

East Central Area Literacy Council

Sexual Harassment Policy

East Central Area Literacy Council is committed to creating and maintaining a positive environment, conducive to teaching and learning. Volunteers and students have the right to work and learn in an environment free from sexual harassment.

All volunteers, employees and students of East Central Area Literacy Council are to be treated fairly and equally. Sexual harassment is inconsistent with this environment and will not be tolerated.

Definition: Sexual harassment may be defined as unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other communication or physical conduct of a sexual nature that takes place under any of the following conditions:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or student's status as a student.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for decisions affecting individual's employment or student status.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance as an employee or student or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Sexual harassment may consist of a variety of behaviors directed to employees or students, including but not limited to, subtle pressure for sexual activity, inappropriate touching, inappropriate language, demands for sexual favors, and physical assault. Other behaviors which may be experienced as intimidating or offensive, particularly when repeated or when one person has authority over another, include:

1. Sexually-oriented jokes, kidding or stories;
2. Veiled suggestions of sexual activity; display of pictures, posters, or other sexually suggestive, demeaning or pornographic material; and/or
3. Touching, patting, pinching or hugging.

Volunteer/Employee's Obligation

Accountability for compliance with this policy shall be the responsibility of all literacy council members and volunteers.

Prohibited Practices

While it is not the intent of the college to regulate employees' social interactions or relationships freely entered into, the college will not tolerate any behavior or communication or physical contact, by any employee or student, which constitutes sexual harassment of another employee or student.

Complaint Process

Employees or students who feel they have been victims of sexual harassment are encouraged to resolve the situation by first using the informal procedure.

A. Informal Procedure

1. Clearly say "no" to the person whose behavior is unwelcomed;

2. Communicate verbally or in writing with the person whose behavior is unwelcomed, describing the incident(s), factually, describing feelings or consequences of the incident(s), and request that the unwelcomed behavior stop immediately; and/or
3. Speak with the appropriate supervisor who may speak with the person whose behavior is unwelcomed.

B. Formal Procedure

If informal resolution has been unsuccessful, a formal grievance may be filed with the executive director for investigation and action.

C. Procedure for Investigation of Claims

It is essential that complaints of sexual harassment be investigated promptly and discreetly. The following procedures will be used as a guideline for investigating sexual harassment claims:

1. Interview complainant regarding the nature and specifics of the incident(s);
2. Interview the person accused of sexual harassment; and
3. Interview other possible witnesses, if appropriate.

D. Action

The executive director will review with the president of the council any disciplinary action or steps to be taken. These may include:

1. Verbal warning.
2. Written warning in the individual's file.
3. Suspension and/or probation.
4. Termination.
5. Dismissal of the case.

Appropriate action will depend on the nature of the complaint, the conclusiveness of the evidence and other circumstances. Records of all investigations will be kept for a reasonable period of time.

Exercise of Rights

Any exercise of the rights provided by this policy and procedures shall not be used as a basis for any type of retaliation.