

## **POLICY AGAINST HARASSMENT**

The Library has a policy of maintaining a work environment in which every employee is treated with respect, and is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment. This zero-tolerance policy prohibits not only conduct and language that constitutes sexual harassment in violation of this policy (including all inappropriate behavior having sexual content), but also harassing conduct on the basis of sex or gender, color, race, ancestry, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or any other protected group status.

### **A. APPLICABILITY**

This policy applies to all elected officials, employees (whether full-time, part-time, or seasonal), applicants for employment, contractors, and business visitors.

1. This policy applies both where the perpetrator and the victim are of different genders, and where they are of the same gender.
2. This policy prohibits harassing conduct regardless of whether it rises to the level of a legal violation.

### **B. WHAT IS HARASSMENT?**

This policy prohibits conduct, whether physical, verbal, written, or visual, that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion to an individual based on that individual's legally protected status. The Library will not tolerate harassment or conduct that has the purpose or effect of interfering unreasonably with an individual's work performance, affecting an individual's tangible job benefits, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. It can include, but is not limited to:

1. Physical or verbal abuse
2. Derogatory jokes
3. Insults
4. Epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or intimidating acts that are based on a person's protected status
5. Unwelcome physical contact of any nature
6. Taunting, intended to provoke an employee
7. Display or circulation of derogatory written materials or pictures, whether posted or circulated in the workplace or electronically

8. Unfounded and unwarranted accusations intended to discredit or harm another employee

### C. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature are prohibited, and will not be tolerated, especially when submission to the conduct is an explicit or implicit term of employment, submission or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for an employment decision, or when the conduct has the purpose or effect of creating a hostile, intimidating, or offensive work environment, or substantially interferes with an employee's work performance. A broad range of verbal and physical conduct is prohibited, including, but not limited to:

1. Engaging in favoritism or retaliation based on the granting or refusal of sexual conduct
2. Displaying "pin up" calendars, or sexual or discriminatory displays, whether electronic or physical, or otherwise having sexual or discriminatory publications, whether electronic or physical, in the workplace
3. Telling sexually oriented jokes
4. Making sexually oriented or suggestive remarks, gestures, noises, innuendo, or comments
5. Engaging in sexual teasing, including comments about sexual orientation
6. Subjecting another employee to unwelcome pressure for dates, or unwanted sexual advances
7. Intentional physical conduct, which is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, padding, grabbing, etc.
8. Physical assaults of a sexual nature, including rape or sexual battery

### D. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY AND REPORTING

1. Every employee is expected to avoid any behavior or conduct that could reasonably be interpreted as prohibited harassment under this policy. Employees are encouraged to inform others in the workplace whenever their conduct is unwelcome, offensive, inappropriate, or in poor taste. Employees are also expected to come forward with complaints about alleged problems, or violations, of this policy at any time, and before the alleged offending behavior becomes severe or pervasive. Complaints can include behavior that the employee experienced or observed. Complaints may be reported to one of the following:

- a) Library Director
  - b) Any Trustee
  - c) City of North Chicago Director of Human Resources
2. This policy does not require an employee to report conduct to the individual who is the target of the employee's complaint of harassing or discriminatory behavior.

#### E. EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITY AND REPORTING

1. The Library requires each supervisor to immediately report to the Director or a Trustee any complaint or observation of conduct which may violate this policy. The Director or Trustee shall then inform the Board of Trustees of such report.
2. No supervisor or manager has the authority to condition any tangible job benefit on an employee's acquiescence to any words or conduct that violate this policy, and any threats to do so must be reported immediately. If any employee believes that he or she has been deprived of a tangible job benefit (such as significant change of employment status, like discharge, demotion, or undesirable reassignment) because the employee has refused to cooperate with sexually offensive verbal or physical conduct, requests for sexual favors, or sexual advances, it must be reported to one of the people listed above.
3. All reports describing conduct inconsistent with this policy will be promptly investigated, and corrective action will be taken as determined by the Board of Trustees to be appropriate under the circumstances. The Library may take reasonable interim measures to stop harassing or discriminatory conduct while an investigation into the report takes place. Such measures do not preclude the Library from taking further appropriate action following the investigation, including discipline and discharge as is appropriate under the circumstances. The Library may discipline an employee for any inappropriate conduct discovered during an investigation, regardless of whether the conduct amounts to a violation of this policy. The Library will take corrective action in response to conduct by non-employees as it is appropriate under the circumstances.
4. In the interest of encouraging prompt reporting of inappropriate behavior, the Library considers all complaints under this policy confidential and expects everyone involved in the complaint or investigation to take reasonable steps to protect the privacy of the individuals involved. Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, however.
5. The Library encourages employees to use the above complaint procedure(s) to report and resolve the complaints of harassment or retaliation to promote immediate notice to the Library and prompt resolution of problems. However, employees may also file a charge of discrimination, in writing, with the Illinois

Department of Human Rights within one hundred eighty (180) days of the harassment and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission at:

- a) Illinois Department of Human Rights  
100 West Randolph Street, Suite 10-100  
Chicago, Illinois 60601  
(312) 814-6200
  
- b) Equal Employment Opportunity Commission  
500 West Madison Street, Suite 2800  
Chicago, Illinois 60661-2511  
(312) 353-2713

#### F. RETALIATION PROHIBITED

It is also a violation of this policy for any official or employee to retaliate, in any way, against any person who reports, or cooperates in, an investigation of alleged violation of this policy. No supervisor or manager has the authority to deprive any individual of any tangible job benefit in retaliation for that person making a complaint or assisting in an investigation of a complaint under this policy. Any conduct by an employee believed to be in retaliation, or any threat of retaliation, or attempt to do so, should be reported immediately as provided above.

#### G. PRIOR POLICIES

This Policy supersedes and replaces any and all previous policies concerning harassment and/or sexual harassment.