

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES
AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT

DCD
(LEGAL)

The employment-at-will doctrine is the law of Texas, under which an employer has no duty to an employee regarding continuation of employment. Jones v. Legal Copy, Inc., 846 S.W.2d 922 [Tex. App.—Houston [1st Dist.] 1993, no writ]

The employment-at-will doctrine places no duties on an employer regarding an employee's continued employment and thus bars contract and tort claims based on the decision to discharge an employee. Sabine Pilot Serv., Inc. v. Hauck, 687 S.W.2d 733 (Tex. 1985)

In Texas, at-will employment is presumed unless shown otherwise. Gonzales v. Galveston Ind. Sch. Dist., 865 F.Supp. 1241 (S.D. Tex. 1994)

Employment for an indefinite term may be terminated at-will and without cause, except as otherwise provided by law. Garcia v. Reeves County, Texas, 32 F.3d 200 (5th Cir. 1994); Irby v. Sullivan, 737 F.2d 1418 (5th Cir. 1984); Winters v. Houston Chronicle Pub. Co., 795 S.W.2d 723 (Tex. 1990)

EXCEPTION

An at-will employee cannot be discharged if the sole reason for the discharge was that the employee refused to perform an illegal act. Sabine Pilot Serv., Inc. v. Hauck, 687 S.W.2d 733 (Tex. 1985) [See DG, DGA, DGB for other exceptions]

NEPOTISM

A superintendent to whom the Board has delegated final hiring authority to select personnel is a "public official" with appointment authority for purposes of the nepotism laws. *Atty. Gen. Op. GA-123 (2003)* [See DBE]

DISMISSAL
PROCEDURE

An at-will employment relationship, standing alone without benefit of recognized exception, triggers no due process requirement nor right. Mott v. Montgomery County, 882 S.W.2d 635, 638 (Tex. App.—Beaumont 1994, writ denied)

Termination of employment is a condition of work that is a proper subject for the grievance process. Fibreboard Paper Products Corp. v. National Labor Relations Board, 379 U.S. 203 (1984); Sayre v. Mullins, 681 S.W.2d 25 (Tex. 1984) [See DGBA]

NOTICE TO THE
COMMISSIONER

See policy DF regarding circumstances under which a certified paraprofessional employee's dismissal will be reported to the Commissioner.