

## ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

### SECTION 108:20. ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

#### Sec. 108:2001. PURPOSE:

The Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles is committed to providing a work environment free of discriminatory harassment. This Policy defines discriminatory harassment, and sets forth a procedure for the investigation and resolution of complaints of such harassment by or against any employee or applicant.

#### Sec. 108:2002. POLICY:

Discriminatory harassment violates this Policy<sup>1</sup>, and will not be tolerated. Discriminatory harassment of an applicant or employee includes harassment based on race, religious creed, sex, national origin, ancestry, disability, medical condition, marital status, age or sexual orientation. It is also improper to retaliate against any individual for making a complaint of discriminatory harassment or for participating in a harassment investigation, and retaliation constitutes a violation of this Policy.

This Policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to hiring, placement, promotion, disciplinary action, layoff, recall, transfer, leave of absence, training opportunities and compensation.

Employees who violate this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

#### Sec. 108:2003. DEFINITION:

Harassment can consist of virtually any form or combination of verbal, physical, visual or environmental conduct. It need not be explicit, nor even specifically directed at the victim. Sexually harassing conduct can occur between people of the same or different genders.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to the following misconduct:

1. *Verbal:* Inappropriate or offensive remarks, slurs, jokes or innuendoes based on sex, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, disability, medical condition, marital status, age or sexual orientation. This may include, but is not limited to, inappropriate comments regarding an individual's body, physical appearance, attire, sexual prowess, marital status, pregnancy or sexual orientation; unwelcome flirting or propositions; demands for sexual favors; verbal abuse, threats or intimidation of a sexual nature; or sexist, patronizing or ridiculing statements that convey derogatory attitudes about a particular gender.
2. *Physical:* Inappropriate or offensive touching, assault, or physical interference with free movement when directed at an individual on the

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<sup>1</sup> A violation of this policy may not be a violation of state and/or federal law, although discriminatory harassment is prohibited by both.

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basis of sex, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, disability, medical condition, marital status, age or sexual orientation. This may include, but is not limited to, kissing, patting, lingering or intimate touches, grabbing, massaging, pinching, leering, staring, unnecessarily brushing against or blocking another person, whistling or sexual gestures.

3. *Visual or Written:* The display or circulation of offensive or derogatory visual or written material related to sex, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, disability, medical condition, marital status, age or sexual orientation. This may include, but is not limited to, posters, cartoons, drawings, graffiti, reading materials, computer graphics or electronic media transmissions.
4. *Environmental:* A work environment that is permeated with sexually-oriented talk, innuendo, insults or abuse not relevant to the subject matter of the job. A hostile environment can arise from an unwarranted focus on sexual topics or sexually suggestive statements. An environment may be hostile if unwelcome sexual behavior is directed specifically at an individual or if the individual merely witnesses unlawful harassment in his or her immediate surroundings. The determination of whether an environment is hostile is based on the totality of the circumstances, including such factors as the frequency of the conduct, the severity of the conduct, whether the conduct is humiliating or physically threatening, and whether the conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's work.

Romantic or sexual relationships between supervisors and employees are discouraged. There is an inherent imbalance of power and potential for exploitation in such relationships. The relationship may create an appearance of impropriety and lead to charges of favoritism by other employees. A welcome sexual relationship may change, with the result that sexual conduct that was once welcome becomes unwelcome and harassing.

By definition, sexual harassment is not within the course and scope of an individual's employment with the Agency.

### Sec. 108:2004. PROHIBITED SUPERVISORY OR MANAGERIAL BEHAVIOR

No supervisor, manager, or other authority figure may condition any employment, employee benefit or continued employment in this Agency on an applicant's or employee's acquiescence to any of the behavior defined above.

No supervisor, manager, or other authority figure may retaliate against any applicant, or employee, because that person has opposed a practice prohibited by this policy or has filed a complaint, testified, assisted or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding or hearing conducted by an authorized investigator.

No person shall destroy evidence relevant to an investigation of harassment discrimination.

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### Sec. 108:2005. BEHAVIOR PROHIBITED BY ALL PERSONS

1. No supervisor, manager, or any other person in this Agency shall create a hostile or offensive work environment for any other person by engaging in any discriminatory harassment or by tolerating it on the part of any employee.
2. No supervisor, manager, or any other person in the Agency shall assist any individual in doing any act which constitutes discriminatory harassment against any employee of the Agency.

### Sec. 108:2006. OBLIGATIONS OF SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS

#### *a. Preventive Action:*

3. A copy of this policy shall be provided to all employees in the Agency, as well as displayed in prominent locations throughout the Agency.
4. A copy of the information sheet on sexual harassment prepared by the Department of Fair Employment and Housing is available to all Agency employees upon request.
5. All supervisors and managers, shall make available to any new employees a copy of this policy within one week of their employment.
6. The Agency shall periodically notify employees of the procedures for registering a complaint as well as available redress. Such notification shall occur through the normal channels of communication.
7. The Human Resources office shall make available information from the Department of Fair Employment and Housing and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission about filing claims of sexual harassment with these entities.
8. A copy of this policy shall appear in any publication of the Agency which sets forth the comprehensive rules, regulations, procedures and standards of conduct for the Agency.
9. Employees of the Agency shall receive periodic training on the policy.

### Sec.108:2007. OBLIGATIONS OF ALL EMPLOYEES

1. All employees shall report any conduct, which fits the definition of discriminatory harassment, to their immediate supervisor or appropriate authority figure. This includes conduct of non-employees, such as sales representatives or service vendors.
2. All employees shall cooperate with any investigation of any alleged act of discriminatory harassment discrimination conducted by the Agency.

### Sec. 108:2008. INVESTIGATIVE/CORRECTIVE ACTION

- (a) All persons shall immediately report any evidence of discriminatory harassment or complaints regarding sexual harassment made to them to

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their supervisor, manager, or to the Human Resources Department. Any supervisor, or manager who receives a complaint regarding discriminatory harassment shall immediately report it to the Human Resources Department.

- (b) Human Resources shall authorize the investigation or conduct the investigation of any incident of alleged discriminatory harassment reported to them. The investigation shall be conducted in a way which ensures, to the extent feasible, the privacy of the parties involved.
- (c) The person designated to investigate shall immediately report in writing the results of any investigation to the Human Resources Department; or designee and to the complainant.
- (d) All persons shall report to their supervisor, manager or Human Resources any instances of discriminatory harassment which they have directly observed, whether or not reported by the employee who is the object of the harassment.
- (e) Disciplinary action taken by any supervisor or manager, shall be decided in accordance with Agency policy and after consultation with the Human Resources Director.
- (f) Under no circumstances shall an employee of the Agency who believes that he or she has been the victim of discriminatory harassment be required to first report that harassment to a supervisor or other authority figure if that person or authority figure is the individual who has done the harassing.
- (g) Under no circumstances shall a supervisor, manager, or other authority figure retaliate in any way against an employee who has provided information as a witness to an incident of alleged harassment.
- (h) All supervisors and managers are required to maintain confidentiality to the extent possible in investigating any claims of alleged harassment.
- (i) All supervisors or managers, shall follow up within three months, of any reported incident of discriminatory harassment to determine whether the victim has been subject to any further prohibited conduct.
- (j) Employees who have questions about their rights and obligations set forth herein should contact the Human Resources Department.