

Employee Misconduct: Elevated Glucose Not Reported To Charge Nurse.

An aide working as a psychiatric technician was terminated after she tested a patient's blood glucose, obtained an elevated level and then failed to follow the hospital's policy that she was to verbally inform a registered nurse immediately in order that proper and timely medical follow-up could be initiated.

It was not until a nurse overheard the aide talking about the elevated blood glucose that the nurse was able to take appropriate measures.

The court record did not indicate how high the glucose level was, how long was the delay or whether the patient was actually harmed.

An employee's failure to comply with the employer's policies and procedures can amount to misconduct justifying termination, especially in cases where the employee is a healthcare professional whose failure to adhere to prescribed safety procedures could jeopardize the welfare of a patient.

NEW YORK SUPREME COURT
APPELLATE DIVISION
September 15, 2005

The New York Supreme Court, Appellate Division, ruled that the aide was guilty of misconduct serious enough to warrant termination for cause, which is the general rule when a healthcare worker's neglect did or could have harmed a patient. **Claim of Powell**, 800 N.Y.S.2d 790 (N.Y. Sup., September 15, 2005).