

Case Study #1: Right to Refuse

A long-time employee says openly that they are going to lift all stretchers by themselves even though there is clear policy that states 2 paramedics must lift a stretcher. They believe that takes too long and is more dangerous.

One of their colleagues refuses to perform a one person stretcher lift, because this employee refuses to help them. The second employee comes to you, as the supervisor to inform you of what is happening.

Is this a correctly applied right to refuse? Why or Why Not?

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Does the worker have reasonable grounds to believe a danger exists?

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As the supervisor what immediate steps would you take to resolve this situation?

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How would you investigate this situation?

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How could this situation have been prevented?

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What steps would you take to prevent this from happening in the future?

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Case Study #2: Right to Refuse

A new paramedic has been working for about two hours when they come into your office and tell you that they refuse drive to the pediatric truck on a PICU. They have never driven it and reveal they do not feel comfortable.

Is this a correctly applied right to refuse? Why or Why Not?

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Does the worker have reasonable grounds to believe a danger exists?

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As the supervisor what immediate steps would you take to resolve this situation?

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How would you investigate this situation?

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How could this situation have been prevented?

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What steps would you take to prevent this from happening in the future?

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Case Study #3: Right to Refuse

A cognitively impaired client in a special care home under the community medicine program is verbally abusive towards the community paramedic. While administering care the client continuously hits the paramedic. The community paramedic initiates a refusal to work due to physical and verbal abuse.

Is this a correctly applied right to refuse? Why or Why Not?

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Does the worker have reasonable grounds to believe a danger exists?

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As the supervisor what immediate steps would you take to resolve this situation?

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How would you investigate this situation?

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How could this situation have been prevented?

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What steps would you take to prevent this from happening in the future?

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Case Study #4: Right to Refuse

A Medical Communications officer has been employed at MHSW for six years. They never had any health problems from using the cleaners and disinfectants required to clean and disinfect their station. The process for cleaning and disinfecting has recently been modified due to the pandemic. MHSW now uses peroxide based disinfectants that are spray. After a one-time use, this worker goes home with a headache and stuffy nose. The next day they return to work feeling fine. At the end of the day they go home with the same symptoms again. After a week of working with the new product, the worker has an asthmatic attack, the first one in years. After they recover and return to work, they put in a refusal to work, citing the use of the new cleaner as the cause of their illness.

Is this a correctly applied right to refuse? Why or Why Not?

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Does the worker have reasonable grounds to believe a danger exists?

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As the supervisor what immediate steps would you take to resolve this situation?

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How would you investigate this situation?

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How could this situation have been prevented?

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What steps would you take to prevent this from happening in the future?

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Case Study #5: Right to Refuse

A paramedic at MHSW has suffered from heat stroke in the past and now finds that she is sensitive to warm temperatures. If the ambulance bay temperature reaches a certain level, the symptoms of heat stroke start to surface in a mild form. This paramedic talks to their co-workers and they also feel uncomfortable when the ambulance bay gets that hot. They decide that the next time the ambulance bay is hot they will put in a refusal to work. No one tells you about this.

Is this a correctly applied right to refuse? Why or Why Not?

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Does the worker have reasonable grounds to believe a danger exists?

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As the supervisor what immediate steps would you take to resolve this situation?

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How would you investigate this situation?

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How could this situation have been prevented?

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What steps would you take to prevent this from happening in the future?

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