



ESTABLISHED 1659

CITY OF NORWICH
CONNECTICUT

DATE: February 1, 2016
TO: City Employees
FROM: City Manager
SUBJECT: **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

As a reminder, attached is the City's Sexual Harassment Policy and the procedures to support its administration.

The City of Norwich is committed to providing a work environment where men and women can work together comfortably and productively, free from sexual harassment. Since 1964, the United States work place has been protected under the Federal law from discrimination and harassment because of sex, race, creed, religion and age. Any employee who feels that he or she is a victim of harassment should immediately report the matter to their immediate supervisor or to the Director of Human Resources. Complaints will be immediately investigated and information about the complaint will be held in the strictest confidence. No adverse action will be taken against any employee who submits a complaint. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

This policy applies to all phases of employment including recruiting, testing, hiring, upgrading, promotion, demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, rates of pay, benefits, selection for training, travel and City social events.

The attached policy includes the following:

- Definition of Sexual Harassment
- Description of prohibited behavior
- City's position on harassment by non-employees
- Monitoring and training procedures
- Discipline procedures
- City's position on retaliation

The City will periodically review the sexual harassment policy with the idea of ensuring compliance, and assessing the need for changes.

I respectfully request your continued support and assistance in the fair and equitable administration of the City's Sexual Harassment Policy.

HARASSMENT POLICY

The City of Norwich is committed to maintaining a workplace free of harassment and intimidation. The City does not tolerate harassment of any employee by another employee or by a member of management, non-employee or volunteer on any basis including, but not limited to race, color, creed, religion, age, marital status, familial status, national origin, ancestry, sex, veterans status, mental retardation, mental disability, physical disability including but not limited to blindness or deafness, learning disability, lawful source of income, sexual orientation or on the basis of any other characteristic protected by the state or federal law.

Any employee who feels that she/he is a victim of harassment should immediately report the matter to their immediate supervisor or to the Director of Human Resources. All complaints will be immediately investigated. The right to confidentiality of the complainant and the accused will be respected consistent with the City's legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct. No adverse action will be taken against any employee who reports or participates in the investigation of a complaint alleging a violation of this policy. Violations of this policy will not be permitted and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

The City of Norwich is committed to providing a work environment where women and men can work together comfortably and productively, free from sexual harassment. Such behavior is illegal under both state and federal laws and will not be tolerated here.

This policy applies to all phases of employment including recruiting, testing, hiring, upgrading, promotion or demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, rates of pay, benefits and selection for training, travel or City social events.

Sexual Harassment Defined

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is illegal under both state and federal laws. Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term of a person's employment;
2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for an employment decision; and
3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Prohibited Behavior

Prohibited sexual harassment includes unsolicited and unwelcome contact that has sexual overtones. This includes:

- written contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, invitations
- verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits, sexual propositions
- physical contact, such as intentional touching, pinching, brushing against another's body, impeding or blocking movement, assault, coercing sexual intercourse, and
- visual contact, such as leering or staring at another's body, gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters or magazines.

Sexual harassment also includes continuing to express sexual or social interest after being informed directly that the interest is unwelcome and using sexual behavior to control, influence or affect the career, salary or work environment of another employee.

It is impermissible to suggest, threaten or imply that failure to accept a request for a date or sexual intimacy will affect an employee's job. For example, it is forbidden either to imply or actually withhold support for an appointment, promotion, or change of assignment, or suggest that a poor performance report will be given because an employee has declined a personal proposition.

Also, offering benefits, such as promotions, favorable performance evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, recommendations or reclassifications in exchange for sexual favors is forbidden.

Harassment by Non-employees

In addition, the City of Norwich will take all reasonable steps to prevent or eliminate sexual harassment by non-employees including volunteers, customers, clients and suppliers, who are likely to have workplace contact with our employees.

Monitoring and Training

The City of Norwich shall take reasonable steps to see that this policy prohibiting sexual harassment is followed by all employees, supervisors and others who have contact with our employees. This prevention plan will include training sessions, ongoing monitoring of the work site and employees will, from time to time, be reminded of this policy and of their right to raise the issue of sexual harassment. Also, employees will be reminded that in case of a complaint, the right to confidentiality will be respected consistent with the City of Norwich legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct.

A copy of this policy will be distributed to all employees and posted in areas where all employees will have the opportunity to freely review it. The City of Norwich welcomes your suggestions for improvements to this policy.

Discipline

Any employee found to have violated this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including warnings, reprimand, suspension or discharge.

If an investigation reveals that sexual harassment has occurred, the harasser may also be held legally liable for his or her actions under state or federal anti-discrimination laws or in separate legal actions.

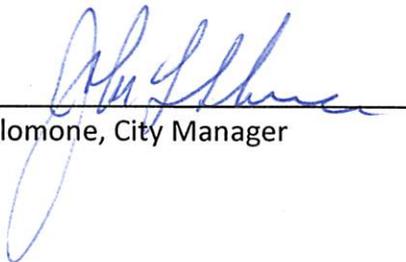
Retaliation

Any employee bringing a sexual harassment complaint or assisting in investigating such a complaint will not be adversely affected in terms and condition of employment, or discriminated against or discharged because of the complaint. Complaints of such retaliation will be promptly investigated and corrective action taken as appropriate.

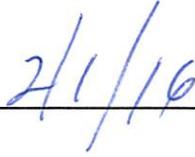
Complaint Procedure and Investigation

Any employee who believes that he or she has been the subject of sexual harassment should report the alleged charge immediately to his or her supervisor who in turn must immediately notify the Director of Human Resources. An employee may choose to go directly to the Director, who will immediately conduct an investigation. Upon conclusion of the investigation, the Director will issue a recommendation for disposition of the complaint.

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected consistent with the City of Norwich's legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and to take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.



John Salomone, City Manager



Date