

PLAQUEMINES PARISH GOVERNMENT

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

It is the policy of Plaquemines Parish Government that all employees should be able to enjoy a work environment free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment. Sexual Harassment is defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical 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 affecting such individual, or
- C. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonable interference with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment and shall not be tolerated.

Harassment, other than Sexual Harassment, is addressed in separate policies. Plaquemines Parish Government prohibits any form of retaliation against employees for bringing bona fide complaints or providing information about harassment. However, if an investigation of a complaint shows the complaint or information was false, the individual who provided the information will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

This policy applies to all employees, supervisors, managers, vendors, service/sales representatives, and all others doing business with Plaquemines Parish Government.

1) POLICY OBJECTIVES:

- A. To provide a workplace that is free of any form of sexual harassment, and which is conducive to efficient, productive public service.
- B. To ensure that no employee, either male or female should be subjected to unsolicited, unwelcome, or offensive sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical.
- C. To provide for a procedure where employees may seek relief from all forms of sexual harassment without fear of retaliation.
- D. To provide corrective consequences to individuals found to be in violation of this policy.
- E. To ensure employees feel free to report sexual harassment by strictly prohibiting retaliation.

2) POLICY SCOPE:

Under no circumstances should an inappropriate situation be allowed to continue by not reporting it, regardless of the offending party. No Plaquemines Parish employee is exempt from the requirements of this policy.

A. Supervisor Responsibility:

All employees, supervisors, and appointing authorities are prohibited from involving themselves or other employees or persons in unwelcome conduct that constitutes sexual harassment. Violation of this policy will result in corrective administrative and/or corrective disciplinary action up to and including termination.

At a minimum, all allegations are to be reported to the Human Resources Manager.

Supervisors are also responsible to ensure that an employee who files a claim for Sexual Harassment remains free from any form of retaliation from any source for doing so.

B. Employee Responsibility:

All employees are responsible for conducting themselves in a courteous, civil, and respectful manner toward all persons. The use of crude, profane, vulgar, or discourteous language or unwelcome behavior toward supervisor, subordinate, a fellow employee, or toward any citizen, is strictly prohibited.

Any employee who is subjected to unwelcome, prohibited, or illegal sexual harassment, as specified in this policy, should promptly take the following steps:

1. Politely, but firmly, tell whoever is initiating the prohibited acts or behavior that it is offensive and/or unwelcome to immediately stop; and if it does not stop, or if acts committed already constitute sexual harassment, then as soon as possible, report the matter to your Department Director, the Human Resources Manager or his or her representative.

At any time, an employees has the right to discuss their complaint with anyone in higher management with whom they feel comfortable or with the Human Resources Manager.

2. The matter will be quickly, thoroughly, and impartially investigated. Confidentiality will be maintained to the greatest extent possible.
3. Those working outside the normal 8:00 to 4:30 hours, and those working on weekends and holidays, may report harassment by calling 504-297-5600 in order for the emergency operator to locate either your Director or the Human Resource Manager.
4. Parish management depends on all employees to assist in making sure that the commitments of this policy are fulfilled. Therefore, any person who witnesses or otherwise has knowledge of any improper conduct or discriminatory act is to promptly report it as set forth above.

C. Human Resources Manager Responsibility:

The Department of Human Resources may advise the employee how to file a grievance with the usual steps of the grievance procedure waived. It would automatically be filed with the Grievance Resolution Committee (GRC), who in turn will notify the proper supervisor or superintendent if applicable and necessary.

In all cases, the Human Resources Manager is responsible to ensure the matter is investigated and resolved in a quick, thorough, and impartial manner.

3) MANDATORY TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- A. All employees are mandated to complete a minimum of one (1) hour of education and training on preventing sexual harassment each full calendar year of public employment or term of office. The education and training may be received either in person or via the internet through training and education materials approved by the Human Resources department. Annual deadlines for such training will be set by the Human Resources department.

- B. Supervisors and any persons designated by Plaquemines Parish Government to accept or investigate a complaint of sexual harassment in the agency will be required to receive additional education and training.
- C. Employees will be notified of the mandatory training requirement. The Human Resources department shall be responsible for maintaining the compliance records of each Plaquemines Parish Government employee with the mandatory training requirement.

4) MANDATORY REPORTING:

Plaquemines Parish Government will compile an annual report by February first each year containing information from the previous calendar year regarding sexual harassment compliance, including:

- A. The number and percentage of Plaquemines Parish Government employees who completed the training requirements.
- B. The number of sexual harassment complaints received by Plaquemines Parish Government.
- C. The number of complaints which resulted in a finding that sexual harassment occurred.
- D. The number of complaints which resulted in discipline or corrective action.
- E. The amount of time it took to resolve each complaint.

5) SEXUAL HARASSMENT STATUTES:

Louisiana R.S. 42:341-344 or "Prevention of Sexual Harassment," became effective January 1, 2019.