

# **CITY OF NEWBURGH INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

## **2025 ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY**

### ***Introduction***

The City of Newburgh Industrial Development Agency (the “Agency”) is committed to maintaining a workplace free from harassment of any kind, including harassment based on disability, sex, race, color, religion, pregnancy, national origin or ancestry, creed, age, sexual orientation, military status, domestic violence victim status, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, criminal history, or any other status protected by law. To be clear, this policy prohibits sexual harassment as sexual harassment is a form of workplace discrimination.

All employees are required to ensure the workplace is free from harassment and discrimination of any kind. This policy is one component of the Agency’s commitment to a discrimination-free work environment. Harassment and discrimination are against the law and all employees have a legal right to a workplace free from those constructs. To accomplish this goal, employees are urged to report harassment and discrimination by filing a complaint internally with the Agency. Employees can also file a complaint with the governmental agencies tasked with enforcement of the applicable provisions or in court under federal, state or local anti-discrimination laws.

### ***Policy***

The Agency’s policy applies to all employees, applicants for employment, interns, whether paid or unpaid, contractors and persons conducting business, regardless of immigration status, with the Company. In the remainder of this document, the term “employee” refers to this collective group.

Harassment and/or discrimination will not be tolerated. Any individual covered by this policy who engages in harassment, discrimination, or retaliation will be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary action (e.g., counseling, suspension, termination). It is important to understand that an action or comment that doesn’t violate an anti-discrimination/harassment law could still violate this policy.

No person covered by this policy shall be subject to adverse action because the employee reports an incident of harassment or discrimination in good faith, provides information, or otherwise assists in any investigation of a harassment/discrimination complaint. The Agency will not tolerate such retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports or provides information about

suspected harassment or discrimination. Any employee of the Company who retaliates against anyone involved in a harassment or discrimination investigation will be subjected to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. All employees, paid or unpaid interns, or non-employees<sup>1</sup> working in the workplace who believe they have been subject to such retaliation should inform the Executive Director or any supervisor or manager. All employees, paid or unpaid interns or non-employees who believe they have been a target of such retaliation may also seek relief in other available forums, as explained below in the section on Legal Protections.

Harassment is offensive, is a violation of our policies, is unlawful, and may subject the Agency to liability for harm to targets of harassment. Harassers may also be individually subject to liability. Employees of every level who engage in harassment, including managers and supervisors who engage in harassment or who allow such behavior to continue, will be penalized for such misconduct.

The Agency will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation that ensures due process for all parties, whenever management receives a complaint about discrimination or harassment, or otherwise knows of possible harassment occurring. The Agency will keep the investigation confidential to the extent possible. Effective corrective action will be taken whenever harassment or discrimination is found to have occurred. All employees, including managers and supervisors, are required to cooperate with any internal investigation of harassment.

All employees are encouraged to report any harassment/discrimination or behaviors that violate this policy. THE AGENCY will provide all employees a complaint form for employees to report harassment and file complaints.

Managers and supervisors are required to report any complaint that they receive (regardless of whether it's in writing or made verbally), or any harassment that they observe or become aware of, to Chair or any Vice Chair.

This policy applies to all employees, paid or unpaid interns, and non-employees and all must follow and uphold this policy. This policy shall be provided to all employees and will be posted prominently in all work locations, to the extent practicable, and shall be provided to employees upon hiring.

### ***What Is "Sexual Harassment?"***

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. Sexual harassment includes harassment on the basis of self-

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<sup>1</sup> A non-employee is someone who is (or is employed by) a contractor, subcontractor, vendor, consultant, or anyone providing services in the workplace. Protected non-employees include persons commonly referred to as independent contractors, "gig" workers and temporary workers. Also included are persons providing equipment repair, cleaning services or any other services provided pursuant to a contract with the employer.

identified or perceived sexual orientation, sex, gender expression, gender identity, and the status of being transgender.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct which is either of a sexual nature, or which is directed at an individual because of that individual's sex when:

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, even if the reporting individual is not the intended target of the sexual harassment;
- Such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment;  
or
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting an individual's employment.

