

## **VILLAGE OF LIMA'S** **POLICY AGAINST HARASSMENT**

The Lima Village Board is committed to safeguarding the right of all Village employees to assure a productive work environment that is free of discrimination and intimidation. It is the policy of the Village of Lima to strictly prohibit conduct that constitutes harassment in any form because of race, sex, age, religion, color, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or status as a U.S. military veteran.

The Village Board is committed to eliminating illegal harassment based on these factors. Employees are encouraged to bring any concerns regarding possible harassment to the attention of their supervisor or any Board Member they feel most comfortable talking to. The Village Board will make special efforts to prevent or remedy retaliation against an employee who complains of harassment, or participates in investigations of such complaints.

### **What is sexual harassment?**

Sexual harassment has been defined by governmental agencies and the courts as unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment;

or

- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual.

Sexual harassment also has been defined to include unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose of effect of:

- Unreasonably interfering with an individuals work performance; or creating an intimidation, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Thus, sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances;
- Unwelcome suggestive contact of any kind (for example, unwanted hugging, kissing or fondling);
- Unwelcome sexually oriented verbal comments (for example, sexual innuendo, suggestive comments, jokes about sex or gender specific traits);
- Subtle pressure for sexual activity;
- Demands for sexual favors;
- Display of offensive sexually oriented pictures, posters, etc.
- Non-verbal suggestive or threatening actions such as throwing kisses, making gestures, winking or stalking.

This conduct is inappropriate whether it is directed at someone of the opposite sex or someone of the same sex. Harassment may occur between fellow employees or between an employee and their supervisor.

### **What about other types of harassment?**

Village policy also prohibits harassment on the basis of race, religion, color, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or veteran status. Such prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following examples:

- Telling jokes with negative racial, ethnic or religious meaning or tone;
- Making inappropriate comments that could reasonably be construed as having a negative racial, ethnic, or religious meaning or tone;
- Using offensive racial, ethnic or religious, stereotypes, or threats even if an individual from the racial, ethnic or religious group is not present;
- Graffiti of this nature in the workplace;
- Distributing or displaying written or graphic material that shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of race, color, religion, age, disability, etc.

**Responsibilities:**

All employees of the Village of Lima share the responsibility to model appropriate behavior to ensure that the workplace is free from harassment. Employees are required to treat other employees with dignity and respect, and refrain from conduct that may be perceived as harassment. You should report incidents that you believe might constitute harassment. You may express your concerns without fear or retaliation.

Every complaint will be treated in a manner that is serious, sensitive, and to the extent appropriate, confidential.

When a through investigation of an incident leads to the conclusion that harassment has occurred, supervisors and Board Members must take prompt, appropriate corrective action, up to and including discharge of the offender.

**What to do:**

If you observe harassment, you may approach the offender directly or you may report your observations to an appropriate member of supervision or a Village Board Member that you feel comfortable talking with. If you believe you have been harassed, tell the person who is harassing you that his or his comments or behavior are offensive to you and immediately report the incident to your supervisor or a Board Member.

Complaints will be investigated promptly and in a fair manner. An investigation generally involves interviews with the person who complains, the alleged harasser and any witnesses. We will strive to keep the process as confidential as possible, while performing a through investigation.

The Village will take actions to prevent retaliation against anyone making a good faith complaint of harassment, and will respond to any complaints of such retaliation.

This policy was reviewed with me on \_\_\_\_\_, and I understand the contents and consequences for any infraction.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date