

DISCHARGE NOTICE

Distribute a copy to:

- Employee
- Employee Representative
- Department File
- Employees' Retirement System
- Dept. of Employee Relations – send within 48 hours to DERpersonnelforms@milwaukee.gov

Employee:	Lakena Cornelius	Employee ID No.:	031449
Department:	Health	Race:	Black
		Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Female
Division:	Clinical Services	Div. No.:	3814
		Payroll Loc. No.:	381 54
Job Title:	Medical Assistant	Immediate Supervisor:	Corey McVey

In accordance with City Service Commission Rules, you are hereby discharged effective at 9:00 (am / pm) on 8/27/2025 for violating Rule XIV, Section 12, Paragraph I, J, Q of the City Service Rules , City of Milwaukee Violence Prevention Policy, City of Milwaukee Anti-harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy, and the Milwaukee Health Department's Standards of Workplace Behavior . You have three days from the receipt of this notice to file an appeal. See Right of Appeal information below.

I. Description of Offense:

On July 23, 2025, Lakena Cornelius yelled at her supervisor while standing in the doorway of their office. During the investigation into the allegations it was disclosed that Lakena has talked about having a concealed carry weapon in staff meetings and made statement related to having the weapon "they don't know I pack". The statements were made following incidents in which Lakena was upset.

Given the multiple eye witnesses to Lakena's behavior on the date in question, it is believed to be accurate that she was yelling and standing in the doorway of her supervisor's office.

Regarding the concealed carry weapon, Lakena denied the allegation of having a concealed carry weapon in the workplace, although she discussed having one and no longer carrying it, after denying having one. Five witnesses confirmed Lakena has talked about having a concealed carry weapon. Three of the witnesses have heard Lakena state, "they don't know I'm packing".

During the pre-discharge meeting, Lakena admitted to her behavior being bullying in nature and inappropriate for the workplace.

Given the circumstances of the incident, the witnesses statements, we find there was a violation of the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy, City of Milwaukee Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy, the MHD handbook (Standards of Workplace Behavior) and City Service Rules, Rule XIV, Sections i, j, and q.

We are discharging Lakena from employment as of 4 pm on Wednesday, August 27, 2025.

II. Previous Disciplinary Actions including Warning Letters:

11/2024 – counseling and coaching session related to workplace altercation and appropriate workplace behavior. Referral to EAP and review of the Standards of Workplace Behavior document.
2/2025 - Verbal warning about call in procedures.

DATES REQUIRED:

1. Date of investigatory meeting: 8/5/2025-8/15/2025

Reporting Authority Signature:

Signed by:

Jefflyn Brown

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<p>2. Date Discharge notice was provided to the employee or notice was mailed to employee: Date: 8/28/2025</p>	<p>Please print name: Jefflyn Brown</p>
<p>RIGHT OF APPEAL: Regularly appointed Civil Service employees (those who have completed their probationary period) may appeal in writing to the City Service Commission within three days of receipt of this notice. Employees of a department under the supervision of a board or commission of three or more members must appeal to that board or commission.</p>	<p>Title: Deputy Commissioner of Clinical Services</p>
<p>NOTE: If you have been issued an employee identification card, it must be turned in to your supervisor before your final paycheck will be released.</p>	<p>Date: 8/27/2025</p>
	<p>Appointing Authority Signature: Signed by: <i>Michael F Totoraitis</i> 0484CE82C62F45F...</p>
	<p>Please print name: Michael F Totoraitis</p>
	<p>Title: Commissioner of Health</p>
	<p>Date: 8/27/2025</p>



Department of Employee Relations

City Service Commission
APPEAL OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION FORM

Pursuant to Rule XIV (Discharge, Appeal, Hearing), Section 2 of the Rules of the Board of City Service Commissioners (the Commission), a regularly appointed employee who has passed his/her probationary period may appeal a discharge, reduction (involuntary demotion), a second suspension within six months of a former one or any suspension exceeding fifteen working days in length.

Appellants are encouraged to review the Guidelines for Disciplinary Appeals to the City Service Commission located at http://city.milwaukee.gov/der/csc/FormsDocs

Please complete the form below to appeal a qualifying disciplinary action.

I appeal the following disciplinary action, pursuant to Rule XIV, Section 2 of the Rules of the Board of City Service Commissioners (check one):

- Discharge (checked)
Reduction in classification (involuntary demotion)
Second suspension within six months of a former one (Date of 1st suspension)
Suspension exceeding 15 days

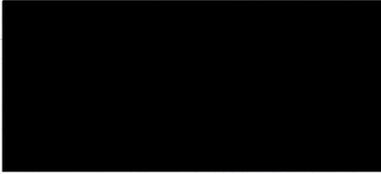
I received written notification of the disciplinary action that I am appealing on: 8/27/25. Please attach the disciplinary notice for the action that you are appealing. Please attach a brief statement indicating the basis of your appeal.

