



STATE ACCOUNTING OFFICE Human Resource Policy

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 23, 2006

REVIEW DATE: June 30, 2015

REFERENCES: Antidiscrimination Policy (State Personnel Board Rule 478-1-.03)
Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
Fair Employment Practices Act (O.C.G.A 45-19)

PURPOSE

In order to provide a productive and pleasant working environment, it is important that employees of the State Accounting Office endeavor to maintain a workplace characterized by mutual respect. Accordingly, discrimination and harassment of any type, including sexual harassment, will not be tolerated in our workplace.

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

Harassment/Discrimination

Harassment or discrimination on the basis of any protected characteristic is strictly prohibited. Under this policy, harassment constitutes verbal, written or physical conduct that disparages or shows hostility toward an individual because of his or her race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law and that:

- Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment
- Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, or otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities

Examples of harassment includes epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; and written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility toward an individual or group circulated or placed in the workplace, on company time or using company equipment by e-mail, phone (including voice messages), text messages, or other means.

Harassment by Non-employees

We will endeavor to protect employees, to the extent possible, from reported harassment by non-employees such as from customers, vendors and other parties who have workplace contact with our employees.



Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment has been defined as a form of sex discrimination, consisting of unwanted sexual advances. Examples of prohibited sexual harassment include:

- Supervisors or managers explicitly suggesting sex in return for a hiring, compensation, promotion or retention decision.
- Verbal or written sexually suggestive or obscene comments, jokes, or propositions.
- Unwanted physical contact, such as touching, grabbing, or pinching.
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or magazines.
- Continual expression of sexual or social interest after an indication that such interest is not desired.
- Conduct with sexual implications when such conduct interferes with the employee's work performance or creates an intimidating work environment.
- Suggesting or implying that failure to accept a request for a date or sex would adversely affect the employee in respect to a performance evaluation or promotion.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

SAO encourages the prompt reporting of complaints or concerns. Any reported allegations of harassment, discrimination or retaliation will be investigated promptly.

1. Employees are encouraged to discuss and seek resolution to any complaints with their manager prior to filing a formal complaint. If no resolution is reached a formal complaint can be filed with Human Resources.
2. Formal complaints should be made in writing and provide specific details of the incident to help determine whether this policy has been violated.
3. Human Resources will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and begin an investigation. The investigation may include individual interviews with the parties involved and, where necessary, with individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge.
4. Findings of the investigation and proposed resolutions will be reviewed with appropriate management members and the complainant.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent consistent with adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action.

RESOLUTION

Misconduct constituting harassment, discrimination or retaliation will be addressed appropriately. Responsive action may include, for example, training, referral to counseling or disciplinary action, which may include reprimands, suspension or termination of employment, based on the nature of offense.

False and malicious complaints of harassment, discrimination or retaliation (as opposed to complaints that, even if erroneous, are made in good faith) will also be the subject of appropriate disciplinary action.



A person committing sexual harassment may also be held legally liable for his or her action under applicable law.

Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or discrimination or for participating in an investigation of a claim of harassment or discrimination is a serious violation of this policy and will be subject to disciplinary action. Acts of retaliation should be reported immediately and will be promptly investigated and addressed.

RESPONSIBILITY

EMPLOYEE

Each SAO employee is expected to comply with the above policy. Employees should:

- Report all instances of discrimination and harassment to management or Human Resources. We cannot take appropriate action if we are not made aware of any issues.
- Participate fully in all investigations and provide truthful information.

If you have any questions regarding this policy or any item contained within it, please contact Human Resources.

MANAGER

SAO managers are expected to deal quickly and fairly with any allegations of discrimination or harassment within their departments whether or not there has been a written or formal complaint.

They must:

- Take all complaints or concerns of alleged or possible harassment or discrimination seriously no matter how minor or who is involved.
- Ensure that harassment or inappropriate sexually oriented conduct is immediately reported to Human Resources so that a prompt investigation can occur.
- Take any appropriate action to prevent retaliation or prohibited conduct from recurring during and after any investigations or complaints.

Managers and supervisors who knowingly allow or tolerate sexual harassment or retaliation, including the failure to immediately report and/or investigate such misconduct to Human Resources, are in violation of this policy and subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.