A sexually harassing hostile work environment includes, but is not limited to, words, communications, signs, postings, jokes, pranks, intimidation or physical violence which are of a sexual nature, or which are directed at an individual because of that individual's sex. Sexual harassment also consists of any unwanted verbal or physical advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements or sexually discriminatory remarks made by someone which are reasonably offensive or objectionable to the recipient, which cause the recipient discomfort or humiliation, which interfere with the recipient's job performance. Sexual harassment can occur between members of the same or opposing sex or gender.

Sexual harassment also occurs when a person in authority tries to trade job-related benefits for sexual favors. This can include hiring, promotion, continued employment or any other terms, conditions or privileges of employment. This is also called "quid pro quo" harassment.

Any employee who feels harassed should report the potentially harassing conduct so that any violation of this policy can be corrected promptly. Any harassing conduct, even a single incident, can be addressed under this policy.

### ***Examples of Sexual Harassment***

The following describes some, but not all, of the types of acts that may be unlawful sexual harassment and that are strictly prohibited:

- Physical acts of a sexual nature, such as, but not limited to:
  - Touching, pinching, patting, kissing, hugging, grabbing, inappropriately brushing against another employee's body or poking another employee's body;
  - Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults.
- Unwanted sexual advances or propositions, such as, but not limited to:

- Requests for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning the target’s job performance evaluation, a promotion or other job benefits or detriments;
- Subtle or obvious pressure for unwelcome sexual activities.
- Sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks or jokes, or comments about a person’s sexuality or sexual experience, which create a hostile work environment.
- Sex stereotyping, which occurs when an individual’s conduct or personality traits are considered inappropriate by others simply because they may not conform to other people's ideas, assumptions, stereotypes, or perceptions about how individuals of a particular sex or gender should act or look.
- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the workplace, such as, but not limited to:
  - Displaying pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional material, reading materials or other materials that are sexually demeaning or pornographic. This includes such sexual displays on workplace computers or cell phones and sharing such displays while in the workplace.
- Hostile actions taken against an individual because of that individual’s sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and the status of being transgender, such as, but not limited to:
  - Interfering with, destroying or damaging a person’s workstation, tools or equipment, or otherwise interfering with the individual’s ability to perform the job;
  - Sabotaging an individual’s work;
  - Bullying based on protected status, yelling, name-calling.

***Who Can Be A Target Of Sexual Harassment?***

Sexual harassment can occur between any individuals, regardless of their sex or gender. New York Law protects employees, paid or unpaid interns, and non-employees, including independent contractors, and those employed by companies contracting to provide services in the workplace. Harassers can be a superior, a subordinate, a coworker or anyone in the workplace including an independent contractor, contract worker, vendor, client, customer or visitor.

***Where Can Sexual Harassment Occur?***

Unlawful sexual harassment is not limited to the physical workplace itself. It can occur while employees are traveling for business or at employer sponsored events or parties. Calls, texts, emails, and social media usage by employees can constitute unlawful workplace harassment, even if they occur away from the workplace premises, on personal devices or during non-work hours.

## ***Retaliation***

Retaliation occurs when an individual, because of another's engagement in a protected activity, causes an adverse action to occur against the other individual due to said protected activity. Unlawful retaliation can also be any action that could discourage a worker from coming forward to make or support a harassment claim. Adverse action need not be job-related or occur in the workplace to constitute unlawful retaliation (e.g., threats of physical violence outside of work hours).

Retaliation is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. For example, the New York State Human Rights Law protects any individual who has engaged in "protected activity." Protected activity occurs when a person has:

- made a good faith complaint of harassment, either internally or with any anti-discrimination agency;
- testified or assisted in a proceeding involving harassment under the Human Rights Law or other anti-discrimination law;
- opposed harassment by making a verbal or informal good faith complaint to management, or by simply informing a supervisor or manager of harassment;
- reported in good faith that another employee has been harassed; or
- encouraged a fellow employee to report harassment.

