

## **Harassment**

The Hospital is fully committed to providing a workplace free from offensive or harassing conduct. Harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability, citizenship status, membership or application for membership in a uniformed service, engaging in legally protected activity, or other characteristics protected under applicable law will not be permitted or condoned. Slurs, insults or stereotypical comments relating to those characteristics are wholly inappropriate and violate the Hospital's equal employment opportunity policy, and may also violate Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Texas Commission on Human Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and/or other applicable laws.

Certain types of conduct which may be intended to be inoffensive social exchanges, but which might be perceived as offensive, could be used as a basis for harassment claims on any of the above grounds. Such conduct is not necessarily a violation of the law or this policy. Rather, Staff Members should be aware that certain conduct holds the potential for supporting claims of harassment even though no offense was intended.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature by a Staff Member or supervisor when (i) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; or (ii) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting an individual. Sexual harassment also includes conduct of a sexual nature that unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment or otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

It is not possible to catalogue all the specific types of conduct that might violate this policy or the law, but certain comments or conduct that might be perceived as sexually offensive are to be strictly avoided. Examples of conduct that might constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, repeated offensive or unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions; continual or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature or graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body; sexually degrading words used to describe an individual; or the display in the work place of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.

No person has the authority to condition employment or association with the Hospital on the submission to sexual advances or acceptance of conduct that violates this policy, whether the promised or threatened conduct could favorably or adversely affect the person involved.

## **Complaint Procedure**

Complaints of any violation of this policy should be reported immediately. Any Staff Member who feels that he or she is the victim of a violation of this policy is urged to contact Director of the People Department. If a Staff Member believes that a complaint of this nature has not or cannot be addressed by Director of the People Department for any reason, he or she is strongly urged to contact the Administrator or President. A Staff Member who reports an alleged violation of this policy in an appropriate manner will not be subjected to adverse employment action because of the complaint. However, the Hospital recognized that false accusations of harassment or other unlawful behavior can be damaging to an accused Staff Member and disruptive to the operations of the Hospital; thus, knowingly made false accusations may constitute misconduct for which disciplinary action may be imposed.

### **Investigation of Complaints**

The Hospital promptly and thoroughly investigates all complaints of harassment or other violations of this policy to determine whether improper conduct has occurred. All Staff Members are expected to cooperate fully in any investigation. The confidentiality of all complaints will be maintained to the extent possible while allowing the Hospital to conduct a full and fair investigation. The Hospital will take all reasonable steps during the investigation to protect the privacy of, and minimize suspicion toward, all parties concerned.

### **Disciplinary Action**

It is the responsibility of each Staff Member and each supervisor to ensure adherence to the Hospital's policy of equal employment opportunity for all individuals. Any Staff Member found to have violated the Hospital's policy against harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.