

PERSONNEL

Harassment in the Workplace

Sexual Harassment is Illegal

Harassment of an employee by a supervisor or co-worker on the basis of sex creates a harmful working environment and is illegal under state and federal law. It is the policy of the Board to maintain a working environment free from harassment, insults or intimidation on the basis of an employee's sex. Verbal or physical conduct by a supervisor or co-worker relating to an employee's sex which has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, unreasonably interfering with the employee's work performance, or adversely affecting the employee's employment opportunities is prohibited.

While it is difficult to define sexual harassment precisely, it does include any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Although not an exhaustive list, the following are examples of the type of conduct prohibited by the policy against sexual harassment:

1. Unwelcome sexual advances from a co-worker or supervisor, such as unwanted hugs, touches, or kisses;
2. Unwelcome attention of a sexual nature, such as degrading, suggestive or lewd remarks or noises;
3. Dirty jokes, derogatory or pornographic posters, cartoons or drawings;
and

4. The threat or suggestion that continued employment, advancement, assignment or earnings depend on whether or not the employee will submit to or tolerate harassment.

Any infraction of this policy by supervisors or co-workers should be reported immediately to the Superintendent or his/her designee. Retaliation against any employee for complaining about sexual harassment is prohibited under this policy and illegal under state and federal law. Violations of this policy will not be permitted and may result in discipline up to and including discharge from employment. Individuals who engage in acts of sexual harassment may also be subject to civil and criminal penalties.

Any employee who believes that he or she has been harassed in the workplace in violation of this policy may also file a complaint with the Connecticut Commission of Human Rights and Opportunities, 100 Broadway, City Hall, Norwich, Ct 06360, (Telephone Number 886-5703), and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Boston Area Office, One Congress Street, Boston, MA 02114, (Telephone Number 617-565-3200). Connecticut law requires that a formal written complaint be filed with the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities within 180 days of the date when the alleged harassment occurred. Remedies for sexual harassment include cease and desist orders, back pay, compensatory damages, hiring, promotion or reinstatement.

Note: This policy is limited to addressing sexual harassment. Other types of harassment also are prohibited by law, such as harassment on the basis of sexual orientation, race, color, religious creed, marital status, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, or age.

Legal References:

Connecticut General Statutes: Section 46a-60(8)

ADOPTED March 14, 2002

REVISED _____