Even if the alleged harassment does not rise to the level of a violation of law or this policy, the individual is protected from retaliation if the person had a good faith belief that the practices were unlawful. However, this anti-retaliation provision is not intended to protect persons making intentionally false charges of harassment.

## ***Reporting Harassment***

Preventing harassment is everyone's responsibility. THE AGENCY cannot prevent or remedy harassment unless it knows about it. Any employee, paid or unpaid intern or non-employee who has been subjected to behavior that may constitute harassment is encouraged to report such behavior to the Chair or any Vice Chair or any supervisor or manager. Anyone who witnesses or becomes aware of potential instances of harassment should report such behavior to the Executive Director or any supervisor or manager.

Reports of harassment may be made verbally or in writing. A form for submission of a written complaint can be obtained from the Chair or Vice Chair or any supervisor or manager, and all employees are encouraged to use this complaint form. Employees who are reporting sexual

harassment on behalf of other employees should use the complaint form and note that it is on another employee's behalf. An individual making a verbal complaint may be asked to complete a complaint form. In the event that an employee requests to not fill out the applicable form, the form may be completed on their behalf based on the information provided.

### ***Other Forums Available to Address Sexual Harassment***

Employees, paid or unpaid interns or non-employees who believe they have been a target of sexual harassment may also seek assistance in other available forums, as explained below in the section on Legal Protections And External Remedies With Respect To Sexual Harassment.

### ***Supervisory Responsibilities***

All supervisors and managers who receive a complaint or information about suspected harassment either in writing or verbally, observe what may be harassing behavior or for any reason suspect that harassment is occurring, are required to report such suspected sexual harassment to Chair or any Vice Chair.

In addition to being subject to discipline if they engaged in harassing conduct themselves, supervisors and managers will be subject to discipline for failing to report possible harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or otherwise knowingly allowing harassment to continue.

Supervisors and managers will also be subject to discipline for engaging in any retaliation.

### ***Complaint and Investigation of Harassment***

All complaints or information about possible harassment will be investigated, whether that information was reported in verbal or written form. Investigations will be conducted in a timely manner, and will be confidential to the extent possible. Only those authorized by the Agency will perform investigations into possible harassment or discrimination. Supervisors and managers are not to perform investigations under this policy, including any "self-help" actions, unless expressly authorized to do so.

An investigation of any complaint, information, or knowledge of possible harassment will be reasonably prompt and thorough, commenced immediately, and completed as soon as possible. The investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible. All persons involved, including complainants, witnesses and alleged harassers will be accorded due process, as outlined below, to protect their rights to a fair and impartial investigation.

Any employee may be required to cooperate as needed in an investigation of suspected harassment. The Agency will not tolerate retaliation against employees who file good faith complaints, support another's complaint or participate in an investigation conducted pursuant to this policy.

While the process may vary from case to case, the Agency will, typically, engage in the following steps:

- Upon receipt of complaint, the Agency, or its designee, will conduct an immediate review of the allegations, and take any interim actions (e.g., instructing the alleged harasser to refrain from communications with the complainant), as appropriate. If the complaint is verbal, the Agency will encourage the individual to complete the “Complaint Form” in writing. If the complainant refuses, the Agency may prepare a Complaint Form based on the verbal reporting.
- If documents, emails or phone records are relevant to the investigation, the Agency will take steps to obtain and preserve them.
- Request and review all relevant documents, including all electronic communications.
- Interview all parties involved, including any relevant witnesses.
- Create a written documentation of the investigation (such as a letter, memo or email), which contains the following:
  - A list of all documents reviewed, along with a detailed summary of relevant documents;
  - A list of names of those interviewed, along with a detailed summary of their statements;
  - A timeline of events;
  - A summary of prior relevant incidents, reported or unreported; and
  - The basis for the decision and final resolution of the complaint, together with any corrective action(s).
- Keep the written documentation and associated documents in a secure and confidential location.
- Promptly notify the individual who reported the possible harassment and the individual(s) about whom the complaint was made of the final determination and implement any corrective actions identified in the written document. Specific findings will not be provided to these individuals, but the determination as to whether the complaint was founded or unfounded (in whole or in part) will be provided. Additional details may also be provided thereafter if confidentiality can be maintained.
- Inform the individual who reported the possible harassment of their right to file a complaint or charge externally.

