



JEFF LANDRY
GOVERNOR

DAN CASEY
COMMISSIONER

State of Louisiana
Department of Public Safety and Corrections
Office of Motor Vehicles

March 18, 2025
4750/0501/SDS/25-24227
OMV1-25-03-18-02

Kennisha Smith, MVCA 2
Department of Public Safety and Corrections
Office of Motor Vehicles

VIA HAND-DELIVERY
OLA#P-200262

RE: Reduction in Pay Equivalent to a 24-hour Suspension

Ms. Smith:

Under Louisiana State Civil Service Rules 12.1, 12.2, and 12.7, and the authority of Colonel Robert Hodges, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, Public Safety Services (DPS), you are hereby notified that your regular pay will be reduced in an amount equivalent to a 24-hour suspension because your conduct on November 27, 2024, violated Office of Motor Vehicle (OMV) Policy 2.07 *General Courtesy* and DPS policy Section 1-03-02 *Conduct Unbecoming an Employee*. Specifically, you disrupted the workplace on November 27, 2024, by engaging in a verbal altercation with Dara Davis, a fellow OMV employee, and several OMV employees heard the disturbance. The reasons for this proposed action are outlined below.

You are employed with the Office of Motor Vehicles (OMV) as a Motor Vehicle Compliance Analyst 2 and have attained permanent status. On November 27, 2024, you and Ms. Davis, an OMV Manager 2, engaged in a verbal altercation while on duty. Lauren Debetaz, OMV Administrator, was notified.

On December 4, 2024, as instructed by Louisiana State Police Lieutenant Colonel Frank Besson at the direction of DPS Deputy Secretary, Internal Affairs (IA), initiated an administrative investigation into allegations that your conduct on November 27, 2024, may have violated OMV and DPS policies. IA Captain Saleem El-Amin assigned the administrative investigation to Sergeant Ashton McRae.

Sgt. McRae reviewed written statements and interviewed you,¹ Ms. Davis, and other OMV employees identified as witnesses to the incident: Angela Broussard, Carl Angelle, Dana Garvin, Detra Thomas, Donna Ferguson, and Katie Braud.

¹ Exhibit 1. Your written statement dated December 3, 2024.

Ms. Broussard stated that she observed Ms. Davis attempt to push you out of her office. She heard Ms. Davis tell you several times to leave her office, and you told Ms. Davis several times not to touch you. She also said the argument was embarrassing because it occurred in front of two new OMV employees.

Mr. Angelle stated that Ms. Davis' office door was open, and he heard loud arguing when he walked by. He heard Ms. Davis say, "Wait a minute, I'm the boss here. Close the door." He also stated that he could hear you and Ms. Davis speaking loudly after the door closed.

Ms. Garvin stated that you and Ms. Davis were screaming at each other, describing the argument as "real bad." She also stated that Ms. Davis attempted to push you out of her office and heard you tell Ms. Davis to get her hands off you.

Ms. Thomas stated that she observed and heard both of you talking loudly to each other. She observed you leave your desk, enter Ms. Davis' office, and close the door. She observed Ms. Davis open the door and tell you to leave her office. She attempted to intervene and asked you to leave Ms. Davis' office, but you would not. She also heard you tell Ms. Davis not to put her hands on you.

Ms. Ferguson stated that she could hear you and Ms. Davis arguing. She observed you enter Ms. Davis's office and heard your voice through Ms. Davis' closed door. She also heard Ms. Davis's door slam twice and she heard Ms. Davis tell you to leave her office.

Ms. Braud stated that she observed you yelling at Ms. Davis in the doorway. She heard Ms. Davis tell you to back up and that she was unafraid of you. She repeatedly heard Ms. Davis ask you to leave her office, but you did not. She heard you say that Ms. Davis had put her hands on you. Ms. Braud also state that she could hear your voice after Ms. Davis' door closed.

Based upon the information gathered, I have determined that your conduct on November 27, 2024, violated OMV policy 2.07 *General Courtesy* and DPS policy Section 1-03-02 *Conduct Unbecoming an Employee*.

1. OMV policy 2.07 General Courtesy

This policy defines "courtesy" as "[b]ehavior exhibited in a professional, compassionate, and responsive manner to the citizens of this state and anyone who comes in contact with the Office of Motor Vehicles. As an OMV employee, you are required to do the following:

- Always be civil, orderly, and courteous.
- Always be diplomatic and tactful in the performance of their duties.
- Always control their tempers and exercise patience and discretion.
- Never engage in argumentative discussions, even in the face of extreme provocation; however, employees must act with firmness and sufficient energy to perform their duties when required.
- Never behave disrespectfully or use threatening or insulting language toward any other

COURTESY • LOYALTY • SERVICE

"An Equal Opportunity Employer"

P.O. BOX 66614, BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70896

employee toward any other employee engaged in the execution of their position or duties, nor shall an employee offer violence against, strike, or attempt to strike another employee.

2. DPS Section 1-03.02 Conduct Unbecoming an Employee

This policy states, in part:

A. An employee shall act dutifully responsible and professional at all times so as not to reflect unfavorably upon himself or the Department.

B. Unbecoming conduct is defined as conduct which:

...

3. Impairs the orderly operations or efficiency of the Department and/or its Employees;

4. Adversely affects the morale of the Department and/or its employees;

...

You are a permanent employee employed as an MCVA 2 and must adhere to OMV and DPS policies. You violated these policies by engaging in a verbal altercation with Ms. Davis on November 27, 2024. Several employees heard you yelling at each other and observed you leave your desk and go to Ms. Davis' office to continue the argument. Under the circumstances, you failed to control your temper and de-escalate this situation. The fact that other employees heard you argue with Ms. Davis near your desk and in her office, even with Ms. Davis' door closed, impaired the orderly operations of the office. Further, your unprofessional conduct could affect the morale of the department and/or employees.

