

Harassment

Effective: 01/01/02

Revised: 12/09/21

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Policy Number : 3.5

Policy

The Communications District is committed to providing a work environment that is free from harassment.

Harassment, in general, refers to behavior which is personally offensive, impairs morale, or interferes with the work effectiveness of employees.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, physical, or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when the conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment or the holding of office, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment and will not be tolerated;

It is unlawful to harass an applicant or employee because of that person's sex;

Both victim and the harasser can be either a woman or a man, and the victim and harasser can be the same sex;

Although the law doesn't prohibit simple teasing, offhand comments, or isolated incidents that are not very serious, harassment is illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or when it results in an adverse employment decision (such as the victim being fired or demoted);

The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or someone who is not an employee of the employer, such as a client or customer.

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Guidelines

Examples of Harassment

- **Harassment includes behavior which is personally offensive, impairs morale, or interferes with the work effectiveness of employees.**
- **Harassment includes “sexual harassment” such as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature.**
- **Harassment includes offensive remarks about a person’s sex. For example, it is illegal to harass a woman by making offensive comments about women in general.**
- **Harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, physical, or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when the conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment or the holding of office, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment**

If an employee believes that he or she has been subject to discriminatory practices which includes harassment by another employee, supervisor, client, vendor, or anyone else regardless of their working relationship, he or she has the right and responsibility to report their concerns immediately to the Washington Parish Communications District Board. This reporting can be done as per policy 3.6 Grievances if the employee so chooses.

The Communications District does not tolerate retaliation against an employee by any person under their control or influence for filing a bona fide complaint of discrimination or harassment, or for providing information in good faith regarding another employee’s complaint.

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When the Communications District receives a complaint, the complaint will be reported to the Chairperson of the Communication District board.

A Board designated trained person will :

- **Meet with the employee to explain the investigation process and interviews the employee regarding the nature of the harassment, including dates, times, and people involved.**
- **Interviews the alleged harasser and any witnesses**
- **Discuss findings with the Board to determine further action**
- **Reports findings back to the employee and the alleged harasser**

Confidentiality is critical, and only those directly involved are to be informed concerning this situation.

Based on findings, appropriate action will be taken and may include suspension without pay or discharge.

Additional Requirements

- **The Director of the Washington Parish Communications District shall ensure that each public servant in the agency is notified of the agency's policy against sexual harassment and the mandatory training requirement on preventing sexual harassment**
- **The Director of the Washington Parish Communications District shall ensure that its policy against sexual harassment and its complaint procedure is prominently posted on its website**

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- **The Director of the Washington Parish Communications District shall compile an annual report by February first of each year containing information from the previous calendar year regarding his agency's compliance, including:**
 - **The number and percentage of public servants in his agency who have completed the training requirements;**
 - **The number of sexual harassment complaints received by his agency;**
 - **The number of complaints which resulted in a finding that sexual harassment occurred;**
 - **The number of complaints in which the finding of sexual harassment resulted in discipline or corrective action; and**
 - **The amount of time it took to resolve each complaint.**
- **These reports shall be public record and available to the public in the manner provided by the Public Records Law.**

References

Louisiana R.S. 42:341-344, or “Prevention of Sexual Harassment,” became effective January 1, 2019. The provisions of this law impact all public officers and employees, departments, offices, divisions, agencies, commissions, boards, committees, and other organizational units of the State of Louisiana or political subdivisions.

If you believe that you have been discriminated against at work because of your race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information, you can file a Charge of Discrimination via <https://publicportal.eeoc.gov/Portal/Login.aspx>

A charge of discrimination is a signed statement asserting that an employer, union or labor organization engaged in employment discrimination. It requests the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to take remedial action.

Washington Parish Communications District
2021 Report

- **The number and percentage of public servants in the agency who have completed the training requirements: 9 persons, 90 per cent**
- **The number of sexual harassment complaints received by the agency: 0**
- **The number of complaints which resulted in a finding that sexual harassment occurred: 0**
- **The number of complaints in which the finding of sexual harassment resulted in discipline or corrective action: 0**
- **The amount of time it took to resolve each complaint: no complaints**