

St. Andrews Parish Parks & Playground Commission
Policy Manual

Section:	2	Topic:	Harassment
Policy Number:	7		
Page:	1 of 3		

St. Andrew's Parks and Playground Commission is committed to maintaining a work environment that is free of discrimination, harassment and abuse. In keeping with its commitment, SAPPPC will not tolerate any form of harassment or unlawful discrimination against our team members, volunteers, vendors or contractors by anyone, including supervisors, other team members, commissioners, volunteers, vendors, clients, or customers. All team members, commissioners and volunteers must avoid any behavior or conduct that could reasonably be interpreted as unlawful harassment of team members, customers, or vendors, whether they are on agency grounds, on agency business, or at a formal or informal agency function.

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is based on a person's protected status, such as sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, lactation, or other related condition), color, race, ancestry, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, disability or genetic information, medical condition, marital status, military or veteran status, citizenship status, or other protected group status. Harassment includes conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of a person's protected status or that of their relatives, friends, or associates.

Examples of harassment may include epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, threatening, intimidating or hostile acts, denigrating jokes, display or circulation in the workplace of written or graphic material (including e-mail) that denigrates or shows hostility toward an individual or group.

Sex-based discrimination includes both sexual harassment and pregnancy discrimination. Pregnancy discrimination involves treating a woman (an applicant or employee) unfavorably because of pregnancy, childbirth, lactation or a medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth. The Federal Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA) forbids discrimination based on pregnancy when it comes to any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoff, training, fringe benefits, such as leave and health insurance, and any other term or condition of employment.

Sexual harassment is a form of gender-based discrimination that will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment includes harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation,

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self-identified or perceived sex, gender expression, gender identity and the status of being transgender. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other physical, verbal, and visual conduct based on sex may constitute sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct which is either of a sexual nature, or which is directed at an individual because of that person's sex and is unlawful when (1) submission to the conduct is an explicit or implicit term or condition, (2) submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for an employment decision, or (3) the conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. Sexual harassment does not need to be severe or pervasive to be illegal.

A sexually harassing hostile work environment includes but is not limited to words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation or physical violence which are of a sexual nature or which are directed at an individual because of an individual's sex. Sexual harassment may include such actions as: sexually oriented verbal "kidding," "teasing," jokes or stories; foul or obscene gestures; display of foul or obscene printed or visual material; unnecessary physical contact such as patting, pinching, or brushing against another's body; sexist remarks about a person's clothing, body, or sexual activities; leering, ogling, or staring at a person's body; descriptions of sexual acts or boasting about sexual prowess; starting or spreading rumors about a person's sexual activities; or demands for sexual favors. Sexual harassment also consists of any unwanted verbal or physical advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements or sexually discriminatory remarks made by someone which are offensive or objectionable to the recipient, which cause the recipient discomfort or humiliation, which interfere with the recipient's job performance. Sexual harassment can be committed by either sex, against the opposite sex or the same sex.

Unlawful sexual harassment is not limited to St. Andrew's Parks and Playground's physical workplace. It can occur while teammates are traveling on Agency business or at Agency sponsored events or parties, or in remote work environments. Calls, texts, emails, and social media usage by teammates can constitute unlawful workplace harassment even if they occur away from Agency premises, on personal devices or during non-work hours.

If any team member feels they have experienced or witnessed harassment, they should first clearly and firmly inform the offending individual that the behavior is unwelcome, offensive, in poor taste, or inappropriate, and must stop immediately. The offending individual may not realize the behavior has made the individual feel uncomfortable.

If the team member does so and the behavior continues or worsens, or the team member does not feel safe in informing the offending individual of the above, they should immediately notify whoever feels most comfortable in telling: the Executive Director, the Human Resources Director, or their own supervisor. If the complaint involves the Executive Director, the team member may instead notify any member of the Commission.

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When an allegation is made through one of the above channels, the following steps will be taken:

1. The person notified will notify the Human Resources Director, who will handle the entire process and will notify the Executive Director that an allegation has been made. If the Human Resources Director is the subject of the report, the person notified will notify the Executive Director who will then handle the process.
2. The Human Resources Director will conduct a confidential investigation into the alleged incidents. They will keep investigation records, which will remain confidential unless subpoenaed or a similar future report is made regarding the same employee.
3. The Human Resources Director will take action based on the conclusion of the investigation:
 - a. If sexual harassment is found to have occurred, the Human Resource Director will take immediate action to stop it, ranging from counseling to termination of employment, with the approval of the Executive Director. Engaging in harassment is an offense punishable by immediate discharge.
 - b. If the charge is found to be false and to have been made in bad faith, they will bring disciplinary action against the reporting member for violating the Commission's ethics policy.
 - c. If insufficient evidence exists to warrant a definite conclusion, he will advise the Executive Director as to what, in their best judgment, will ensure that the harassment does not occur again. The Executive Director will make the final decision on how the situation is to be handled.
4. The Human Resources Director will follow up with the reporting individual to ensure that they no longer feel harassed.
5. The Executive Director will advise the Commission Chairman of the outcome of the investigation as they deems necessary.

There will be no retaliation against anyone for reporting discrimination or harassment, or for cooperating with an investigation of a report of discrimination or harassment.

SAPPPC is committed to keep reports, investigations, and results confidential to the fullest extent practicable.

In furtherance of the policy, supervisory team members must not date team members within the same chain of command. If a supervisor could terminate or order the termination of a romantic partner, they are in the same chain of command.

Team members who are dating are expected to act professionally while on agency grounds, on agency business or in agency uniform.

If any individual feels they have experienced or witnessed any other type of prohibited harassment, they should follow the same steps listed above.

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