to be concise and direct. Avoid the urge to convey too much information about the adverse incident or evaluation. Too much information will likely confuse the reader and negate the persuasive impact of your rebuttal.

Avoid negative, defensive statements. A positive statement can be more effective in rebutting the negative interpretation of the incident. For example, resist the urge to be defensive and state: "Co-worker Smith deserved my sharp comments. He is always rude to clients." A more positive and effective approach would be to say: "My interactions with co-workers are always professional and appropriate. I will offer suggestions to co-workers when I believe that an employee can benefit from my objective observation."

Avoid derogatory comments about co-workers or supervisors. Focus your rebuttal on the allegations or negative statements directed at you. After completing a draft of your rebuttal take a break and then review it later. A rebuttal should be factual and should not communicate emotions, such as anger and frustration. Make sure to address all adverse statements or allegations contained in the document prepared by the employer's representative.

Include a copy of the rebuttal in your personnel files. Employees generally have more than one personnel file; one file located at the central personnel office and one file located at the personnel office for your department. You should ensure that a copy of your rebuttal is included in all personnel files containing the original document