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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

**TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD
POLICY PROHIBITING HARASSMENT,
INCLUDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Policy

Effective June 16, 2008

The Town of East Hartford is committed to providing a working environment in which all people are treated with respect. Accordingly, the Town will not tolerate harassment, including sexual harassment, of its employees by any person, including any supervisor, co-worker, contractor, vendor or member of the public. Such conduct is prohibited whether it occurs in the workplace, at work assignments outside of the workplace, at Town-sponsored functions or elsewhere. Violation of this Policy may result in discipline, up to and including discharge. This Policy supersedes any previous Town policies on harassment.

What is "Sexual Harassment"?

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that is illegal under both Connecticut and federal law. Sexual harassment has been defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's employment;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a person is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting that person; or
- Such conduct is so severe or pervasive that it unreasonably interferes with a person's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Although not a complete list, the following are examples of behavior that can be sexual harassment:

- Explicit or implied requests for sexual favors in return for promised or actual job benefits, such as favorable reviews, promotions, increased wages or benefits, or continued employment;
- Unwelcome physical contact, such as touching, patting, pinching, or brushing against a person's body;
- Unwelcome sexual propositions;
- Suggestive comments or sexually oriented innuendoes, teasing or jokes;
- Comments about a person's body, sexual activities, sexual prowess or deficiencies;
- Foul or obscene body language or gestures;

- Sexually suggestive sounds or leering;
- Displays of foul, obscene or sexually explicit printed or visual material;
- Sending or viewing foul, obscene or sexually explicit jokes, pictures, or other material by email or the internet.

The offender or victim can be either a man or a woman and can be of the same or opposite sex. Moreover, non-sexually explicit conduct also can be sexual harassment if creates a hostile working environment (*e.g.*, conduct or comments that suggest that a particular gender is not welcome in the workplace).

Other Types of Prohibited Harassment

In addition to sexual harassment, this Policy also prohibits harassment based on race, color, religion, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, disability, veteran status, genetic make-up, sexual orientation and any other characteristic protected by law.

Some examples of conduct that may be harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Comments, jokes, or the use of terminology that ridicules or demeans a person's race, ethnicity, religious beliefs or practices, accent, sexual orientation or any other protected characteristic;
- Displays of printed or visual material that demeans or ridicules a person's race, ethnicity, religious beliefs or practices, accent, sexual orientation or any other protected characteristic;
- Sending or viewing jokes, pictures, or other material by email or the internet that demeans or ridicules a person's race, ethnicity, religious beliefs or practices, accent, sexual orientation or any other protected characteristic.

Reporting Harassment

1. Victims of Harassment: If you believe that you are being harassed, you should promptly notify any of the following people: any Supervisor; your Department Director; the Director of Human Resources (860-291-7220) or the Mayor (860-291-7200). You should report even single instances of harassment. Moreover, you are not limited to filing an internal harassment complaint under this Policy.
2. Employees Who Witness Harassment: Any employee who witnesses harassment or becomes aware that another employee has been harassed is strongly urged to report the conduct to any of the four individuals listed above.
3. Supervisors and Directors: Any Supervisor or Director who receives a complaint or report of harassment, or who believes that an employee, contractor, vendor or member of the public is engaging in conduct that may be harassment, must immediately notify the Director of Human Resources (860-291-7220) or the Mayor's Office (860-291-7200). Directors and Supervisors also should take appropriate interim steps to stop the offending behavior while the report is being processed, such as separating the alleged offender and victim. Ignoring such conduct may result in discipline, up to and including discharge.

Investigating Complaints

All reports of harassment will be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the appropriate Town official(s). Reports of harassment will be treated as confidentially as possible without hindering the investigation, which means that information will be revealed on a "need-to-know" basis and/or as required by law. The Town will take appropriate steps to protect employees from retaliation.

Corrective Action

If the investigation confirms that harassment has occurred, the Town will take appropriate corrective action. Corrective action may include discipline, up to and including discharge. Harassment also may result in criminal and civil penalties.

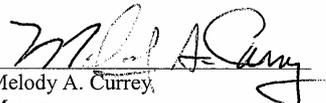
Note: As part of its harassment prevention strategy, the Town will also use corrective action to stop less severe forms of inappropriate or offensive behavior before they rise to the level of harassment.

No Retaliation

The Town will not tolerate retaliation against any employee who reports harassment or who participates in any investigation of alleged harassment. Employees should report all instances of retaliation to any Supervisor; their Department Director; the Director of Human Resources or the Mayor. Supervisors and Directors who receive reports of retaliation must immediately notify the Director of Human Resources or the Mayor. Violation of this section may result in discipline, up to and including discharge.

False or Malicious Complaints

The Town also may discipline/discharge any person who knowingly makes a false or malicious complaint of harassment.



Melody A. Currey,
Mayor

June 16, 2008
Date