

# **State of Nevada Executive Branch**

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Sexual harassment and discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, pregnancy, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity or expression, domestic relations<sup>1</sup> or compensation or wages<sup>2</sup> in any term, condition or privilege of employment are violations of State and/or federal law.

### **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Policy statement regarding sexual harassment and discrimination is to clearly express the position of the State of Nevada that all employees have the right to work in an environment free from all forms of discrimination and conduct which can be considered harassing, coercive or disruptive.

Sexual harassment and discrimination are forms of misconduct that undermine the integrity of the employment relationship. No employee, either male or female, should be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcomed sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal, written (including digital media, i.e., email, text or digital photos or graphics) or physical. No employee should experience discrimination in hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, fringe benefits, job training, classification, referral, and other aspects of employment. Sexual harassment and discrimination are personally offensive, debilitate morale, and, therefore, interfere with work effectiveness. An employee who engages in discriminatory behavior, or behavior that constitutes sexual harassment, may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

### **II. COVERAGE**

This Policy is intended to be applicable to all State employees, officers, appointees such as board members, and volunteers in the executive branch of government. All elected officers are encouraged to adopt this Policy within their agencies.

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<sup>1</sup> AB 229 (2017); AB 227 (2017).

<sup>2</sup> NRS 613.330.

### **III. RESPONSIBILITY**

- A. Sexual harassment and discrimination, whether committed by a supervisor, coworker, or member of the public is specifically prohibited as unlawful and against State policy. Appointing authorities are responsible for taking immediate and corrective action in response to complaints, regardless of whether the specific acts complained of were sanctioned or specifically forbidden and regardless of the manner in which the appointing authority becomes aware of the conduct.
- B. Appointing authorities must ensure that each employee is provided with a copy of this Policy informing them that sexual harassment and discrimination are prohibited conduct and will not be tolerated or condoned. All employees will acknowledge receipt and understanding of the Policy through a signed statement.
- C. All new employees, officers, appointees, board members and volunteers in the executive branch shall attend sexual harassment prevention training within six months of their appointment. Thereafter, employees are required to complete sexual harassment prevention refresher training once every two years.
- D. Managers and supervisors are also required to attend additional training related to equal employment opportunity within 12 months of supervisory appointment and every three years thereafter.
- E. Appointing authorities shall advise all employees of their responsibility to report incidents of sexual harassment and discrimination.
- F. Appointing authorities shall designate employees within each agency to act as coordinators for the reporting of complaints of sexual harassment or discrimination and will notify employees and the Sexual Harassment/Discrimination Investigation Unit of the coordinator's name and contact information.
- G. Supervisors shall have a complete understanding of this Policy. Supervisors who willfully disregard incidents of sexual harassment or discrimination by subordinates may be subject to discipline. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring their employees have received training as outlined in this Policy.

- H. It is the responsibility of appointing authorities to make sure their agencies are in full compliance with this Policy and associated legal guidelines.

#### **IV. STATE EMPLOYEES' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Employees are entitled to work in a workplace free of sexual harassment and discrimination.
- B. Employees are responsible for ensuring they do not sexually harass or discriminate against any other employee, client, applicant for employment, or other individual(s).
- C. Employees are responsible for cooperating in the investigation of any complaint of alleged sexual harassment or discrimination. Employees are additionally responsible for cooperating with the efforts of their agency, division, board or commission to prevent and eliminate sexual harassment and discrimination and for maintaining a working environment free from such unlawful conduct. Pursuant to NAC 284.650, failure to participate in any investigation of alleged discrimination, including without limitation, an investigation of sexual harassment is cause for disciplinary action.

#### **V. LEGAL DEFINITIONS AND GUIDELINES**

- A. NAC 284.771 specifies that sexual harassment violates the policy of this State and is a form of unlawful discrimination based on sex under State and federal law. An employee shall not engage in sexual harassment against another employee, an applicant for employment, or any other person in the workplace.

Sexual harassment is a very serious disciplinary infraction. An appointing authority may impose harsh disciplinary sanctions on persons who commit sexual harassment, even on first-time offenders.

