



SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Purpose

The Northwest Louisiana Council of Governments (NLCOG), position is that sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the employment relationship. All employees have the right to work in an environment free from all forms of discrimination and conduct which can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive, including sexual harassment. Anyone engaging in harassing conduct will be subject to discipline, ranging from a warning to termination.

Definition

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwanted physical, verbal or visual sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other sexually oriented conduct which is offensive or objectionable to the recipient, including, but not limited to: epithets, derogatory or suggestive comments, slurs or gestures and offensive posters, cartoons, pictures, or drawings.

Conduct

Unwelcome sexual advances (either verbal or physical), requests for favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- submission to such conduct is either an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment (e.g., promotion, training, timekeeping, or overtime assignments)
- submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for making employment decisions (hiring, promotion, termination)
- the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment
- refers to behavior that is not welcome, that is personally offensive, that debilitates morale, and that, therefore, interferes with work effectiveness.

Employer's Responsibility

NLCOG wants you to have a work environment free of sexual harassment by management personnel, by your coworkers and by others with whom you must interact in the course of your work as a NLCOG employee. Sexual harassment is specifically prohibited as unlawful and as a violation of NLCOG's policy. NLCOG is responsible for preventing sexual harassment in the workplace, for taking immediate corrective action to stop sexual harassment in the workplace and for promptly investigating any allegation of work-related sexual harassment.

Complaint Procedure

If you experience or witness sexual harassment in the workplace, report it immediately to that person's supervisor. All allegations of sexual harassment will be quickly investigated. To the extent possible, your confidentiality and that of any witnesses and the alleged harasser will be protected against unnecessary disclosure. When the investigation is completed, you will be informed of the outcome of that investigation.

Retaliation Prohibited

NLCOG will permit no employment-based retaliation against anyone who brings a complaint of sexual harassment or who speaks as a witness in the investigation of a complaint of sexual harassment.

Training

NLCOG employees are required to complete a minimum of one hour of education and training on Sexual Harassment. Employees with a role of director, supervisor or administrator are required to take one hour of Sexual Harassment designed for Supervisor rolls.

Violations

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated at NLCOG. If an investigation of any allegation of sexual harassment shows that harassing behavior has taken place, the harasser will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Potential Violations made by an employee other than the Executive Director will be referred to the Executive Director and NLCOG Legal Counsel for further review. Upon review the Executive Director in consultation with NLCOG Legal Counsel will report the violation to the Board of Directors along with a determination of whether suspension, termination or other disciplinary actions are needed. All staff violations will be reported to the NLCOG Board of Directors in executive session.

Potential Violations made by the Executive Director will be referred to the Chair of the Board of Directors and NLCOG Legal Counsel for further review. Upon review the Board of Directors in consultation with Legal Counsel will determine whether suspension, termination or other disciplinary actions are needed. All staff violations will be reported to the NLCOG Board of Directors in executive session.

Northwest Louisiana Council of Governments
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