This appeal is dated this 29 day of August, 2025.

Signature of appellant:

Table with 2 columns: Label (Name of appellant, Department, etc.) and Value (Lakera N. Cornelius, Sexual Health, etc.)

Lakena N. Cornelius



APPEAL OF DISCHARGE

This letter formally appeals the decision to terminate employment. Registered Medical Assistant at Keenan Health Center on August 27, 2025.

I believe that the decision to terminate my employment was unfair, and I am requesting a review of my case for the following reasons.

- Insufficient Evidence
- Harassment
- Discrimination
- Disparaging of my Character
- Harsh and Disproportionate Punishment

It was stated that multiple eyewitnesses observed the incident on 7/23/25, It was stated that five eyewitnesses heard me speak of having a concealed weapon in a staff meeting, it was stated three eyewitnesses heard me say "I was or be packing" all the evidence that *has been brought against me is all hearsay, which is a rumor this information was told to someone, and then told to another person.* An eyewitness is someone who witnesses an incident and tells what they witnessed not through a third party. Hearsay, nor eyewitness statements aren't reliable or accurate for various reasons personal feelings, dislike, jealousy, and many other reasons. *There was never actual evidence of any of the allegations made against me.*

I have reached out to HR on several occasions about my supervisors' behavior, nothing was ever done. Him coming to my desk several times a day reminding me of my job, him yelling my name in the hall outside the ladies' room while I am inside the ladies' room, requesting me to find him each morning when I arrive so that I am considered present, him stating he stands at the door to watch to see what time I make it to work, constantly harassing me regarding using my FMLA and the protocol to the point I received a write up, which I appealed and it was over turned, and even still leading up to the day of question he was harassing me (I will attach the text message)

These things were never considered bullying or harassment when they were being done to me, but now that he has feelings of indifference I am being accused of being a bully, and harassment. I never admitted to any allegations of being or exemplifying behavior as a bully. I made a statement in hopes of clearing the rumors that I heard that came directly from Lindsay in the meeting "all your co-workers are afraid to come to you, HR do not want to return your emails because of the nasty aggressive emails you send to them" I tried to explain that I felt those were allegations of being a bully and that not who or what I am.

I never talked about having a weapon until asked, and I do not understand why I was ever asked if I own a firearm, but I answered the question and proceeded to say I have not carried it in a while because of personal reasons.

I never talked about having a firearm in a staff meeting. The meeting was about firearms, and patients coming into the clinic with theirs. Management was saying we could take them and lock them up until their visits are over, and I said, "that is not legal firearms are not permitted in a city building" and why would we openly let clients know we are ok with them coming into the building with them. I also said if we do that we may as well allow staff to bring theirs and lock them up as well.

On 7/23/25 when asked by others what happened the entire incident was exaggerated. I was in no way aggressive. I walked to my supervisor's office and asked him if I could speak with him, he said yes, we began to talk, while we were talking, I got emotional and started to cry. My voice got elevated as I started to say to him "Why do you keep picking on me please, please just leave me alone. I was never in his face near him, never used foul language or showed aggression or physical force in any way. The only thing I did was allow my emotions to get the best of me, which was an emotional response from me feeling singled out, bullied and discriminated against and that caused my voice to become elevated. I never said the behavior was appropriate, this is why I apologized, but I did not bully anyone.

Per the Discharge letter it states two dates 11/24 I was referred to EAP for an incident involving another employee does this make me a monster out of 7 years this is the first time this has happened. On 2/25 I was giving a warning about the call in procedure the same call in procedure that has been talked about every since I have had FMLA. The same call in procedure that caused me to be written up and it to be overturned. The same call in procedure that I was told I was using the correct method per an email from Lindsay that I will attach, but yet I am still being harassed about this incident even leading up to the day in question, and this is the reason I have FMLA .

I am not trying to act as if I am a perfect employee, but I am not what these allegations are making it seem I am. I do not understand why HR has tried to paint an image of me as being angry and having a firearm. I am very emotionally disturbed by these allegations. I feel that this is discrimination. I am not sure if it is because I am an own a firearm, or if it is because

of what my son is going through, but however it is terrible to paint such a picture of someone with no evidence to support it.

I believe that dismissal is an excessively severe penalty, especially given my number of years of service and the fact that I reached out to HR begging for someone to step in and help, but that did not happen until someone else was being affected. I am asking for the discharge to be reversed, and for my name to be cleared.

Thank you
Lakena N. Cornelius