- B. As used in Section 703 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, "sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
  - 1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's employment; or

2. Submission to or the rejection of such conduct by a person is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting that person; or
  3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a person's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. 29 C.F.R. § 1604.11.
- C. Equal opportunity with regard to the terms, conditions and privileges of employment is mandated under Title VII of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 2008, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, NRS 631.330, NRS 281.370, and numerous sections of Chapter 284 of the NRS which address the State's Personnel System.
- D. The State of Nevada is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against job applicants or employees based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, pregnancy, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity or expression, domestic relations, or compensation or wages.
- E. Federal law prohibits retaliation against employees who bring sexual harassment or discrimination charges or assist in investigating such charges. Any employee making sexual harassment or discrimination complaints or assisting in the investigation of such a complaint will not be adversely affected in terms or conditions of employment, nor discriminated against, disciplined or discharged because of the complaint.

## **VI. PROCEDURE**

### **A. Employee**

1. Employees who believe they have been subjected to or witnessed sexual harassment or discrimination are encouraged to advise the person believed to have engaged in sexual harassment or discrimination that the conduct is unwelcome, undesirable or offensive. If the employee elects not to confront the alleged harasser or if the conduct persists after an objection, the employee shall report the incident to their supervisor or next level authority, or the employee may elect to report the incident as set forth below. Employees will be asked to complete a complaint form.

2. Employees may report incidents of sexual harassment or discrimination (a) to the coordinator within their agency designated to receive such complaints, or (b) by filing a complaint in NEATS on the Home Page, under Personal Tasks, “File a Sexual Harassment or Discrimination Complaint,” or (c) by completing an NPD-30 Sexual Harassment or Discrimination Complaint Form located on the Division of Human Resource Management website, or (d) by calling the Division of Human Resource Management’s Harassment/Discrimination Hotline at (800) 767-7381. Employees are always entitled to consult an attorney or labor representative or to report the incident to the Nevada Equal Rights Commission or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
3. Employees should give the completed complaint form and any supporting documentation to the coordinator designated within their agency to receive such complaints or to the assigned investigator(s).

B. Appointing Authorities

1. After receiving notification of an employee’s complaint, the appointing authority shall promptly notify the agency’s assigned personnel, Deputy Attorney General or staff counsel assigned to represent the agency pursuant to State Administrative Manual § 1702 (legal counsel) and the Division of Human Resource Management’s Sexual Harassment/Discrimination Investigation Unit. The agency coordinator will complete the complaint intake report and obtain a completed copy of the complaint form from the employee filing the complaint. The coordinator will forward a copy of the completed intake report to the agency’s legal counsel and the Sexual Harassment/Discrimination Investigation Unit, along with any supporting documentation. The agency coordinator may also submit the complaint via NEATS.
2. The investigator will begin the investigation as soon as witnesses are available.
3. Investigations will be conducted as discreetly and with as little disruption to the workplace as possible. All information gathered in an investigation will be kept confidential, and

the confidential nature of the investigative process will be conveyed to the complainant, the accused and each witness.

4. The investigator will prepare a written report of findings, which will be submitted to the appointing authority, the agency's legal counsel, and the agency's chief personnel officer. The ultimate decision for remedial action is the responsibility of the appointing authority; however, the investigative staff may suggest mediation services, if appropriate.
5. After the investigation has been completed, the appointing authority will review the findings and recommendations and determine the appropriate resolution of the case. If warranted, the agency, after consultation with their legal counsel, may take disciplinary action up to and including termination. The agency shall retain a written record of the findings of the investigation and the resolution of the complaint as confidential records.
6. At the conclusion of the Division of Human Resource Management's Sexual Harassment/Discrimination Investigation Unit's investigation, the Division of Human Resource Management will notify the complainant in writing that the investigation was completed and forwarded to their agency for review. The agency, in consultation with their assigned legal counsel, shall notify both the complainant and the accused in writing at the conclusion of their administrative review. A copy of the Notification letter that is sent to the complainant and/or accused must be sent to the Sexual Harassment/Discrimination Investigation Unit for its files. Additionally, the agency shall take whatever corrective action it deems appropriate following consultation with its legal counsel. Corrective action that involves discipline of the accused is confidential pursuant to NAC 284.718 and must not be disclosed except as authorized pursuant to NAC 284.726.

C. Complaint Submitted Through the Hotline

1. When an employee transmits a complaint of sexual harassment or discrimination through the State hotline, the Sexual Harassment/Discrimination Investigation Unit will complete the initial intake report and/or submit the complaint in NEATS.

2. The agency coordinator will be notified of the complaint via NEATS.
3. The investigation will then proceed as described for complaints submitted to appointing authorities (*see* Item VI-B).