

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Harassment and Discrimination-Free Workplace

Policy 7-4

Policy

All employees have a right to a work environment characterized by respect and dignity. The Department of Children and Families shall expect that all employees conduct themselves in a manner that reflects a respectful and dignified environment and one free from conduct that could be considered harassing, coercive or discriminatory. Such conduct, when based on a person's membership in a protected class, is in violation not only of this policy but may also constitute a violation of state and federal statutes.

Supervisors and managers shall be responsible for ensuring that the work environment over which they have authority is free of harassing and discriminatory conduct, for addressing any acts of which they become aware that are in violation of this policy, and for reporting violations as required by this policy.

Definitions

Protected class means those persons identified in state and federal law with characteristics that may be the basis of discriminatory acts including race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, genetic makeup, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, intellectual disability, mental disability, learning disability or physical disability including but not limited to blindness.

Sexual harassment means a form of sexual discrimination that is characterized by unwelcome sexual advances or a request for sexual favors or any conduct of a sexual nature when: a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions; or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Workplace means any location owned, operated or controlled by the State of Connecticut, including state vehicles, and any other location where state business is conducted including areas through which an employee travels while on state time to or from such workplace.

Reporting Requirements

Any employee who is affected by acts or discrimination, harassment or sexual harassment in violation of this policy is encouraged to report such acts to any DCF supervisor or manager, Human Resource Management, the Office of Diversity and Equity or the Commissioner's office. Such reports may be made verbally or in writing.

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Reporting Requirements (continued)

Employees should be aware that any act of harassment or discrimination impacts not only them, but the workplace overall and, therefore, will be acted on. Employees cannot expect a supervisor or manager of DCF to not report the matter for further review by the Office of Diversity and Equity or Human Resource Management.

Any supervisor, manager or employee of Human Resource Management or the Commissioner's Office who receives a complaint of discrimination or sexual harassment shall immediately report the complaint to the Office of Diversity and Equity, which shall initiate contact with the employee and conduct a thorough investigation of the allegations. Reports that are not submitted in writing by the complainant shall be reduced to writing by the person receiving the complaint. When complaints are not made through Human Resource Management, the Office of Diversity and Equity shall immediately inform the Director of Human Resource Management of the complaint and coordinate the response.

Any supervisor, manager or employee of Human Resource Management or the Commissioner's Office who, through any means whether written, verbal or through observation, becomes aware of conduct that has the potential to violate this policy shall immediately report that conduct to the Office of Diversity and Equity for consideration of investigation and or resolution, regardless of whether a complaint has been raised or whether the employee has requested that the matter remain confidential. When complaints are not made through Human Resource Management, the Office of Diversity and Equity shall immediately inform the Director of Human Resource Management of the complaint and coordinate a response.

Cross reference: [DCF Policy 9-1](#), "Discrimination Complaints."
