



Safeguarding God's People in the Workplace

Policies Prohibiting Sexual Harassment

epicenter.org/safeguarding
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2021

Sexual Harassment Policy for Employees and Supervisors

The Episcopal Diocese of Texas prohibits and will not tolerate sexual harassment of personnel in any diocesan entity.

A. Definition

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature in which:

1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or relationship with an entity in the diocese;
2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by the individual is used as a basis for employment or other decisions affecting that person; or
3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or abusive working environment.

B. Examples of Sexual Harassment

Examples of unwelcome conduct which may constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

Physical Conduct

- Sexual touching
- Kissing
- Unwelcome casual hugs
- Massaging necks, shoulders, backs
- Being in someone else's "space;"
- Unwelcome displays of romantic or sexual affection
- Aggressive physical contact or assault
- Leering
- Obscene or vulgar gestures including gestures simulating sexual acts, "shooting the finger," kissing the air toward someone, or licking the lips in a sexually suggestive or provocative manner

Verbal

- Off-color jokes
- Sexual language or references
- Proposition
- Suggestive or insulting sounds
- References of a sexual nature about any person
- Gossip/speculation about a person's sexuality, sexual practices, pregnancy, or virility
- Request for dates
- Remarks about anatomy
- Bragging about sexual conquest

- Inquiries about sexual conduct
- Terms of endearment
- Use of curse words or vulgarity
- Sexual innuendo

Visual and Non-Verbal

- Posters
- Photographs
- Cartoons or drawings, including those that depict nudity, sex acts, provocative poses, etc.
- Texts, email messages, or electronic displays of a sexual nature including inappropriate wallpaper, screensavers, or other graphics
- Possession of pornography or inappropriate materials of a sexual nature on the property of a diocesan entity or on its computers, or the display, duplication, or transmission of pornography or such materials

C. Certification

Within 30 days of hire or the beginning of service, the following individuals **must** (1) receive a copy of the *Policies Prohibiting Sexual Harassment*; (2) view the Safeguarding God's People in the Workplace [Harassment Prevention Training Video](#), and (3) complete and sign the acknowledgment form attached to the policies and return it to their employer. Recertification is required every 5 years.

- Heads of congregations, schools, and organizations
- Supervisors of employees and volunteers
- Members of the diocesan Disciplinary Board
- Employees
- Volunteers who function as staff

D. Reporting

Anyone who believes he or she has been a victim of any form of sexual harassment must promptly report it to one or more of the following:

- A supervisor
- Anyone in the supervisory chain
- The head of the congregation, school, or organization
- A warden of a congregation
- Safeguarding Minister
 - The Rev. Canon Lisa Hines
 - 510 Rathervue Pl, Austin, Texas 78705
 - report@epicenter.org or lhines@epicenter.org
 - 512-478-0580; Secure Fax: 866-241-7050
- Canon to the Ordinary
 - The Rev. Canon Christine Faulstich
 - 1225 Texas Ave. Houston, TX 77002
 - report@epicenter.org or cfaulstich@epicenter.org
 - 1-800-318-4452

Complaints of sexual harassment may be submitted by phone, email, letter, fax, or in-person. For assistance regarding what information to include in the report, see [Confidential Notice of Concern](#).

All supervisors and decision-makers are required to report all formal and informal complaints, as well as any suspected or known policy violations, immediately to head of the congregation, school, or organization as well as to the Safeguarding Minister.

An individual may, but is not required, to speak to the person whose conduct is objectionable in an attempt to resolve the situation. However, no one is ever required to complain to the person who is accused of the offensive conduct and should only approach the person engaging in the unwelcome conduct if he or she is comfortable doing so. No one is required to complain to his or her supervisor or within his or her chain of command but may utilize the other reporting options.

E. Investigation

All complaints of sexual harassment will be promptly investigated. Complaints will be handled on a confidential basis, except to the extent necessary to conduct a proper investigation. If the investigation substantiates the complaint, immediate corrective action designed to stop the harassment and prevent its reoccurrence, up to and including termination of employment, will be taken.

F. Retaliation

Any person who in good faith reports sexual harassment or provides information related to a complaint will not be retaliated against or adversely treated with respect to terms and conditions of employment as a result of making a report or providing information. Anyone who believes that he or she has been subjected to retaliation in violation of this policy should report it immediately, following the process outlined above. Persons who are found to have engaged in retaliation will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

G. Harassment and Discrimination Policy

The Episcopal Diocese of Texas prohibits discrimination or harassment based on race, color, sex (including sexual orientation or sexual identity), national origin, age, religion, or disability toward any person. To report discrimination or harassment based on any of these protected classes, please follow the guidelines for reporting sexual harassment. All complaints will be promptly investigated, and corrective action designed to stop the harassment or discrimination will be taken.

Acknowledgment of Receipt and Review of Sexual Harassment Prevention Policies

I, (print name) _____,

employed by (ministry) _____,

acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the *Policies Prohibiting Sexual Harassment* of The Episcopal Diocese of Texas.

I commit myself to following these policies faithfully by treating my fellow workers with honor and respect at all times and by promptly reporting any policy violations that come to my attention.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

This acknowledgment form is to be printed, completed, and returned to the Safeguarding Records Administrator (SRA) at the diocesan entity for which you work.

**Note to SRA: upload the signed form and training session Sign Out Sheet to SRS.*