

Sexual Harassment

The policy of the Rapides Parish Police Jury always has been that our employees should be able to enjoy a work environment free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment. When it comes to sexual harassment in the workplace, employers and employees have similar interests. Employees of both sexes have an interest in work environments where all employees are treated with respect.

Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct which undermines the integrity of the employment relationship. No employee, either male or female, should be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical. Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior, which is not welcome, which is personally offensive, which debilitates morale, and which therefore interferes with our work effectiveness.

- Specifically, this policy provides that no supervisor shall threaten or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, that an employee's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect, or that the submission to or rejection of advances will in any way influence any personnel decision regarding that employee's employment, assigned duties, shifts, or any other condition of employment or career development.
- Other sexually harassing conduct in the workplace, whether physical or verbal, committed by supervisory or nonsupervisory personnel, is also prohibited. This includes repeated, offensive sexual flirtations, advances or propositions, verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, and the display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.
- If an employee accuses another employee of sexual harassment and the action is found to have occurred, no retaliation will be taken against the accusing party by the offender or any other employee of the parish. If an employee is a victim of sexual harassment, the employee shall present the complaint to the employee's immediate supervisor. If the complaint involves the immediate supervisor, the employee shall present the complaint to the department head. If the complaint involves this individual, the employee will present the complaint directly to the President of the Police Jury. All complaints of sexual harassment will be dealt with immediately by the individual initially notified. If required, an investigation of the complaint will take place. All complaints of this nature should be confidential.
- This policy forbids the discrimination against any individual with respect to his or her compensation terms, conditions, or privileges of employment.

The sexual harassment of any employee of the Parish by any other employee or nonemployee is absolutely prohibited. The Police Jury will not tolerate the sexual harassment of any of its employees and will take immediate, positive steps to stop it when it occurs.

This sexual harassment policy adopted by the Police Jury applies to all officers and employees of the Police Jury, including, but not limited to, elected officials, full-and part-time, permanent and temporary, classified and unclassified employees of the Police Jury.

This policy will be distributed to all officials and employees of the Police Jury. Every official and employee will be required to acknowledge his or her receipt and clear communication of this policy in writing. A copy of that acknowledgement shall be kept on permanent file in the Police Jury. Every official and employee will be required to have one (1) hour of training every year that they are employed with

the Police Jury. All supervisors and Department Heads will be required to have two (2) hours of training every year they are employed with the Police Jury. A copy of their certificate of completion shall be kept on permanent file in the Police Jury. Department Heads and supervisors shall also be responsible for clearly and regularly communicating the sexual harassment policy to employees. If an employee refuses to sign acknowledging receipt of this policy, a witness may sign and date with the statement that the employee was given the opportunity and refused to sign.

Any employee who feels he or she is being subjected to sexual harassment should immediately contact his immediate supervisor. If the complaint involves the immediate supervisor, the employee shall present the complaint directly to the appropriate Department Head. If the complaint involves this individual, the employee shall present the complaint directly to the President of the Police Jury. The complaint may be made orally or in writing. The victim should directly inform the harasser that the conduct is unwelcome and must stop, particularly when the alleged harasser may have some reason to believe that the advance may be welcomed. However, a victim of harassment need not always confront his/her harasser directly, so long as his/her conduct demonstrates that the harasser's behavior is unwelcome.

Employees who believe they have been discriminated against are encouraged to immediately file charges with the Equal Employment Commission, the Department of Labor, Office of Federal Compliance, and the compliance officer of any other federal or state agency.

Regardless of the specific person to which an employee makes a complaint of sexual harassment, the employee should be prepared to provide the following information:

- The employee's or official's name, department and position title.
- The name of the person or persons committing the sexual harassment, including their title(s), if known.
- The specific nature of the sexual harassment, how long it has gone on, and any employment action (demotion, failure to promote, dismissal, refusal to hire, transfer, etc.) taken against the employee as a result of the harassment, or any other threats made against the employees as a result of the harassment.
- All witnesses to the harassment.
- Whether such harassment has been previously reported, and, if so, when and to whom.
- Establish that the harasser's conduct is unwelcome.

Reporting an investigation of sexual harassment complaints against classified, unclassified and appointed employees, or elected officials.

Complaints against classified, unclassified and appointed employees: The equal employment officer or his/her authorized representative is designated by the Police Jury to be the investigator of complaints of sexual harassment against employees. In the event the sexual harassment complaint is against the EEO officer, the investigator shall be appointed by the Civil Service Board or Police Jury President.

When an allegation of sexual harassment is made by any employee, the person to whom the complaint is made shall immediately prepare a report of the complaint and submit it to the EEO office, or in the event the sexual harassment complaint is against the EEO officer, to the Civil Service Board.

The EEO officer or his/her authorized investigator shall make and keep a written record of the investigation, including notes of verbal responses made to the investigator by the person complaining of sexual harassment, witnesses interviewed during the investigation, the person against whom the complaint of sexual harassment was made, and any other person contacted by the investigator in connection with the investigation. The notes shall be made at the time the verbal interview is in progress.

When the investigator receives a complaint of sexual harassment, he/she shall immediately:

- Obtain a written statement from the person complaining of sexual harassment, which includes a comprehensive report of the nature of the sexual harassment complained of and the times, dated and places where the sexual harassment occurred; and the investigator shall verbally question the person complaining of sexual harassment about any information in the written statement which is not clear or needs amplification.
- Obtain a written statement from witnesses named in the sexual harassment complaint which includes a comprehensive report of the nature of the sexual harassment complained of and the times, dates and places where the sexual harassment occurred; and the conduct of the person complaining of sexual harassment towards the person against whom the complaint of sexual harassment was made. The investigator shall verbally question witnesses about any information in their written statements which is not clear or needs amplification. These statements may be made discretely.
- Obtain a written statement from the person against whom the complaint of sexual harassment has been made if the preliminary investigation above indicates there was enough facts to justify further investigation. The investigator will verbally question the person against whom the complaint of sexual harassment was made about any information in the written statement which is not clear of needs amplification.
- Prepare a report of the investigation, which includes the written statement of the person complaining of sexual harassment, the written statements of witnesses, the written statement of the person against whom the complaint of sexual harassment was made if obtained, and all the investigator's notes connected to the investigation, and submit the report to the appropriate higher authority: Police Jury President, the Department Head or Supervisor of the department involved, legal counsel, or the Civil Service Board. It should be remembered all complaints of this nature should be confidential.