



Town of Royalston

Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy

Introduction

It is the goal of Royalston to promote a professional workplace that treats all who work here with dignity and respect. Sexual harassment is unlawful and will not be tolerated by this organization. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will also not be tolerated.

Because Royalston takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment and where it is demonstrated to our satisfaction that such harassment occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the harassment and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Massachusetts law defines sexual harassment as sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions; or
- b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment.

These definitions are broad and include any unwelcome sexually oriented conduct, whether intended or not, by supervisors, employees in some instances, or third parties, that has the effect of creating a hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating workplace for male or female workers. Prohibited conduct also extends to any function or activity which is officially sponsored by Royalston. While it is not possible for Royalston to list all those circumstances which we would consider to be sexual harassment, the following are some examples:

- a) Unwelcome sexual advances, whether they involve physical touching or not
- b) Requests for sexual favors in exchange for actual or promised job benefits such as favorable reviews, salary increases, promotions, increased benefits, or continued employment
- c) Assault or coerced sexual acts

The following conduct may also constitute sexual harassment in certain circumstances:

- a) Use of sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comments on an individual's body, comments about an

- individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- b) Display of sexually suggestive texts, objects, pictures, cartoons, videos or recordings
- c) Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, or suggestive or insulting comments
- d) Inquiries into one's sexual experiences
- e) Discussion of one's sexual activities
- f) Comments regarding gender stereotypes which demean, embarrass or humiliate employees
- g) Any unwelcome touching, whether explicitly sexual or not

Private Counseling Option

If you believe you are the victim of sexual harassment, you may seek advice from the chair of the Personnel Board, who acts as our Affirmative Action Officer (AAO). The AAO is available to discuss any concerns you may have and to provide information to you about our policy on sexual harassment and our complaint process. If you desire, the AAO will work with you to find a way of resolving your concerns in an informal manner acceptable to you and in a manner which would offer you as much privacy and confidentiality as is possible. If this option does not resolve the complaint, you may proceed through the complaint procedure set forth below.

Complaints of Sexual Harassment

If you believe you are the victim of sexual harassment, you may also file an oral or written complaint with our AAO, who will then investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. This investigation will include a private interview with you, the person alleged to have committed sexual harassment, and any witnesses. The AAO may, if necessary, request written statements in addition to the private interviews. If the AAO is unable to resolve the complaint, he or she will report the investigative findings to the Personnel Board for disposition.

When the investigation is completed through formal or informal procedures, we will inform you and the alleged harasser of the results, including allegations that have not been sustained. If the investigation reveals that sexual harassment did occur, we will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct and, if appropriate, impose disciplinary action.

Disciplinary Action

If sexual harassment has been committed by one of our employees, we will take such action as is appropriate under the circumstances. Such actions may include counseling, informal or formal reprimands, written or verbal warnings, suspension, reduction in pay, reduction in duties, transfers, and other formal sanctions, including termination from employment.

State and Federal Remedies

In addition to the above, if you believe you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the following government agencies:

- The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
1 Congress Street, 10th Floor, Rm. 1001
Boston, MA 02114
(617)565-3200

- The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination

Boston Office:
One Ashburton Place, Rm 601
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 727-3390

Springfield Office:
436 Dwight Street, Rm. 220
Springfield, MA 01103
(413) 739-2145

Adopted 1997

Amended December 5, 2017