

450 - WORKPLACE HARASSMENT PREVENTION

1.0 Purpose:

The William Shore Metropolitan Park District (District) is committed to insuring that the practices and conduct of all its employees comply with the requirements of federal law and state laws against employment discrimination. To that end, the District expects all employees to work in a manner that respects the feelings and dignity of their co-workers. It is the policy of the District that all employees have the right to work in an environment free from harassment based upon their race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, marital status, veterans' status, sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected status or characteristic. Any such harassment of employees by their co-workers or supervisors will not be tolerated by the District.

2.0 Definitions:

For the purpose of this policy, "sexual harassment" is unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that affects terms and conditions of employment. Sexual harassment includes (1) sexual advances and other verbal or physical conduct where submission to the advances or conduct is made a term or condition of employment or is used as the basis for employment decisions and (2) unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that interferes with an employee's work or creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive work environment.

Some examples of behavior that could constitute or contribute to sexual harassment include but are not limited to:

- Unwelcome or unwanted flirtations, propositions, or advances. This includes patting, pinching, brushing up against, hugging, cornering, kissing, fondling, putting ones' arm around another, or any other similar physical contact considered unacceptable by another individual.
- Requests or demands for sexual favors. This includes subtle or blatant expectations, pressures, or requests for any type of sexual favor accompanied by an implied or stated promise of preferential treatment or negative consequences concerning an individual's employment.
- Verbal abuse or kidding that is sexually oriented and considered unacceptable by another individual. This includes comments about an individual's body or appearance when such comments go beyond an isolated innocuous compliment; off-color jokes or offensive language; or any other tasteless, sexually oriented comments, innuendoes, or offensive actions, including leering, whistling, or gesturing.
- Participation in fostering a work environment that is generally intimidating, hostile, or offensive because of unwelcome or unwanted sexually oriented conversation, office décor, suggestions, requests, demands, physical contacts, or attention.

For the purpose of this policy, "other harassment" (nonsexual) is defined as verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of such individual's protected status or characteristics such as his/her race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability that:

- Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment; or
- Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or
- Otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Some examples of behavior that could constitute or contribute to harassment include but are not limited to: using epithets, slurs, or negative stereotypes; threatening, intimidating, or engaging in hostile acts that relate to protected status or characteristics such as those referred to above; jokes or pranks that refer to

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or denigrate a protected status; or placing on walls, bulletin boards, or elsewhere on the work premises or circulating in the workplace written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward a person or group because of a protected characteristic.

3.0 Complaint Process

An employee who feels harassed should immediately tell the offending individual how they feel and ask them to stop. If that does not work or if the employee is uncomfortable confronting the offending individual, the employee should report the incident promptly. A complaint can be made verbally or in writing to the employee's supervisor or the employee's department head (see Attachment A). In addition to or as an alternative, as the employee may wish, the complaint may be brought to the attention of the Executive Director or Aquatics Manager.

The complaint form available from the Supervisor or Executive Director (see Attachment A) may be used to file a written complaint hereunder. A harassment complaint will be handled as follows:

- Every complaint is to be reported promptly to the Executive Director either by the complainant or by the person receiving the complaint.
- The complaint will be immediately investigated, normally by the Executive Director. However, choice of investigator, level of formality, and the procedures used in the investigation may vary, depending upon the nature of the allegations and full circumstances of the situation, including the context in which the alleged incidents occurred.
- Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent practical and consistent with the District need to undertake a full investigation.
- There shall be no retaliation by the District its officers, elected officials, supervisors, or other employees toward any employee bringing a complaint in good faith or cooperating with the investigation of a harassment complaint.
- Where the investigation confirms the allegations, the District will take prompt corrective action and, where appropriate, discipline the offending individual. Discipline may include verbal and written reprimands, professional counseling, reassignment, or other appropriate action, up to and including termination. The affected individuals will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.
- There may be instances in which an employee reporting harassment seeks only to discuss the matter informally and does not wish the District to undertake an investigation or to take further steps. In such situations, the District may arrange some informal mechanism for resolving the issues. However, an individual reporting harassment should be aware that the District may decide it must take action to address the harassment beyond informal means.

The Supervisors shall be responsible for disseminating information on the District Policy Against Workplace Harassment, for developing training programs and guidelines for preventing sexual or other forms of harassment, and for investigating and resolving allegations of harassment.

All officers, supervisors, and managers (generally, "supervisors") are assigned responsibility for implementing this policy, ensuring compliance with and knowledge of its terms, and for taking immediate and appropriate corrective action if they witness inappropriate behavior or receive a complaint. Supervisors must open and maintain channels of communication to permit employees to raise concerns of sexual or other workplace harassment without fear of retaliation, stop any observed harassment, and treat harassment matters with sensitivity, confidentiality, and objectivity. A supervisor's failure to carry out these responsibilities may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

Attachment A

William Shore Metropolitan Park District Harassment Complaint Form

Name of employee _____

Name of offending employee _____

Please detail below all incidents of improper conduct, including the dates and where each incident of improper conduct occurred (*continue on back or separate sheet if necessary*):

Other persons present:
What response did you make to the conduct in question?

What action do you want the William Shore Metropolitan Park District to take?

Do you believe you can continue to work with this person during an investigation?

This complaint form shall be kept CONFIDENTIAL to the extent practical and consistent with the William Shore Metropolitan Park District need to undertake a full investigation.

_____/_____/_____
Date Signature Print Name

Please provide this form to your supervisor, the department head or Executive Director. The William Shore Metropolitan Park District is firmly committed in preventing sexual or other harassment in the workplace. If you believe that you are in any way retaliated against or affected in your employment as a result of filing a complaint of sexual or other harassment, please promptly complete another complaint form and submit it to the William Shore Metropolitan Park District in the same manner as this form.