

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY STATEMENT

The Office of Policy and Management (OPM) is committed to maintaining a workplace environment free of sexual harassment and intimidation. This policy applies to all individuals working for OPM (including but not limited to, OPM employees whether permanent or non-permanent, full or part-time, paid or unpaid, consultants, contracted individuals, volunteers, fellows or interns).

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or any other 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, fellowship or internship, (B) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for workplace decisions affecting such individual, 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 working environment.

Sexual harassment can encompass more than just physical contact such as touching. It can be demonstrated in both verbal communication (e.g., threats, sexual propositions/demands, gender based stereotypic comments, lewd comments, sexually explicit jokes and suggestive/insulting noises, referring to co-workers by "terms of endearment", inappropriately commenting about an individual's body or physical appearance, whistling or catcalling) and non-verbal communication (e.g., obscene gestures and displays of obscene materials in the work area, sexting, "elevator eyes" or leering, unnecessary or unwanted touching or physical interference with a person's movements, violating personal space and distributing sexually explicit jokes/stories/emails/cards).

Sexual harassment is a type of sex discrimination which is prohibited as an Unfair Employment Practice under C.G.S. Sec. 46a-60(b)(8) and violates the guidelines set forth by the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Any inappropriate and unwelcome behavior with a sexual overtone which causes a negative effect on a person's working environment is illegal under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, and will not be tolerated at OPM. All forms of sexually harassing conduct are illegal regardless of the degree of blatancy. This unacceptable conduct is not limited to such cases of discrimination involving females as targets, but can be female toward male or same gender harassment.

The agency is committed to creating and maintaining a professional work environment for all OPM employees whether permanent or non-permanent, full or part-time, paid or unpaid,

consultants, contracted individuals, volunteers, fellows and interns to whom this policy applies to.

In accordance with C.G.S. Sec. 46a-54(15) the agency:

- provides all new employees with a copy of information regarding the illegality of sexual harassment prevention and remedies available to victims;
- continues to provide to all new employees two (2) hours of sexual harassment training within six (6) months of their start date; and
- provides periodic supplemental training not less than every ten (10) years.

Any individual who believes that they have been subject to sexual harassment with regard to employment or fellowship/internship opportunities or to any program, service or activity at this agency may choose to file a complaint in accordance with the agency's Discrimination Complaint Procedure. If the Complainant prefers, they may report the matter directly to their supervisor. If the Complainant feels uncomfortable reporting the harassment to their supervisor, they should immediately report the matter to any other member of management.

A supervisor or manager who receives a complaint about sexual harassment, witnesses sexual harassment, becomes aware of or believes that someone is engaging in prohibited conduct shall immediately report it to the OPM Designated Equal Employment Opportunity Officer.

Failure of a manager or supervisor to take action upon witnessing or receiving a report of sexual harassment or sexual misconduct constitutes a violation of this policy and shall subject such manager or supervisor to disciplinary action.

Carolyn Kozak, OPM's Designated Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, will receive and investigate all complaints of sexual harassment in accordance with the agency's Discrimination Complaint Procedure. Upon receiving a complaint, the Designated Equal Employment Opportunity Officer will follow established procedures to determine whether there is evidence to support the allegation. If an investigation reveals the presence of sexual harassment, the individual behaving in such an inappropriate manner will be subject to progressive discipline.

In accordance with C.G.S. Sec. 46a-68(b)(4)(B), discrimination complaints based on sexual harassment made against the Secretary of OPM or OPM's Designated Equal Employment Opportunity Officer alleging that he/she directly or personally engaged in discriminatory

conduct, or discrimination complaints made by the Secretary of OPM or OPM's Designated Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, should be directed to OPM's General Counsel in accordance with the agency's Discrimination Complaint Procedure. Upon receiving a complaint, OPM's General Counsel will refer such complaint to the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) for review and, if appropriate, investigation by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS).

No individuals working for OPM will be coerced, intimidated, or retaliated against by OPM or any other individuals working for OPM for performing any of the duties and responsibilities of developing and implementing the agency's affirmative action plan. Any such individual so aggrieved may file a complaint with CHRO. Furthermore, no individuals working for OPM will be retaliated or discriminated against by OPM or any other individuals working for OPM for opposing any discriminatory employment or fellowship/internship practice or for exercising their right to file or participate in the processing of a discrimination complaint.

Sexual harassment is a serious issue. Any individual working for OPM who is not sure how to deal with such an issue is encouraged to speak to OPM's Designated Equal Employment Opportunity Officer who will help deal with the matter and assist in resolving it. Sexual harassment is a workplace issue to be dealt with in a sensitive and structured way. Unfounded allegations of sexual harassment may unduly damage the reputation of others.

Every individual working for OPM has an absolute right to be treated professionally. We expect all individuals working for OPM to be sensitive to this issue and to cooperate in creating a work environment free of any form of sexual harassment.

 9-23-25

Jeffrey R. Beckham
Secretary

Date