After being given an opportunity to do so, you did not respond to the proposed disciplinary letter.

I find that reducing your pay to the equivalent of a 24-hour suspension is warranted to address your discourteous and unprofessional conduct, which interrupted the work of the department.

COURTESY • LOYALTY • SERVICE

"An Equal Opportunity Employer"

P.O. BOX 66614, BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70896

Kennisha Smith, MCVA 2

March 18, 2025

Page 4 of 4

You have the right to appeal this action to the Louisiana State Civil Service Commission. The time limits and procedure for appealing are contained in Chapter 13 of the Louisiana State Civil Service Commission Rules. A copy of Chapter 13 can be obtained from the Louisiana State Civil Service Commission. Their mailing address is P.O. Box 94111, Capitol Station, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9111. Their telephone number is (225) 342-8274 and their fax number is (225) 342-8058.

Sincerely,



Dan Casey

OMV Commissioner

c: Colonel Robert P Hodges, Deputy Secretary Department of Public Safety and Corrections
Internal Affairs
Office of Legal Affairs

COURTESY • LOYALTY • SERVICE

"An Equal Opportunity Employer"

P.O. BOX 66614, BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70896

Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections
Public Safety Services
Workplace Violence/Domestic Violence Incident Statement

When a workplace violence or domestic violence complaint is initiated, a written report of the alleged incident is required by policy.

Name of Person Making Statement (print):

Kennisha Smith

Title: MYCAH

Budget Unit/Section/Work Location:

VIU 7979 Independence Blvd Baton Rouge LA 70806

Date of Incident:

11/27/24

Location of Incident:

HR VIU

Incident Duration:

a.m. to

a.m.

NOT SURE

Names of Parties Involved:

Kennisha Smith AND Dara Davis

Witnesses:

N/A

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT (If necessary, attach additional sheets.)

It all started when I brought Lisbon to HR on 11/26/24 around 3:50pm once we came back down stairs Dara immediately approach me walking from the back of the office stating where have you been (it was not what she said it is how she said it) she is quick to say that is how she talk but the moment I talk like that I am being DISRESPECTFUL she stated over and over that is how she have gotten in trouble before by letting someone go upstairs and did not let her know where they were going. ON 11/27/24 I had called Lauren as long as the lines are covered VIU probably can leave will have to check with Lauren and Dara

Exhibit 1 Page 2 of 5
And seem like that was a problem that I checked with Lauren so words was passed she went into her office and shut (slammed) the door.... After I got up and ask her can me and Rylee (the new employee) switch seats seem like that was a problem she told me go up the chair since you just called Lauren (I didn't think that was a problem) at this point I was at her door she got up out of her chair and pushed my hand off of the door stating GET OUT OF HER OFFICE (I wasn't in her office I was standing at the door)

IN ORDER TO GET RESPECT YOU HAVE TO GIVE RESPECT!!!!

I HAVE BEEN WORKING FOR DMV GOING ON 17 YEARS I NEVER HAD THIS PROBLEM BEFORE!!!!

Kennisha Smith Statement

12/3/24



Signature of Person Making Statement

12/3/24

Date

Signature of Supervisor

Date

Signature of Budget Unit Head

Date

Signature of EEO Officer (Domestic violence incident only)

Date

Signature of Human Resources Director (Workplace violence incident only)

Date

Disposition of the Case:

NOTE: The contents of this statement will be kept confidential. Its contents will be released only to individuals with a legitimate need to know or if it becomes public record by virtue of an appeal to a court or other adjudicative body.

Staci Forbes

From: Staci Forbes
Sent: Wednesday, November 27, 2024 7:50 PM
To: Daniel Casey
Subject: Fwd: WRITTEN STATEMENT

Staci Forbes
OMV Deputy Commissioner

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Lauren Debetaz <Lauren.Debetaz@la.gov>
Date: November 27, 2024 at 5:16:28 PM CST
To: Staci Forbes <Staci.Forbes@la.gov>
Subject: Fwd: WRITTEN STATEMENT

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kennisha Smith <Kennisha.Smith@la.gov>
Date: November 27, 2024 at 5:05:45 PM CST
To: Lauren Debetaz <Lauren.Debetaz@la.gov>, "Brittney Young (DPS)" <Brittney.Young@la.gov>
Subject: WRITTEN STATEMENT

Good Evening

It all started yesterday when I took Lisbon to HR on 11/26/2024 around 3:50Pm
Once we came back down stairs Dara immediately approach me walking from the back of the office
Stating where have we been (IT WAS NOT WHAT SHE SAID IT IS HOW SHE SAID IT) she is quick to say that is how
She talk but the moment I talk like that I am being DISRESEPECTUL she stated over and over that is how she have gotten in trouble
Before by letting someone go upstairs and did not let her know
On today 11/27/2025 I had called Lauren because Dawn said some of the VIU probably can leave as long as the lines are covered
But of course we will have to check with Lauren and Dara And seem like that was a problem that I checked with Lauren
So words was passed she went into her office and shut(Slammed) the door After that I got up and ask her can me and Rylee switch seats
Seem like that was a problem she told me go up the chain since you just called LAUREN at this put I was at her door she got up out of her chair and Pushed my hand off of the door stating GET OUT OF HER OFFICE and started closing the door

IN ORDER TO GET RESEPECT YOU HAVE TO GIVE RESPECT!!!!
I HAVE BEEN WORKING FOR OMV GOING ON 17 YEARS I NEVER HAD THIS PROBLEM
BEFORE!!!!!!

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!!!!