

St. Charles Parish Assessment District Sexual Harassment Policy

POLICY

It is the policy of the St. Charles Parish Assessment District, operating as the St. Charles Parish Assessor's Office, that all employees have a right to work in an environment free from sexual harassment. Conduct prohibited by this policy is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as business trips, business meetings and business related social events. Engagement by any employee in any form of sexual harassment is strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated.

DEFINITIONS

Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle to not-so-subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. The harasser can be a supervisor, co-worker, fellow employee, or a non-employee who has a business relationship with the Assessor's Office. Sexual harassment exists when there are unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment,
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for any employment decision affecting any individual,
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment, or
- The behavior persists despite objection by the person to whom the conduct is directed.

Unwelcome actions such as the following are inappropriate and depending on the circumstances, may in and of themselves meet the definition of sexual harassment or contribute to a hostile work environment (the following are a few examples and are not all-inclusive):

- Sexual pranks, or repeated sexual teasing, jokes or innuendo;
- Lewd comments about an individual's body;
- Touching or grabbing of a sexual nature;
- Talking about one's sexual activity in front of others;
- Repeatedly cornering, leaning in, or standing too close to or brushing up against a person;
- Repeatedly asking a person to socialize during off-duty hours when the person has said no or has indicated he or she is not interested;
- Giving gifts or leaving objects that are sexually suggestive;
- Making or posing sexually demeaning or offensive pictures, cartoons or other materials in the workplace;
- Pressure for unnecessary personal interaction;
- Off-duty, unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that affects the work environment.

Sexual statements can be made in person, in writing, or electronically, such as email, instant messaging, text messaging, blogs, web pages, social media, etc. Sexual harassment does not require the intent to

offend. Inappropriate conduct meant as a joke, prank, or even a compliment can lead to, and contribute to, harassment.

RESPONSIBILITIES

When an allegation of sexual harassment has been received, or there is reason to believe sexual harassment is occurring, immediate and appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that the matter is promptly investigated and addressed. The Assessor's Office is committed to take appropriate action, even if the individual does not wish to file a formal complaint.

Any employee who knows or reasonably believes that sexual harassment is occurring or has occurred whether to the employee directly or to someone else, is obligated to inform their Supervisor or the Chief Deputy Assessor immediately.

Employees are responsible for cooperating fully with any investigation of a complaint of sexual harassment. Information related to complaints and investigations will remain confidential to the fullest extent possible. Employees cooperating in an investigation shall maintain the confidentiality of the investigation to protect the reputations of all involved.

Confidentiality is expected, but total confidentiality may not be guaranteed when investigating a sexual harassment complaint. Management may be required to inform those on a need-to-know basis of the details surrounding the complaint. Although confidentiality is expected, the witnesses and others questioned may not maintain total confidentiality. This should not deter filing complaints of sexual harassment. Confidentiality violations will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Charges of sexual harassment are serious charges, and employees should report incidents when they occur. However, due to the seriousness of these charges and the potential damage that could be done to those who are charged, employees shall refrain from making casual, misleading or false charges of such behavior. False and/or malicious complaints of sexual harassment may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

PROCEDURES:

If you feel that you have been subjected to sexual harassment or witnessed sexual harassment, you should do the following:

- Continue to report to work;
- Inform the person who has offended you that their actions are inappropriate and should be stopped, if you feel secure in doing so;
- Document the occurrence(s) with very specific facts, including names, dates, times, places, witnesses, etc.; and
- Report the action to your Supervisor or the Chief Deputy Assessor.

If the harasser is your Supervisor, skip the chain of command and report the complaint to the Chief Deputy Assessor or the Assessor immediately.

If the harasser is the Assessor, report the incident directly to the Chief Deputy Assessor.

Upon receiving a sexual harassment complaint, the Supervisor, Chief Deputy Assessor or Assessor will determine the appropriate investigative procedures and will notify the employee that the complaint has been received.

All actions taken in the investigative process shall be documented and kept in the investigative file.

Once the investigation has concluded, the Assessor will decide on a course of action. Discipline will be appropriate to the circumstances.

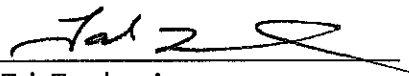
After the complaint has been resolved, the Assessor will periodically follow up with the employee(s) who filed the complaint to ensure that there is no continued or new sexual harassment occurring.

MANDATORY TRAINING

All employees are required to complete one hour of Sexual Harassment Training by December 31st of each year. The Administrative Assistant shall maintain records of compliance for each employee of the Assessor's Office.

RETALIATION

No employee who makes a good faith complaint under this policy, or who participates in an investigation of a charge made under this policy shall be adversely affected because of their complaint or participation. Acts of retaliation shall be reported immediately and will be promptly investigated and addressed.

Approved: 
Tab Troxler, Assessor
St. Charles Parish Assessment District

Date: Nov. 6, 2019