

STOCKBRIDGE HOUSING AUTHORITY

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Purpose: The purpose of the Sexual Harassment Policy is to protect employees, tenants, and others legally on Housing Authority property, both males and females, against unsolicited and unwelcomed sexual overtures or conduct, either physical or verbal. This Policy further protects an individual from any retaliation, which might occur as a result of lodging complaints or cooperating in an investigation.

Policy: Sexual harassment in the workplace is unlawful. It is also unlawful to retaliate against anyone for either filing a complaint about sexual harassment or for cooperating with an investigation into a sexual harassment allegation. It is the policy of the Stockbridge Housing Authority that no employee, tenant, or other individual legally on Housing Authority property be harassed by another employee or supervisor on the basis of sex and that no personnel action be taken affecting an employee (either favorably or unfavorably) on the basis of conduct that is not directly related to work performance. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to the following: submitting to or refusing sexual advances, requesting sexual favors, and engaging in verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by an employee, appropriate action will be taken. Such action may range from counseling to termination from employment, and may include such other forms of disciplinary action as are deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

Definition of Conduct Covered by this Policy:

1. The policy prohibits any demand for sexual favors that is accompanied by a promise of favorable job treatment or a threat concerning the employee's employment or a tenant's occupancy.
2. The policy prohibits subtle pressure for sexual favors, including implying or threatening that an applicant's or employee's or tenant's cooperation of a sexual nature (or refusal thereof) will have any effect on the person's employment, job assignment, wages, promotion, conditions of employment, future job opportunities, or tenancy.
3. The policy prohibits behavior that is not welcomed by the employee or tenant and is personally offensive, such as:
 - a. Repeated sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions.
 - b. Continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature, sexually related comments and joking, graphic, or degrading comments about an employee's or tenant's appearance, sexual orientation, or the display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.
 - c. Any uninvited or unwelcome physical contact or touching.
4. The policy does not prohibit occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature or to welcome social relationships.

Procedures: The following procedures are to be followed to implement this policy:

1. Sexual harassment complaints are to be handled according to the following procedures and not according to grievance procedures.
2. Any employee or tenant who feels that he or she is a victim of sexual harassment should immediately report the matter to the Executive Director, 5 Pine Street, P.O. Box 419, Stockbridge, MA 01262, 413/298-3222. If the Executive Director is the party being reported, the report should be filed with the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners.
3. Any questions regarding this policy or a specific fact situation should be brought to the Executive Director, 5 Pine Street, P.O. Box 419, Stockbridge, MA 01262, 413/298-3222.
4. All employees are required to cooperate in a sexual harassment investigation.
5. The confidentiality and privacy of employees and tenants, and those involved will be respected during the investigation.
6. The person filing the complaint and the person against whom the complaint was made will be informed of the results of that investigation, to the extent that is appropriate.
7. If an employee or tenant brings the matter to the Executive Director and does not believe the situation has been satisfactorily resolved, that individual should then bring his or her complaint to the Chairman of the Board, Anna Owens Smith, 413/298-3884.
8. An employee who feels that she/he has been sexually harassed may also file a written complaint with either or both of the following agencies:

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination
436 Dwight Street, Suite 220
Springfield, MA 01103
Phone: (413) 739-2145

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
1 Congress Street 10th Floor, Room 1004
Boston, MA 02114
Phone: (617) 565-3200

Approved by the Stockbridge Housing Authority Board of Commissioners on April 6, 1999.