## ***Legal Protections and External Remedies with Respect to Sexual Harassment***

Sexual harassment is not only prohibited by the Agency but is also prohibited by state, federal, and, where applicable, local law.

Aside from the internal process at the Agency, employees may also choose to pursue legal remedies with the governmental entities listed below. While a private attorney is not required to file a complaint with a governmental agency, an employee may seek the legal advice of an attorney.

In addition to those outlined below, employees in certain industries may have additional legal protections.

### ***State Human Rights Law (HRL)***

The Human Rights Law (HRL), codified as N.Y. Executive Law, art. 15, § 290 *et seq.*, applies to all employers in New York State with regard to sexual harassment, and protects employees, paid or unpaid interns and non-employees, regardless of immigration status. A complaint alleging violation of the Human Rights Law may be filed with the Division of Human Rights (DHR). A legal action alleging a violation of said provision may also be filed in a court of competent jurisdiction.

Complaints with DHR may be filed any time within three-years (as of 2024) of the harassment. In determining whether to file a complaint with a governmental agency or to file a legal action in court, employees should consult with an attorney.

Complaining internally to the Agency does not extend your time to file with DHR or in court. The three years is counted from date of the most recent incident of harassment.

You do not need an attorney to file a complaint with DHR, and there is no cost to file with DHR.

DHR will investigate your complaint and determine whether there is probable cause to believe that harassment has occurred. Probable cause cases are forwarded to a public hearing before an administrative law judge. If harassment is found after a hearing, DHR has the power to award certain relief, which varies but may include requiring your employer to take action to stop the harassment, or redress the damage caused, including paying of monetary damages, attorney's fees and civil fines.

DHR's main office contact information is: NYS Division of Human Rights, One Fordham Plaza, Fourth Floor, Bronx, New York 10458. You may call (718) 741-8400 or visit: [www.dhr.ny.gov](http://www.dhr.ny.gov).

Contact DHR at (888) 392-3644 or visit [dhr.ny.gov/complaint](http://dhr.ny.gov/complaint) for more information about filing a complaint. The website has a complaint form that can be filled out. The website also contains contact information for DHR's regional offices across New York State.

## ***Civil Rights Act of 1964***

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces federal anti-discrimination laws, including Title VII of the 1964 federal Civil Rights Act (codified as 42 U.S.C. § 2000-e *et seq.*). An individual can file a complaint with the EEOC anytime within 300 days from the last date of the alleged harassment if there is a corresponding State Law, otherwise the individual has 180 days to file with the EEOC. There is no cost to file a complaint with the EEOC. The EEOC will investigate the complaint, and determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that discrimination has occurred, at which point the EEOC will issue a Right to Sue letter permitting the individual to file a complaint in court.

The EEOC does not hold hearings or award relief, but may take other action including pursuing cases in federal court on behalf of complaining parties. Federal courts may award remedies if discrimination is found to have occurred. In general, private employers must have at least 15 employees to come within the jurisdiction of the EEOC.

An employee alleging discrimination at work can file a “Charge of Discrimination.” The EEOC has district, area, and field offices where complaints can be filed. Contact the EEOC by calling 1-800-669-4000 (TTY: 1-800-669-6820), visiting their website at [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov) or via email at [info@eeoc.gov](mailto:info@eeoc.gov).

If an individual filed an administrative complaint with DHR, DHR will file the complaint with the EEOC to preserve the right to proceed in federal court.

## ***Local Protections***

Many localities enforce laws protecting individuals from sexual harassment and discrimination. An individual should contact the county, city or town in which they live to find out if such a law exists.

## ***Contact the Local Police Department***

If the harassment involves unwanted physical touching, coerced physical confinement or coerced sex acts, the conduct may constitute a crime. Contact the local police department if you believe it is necessary to do so.