

HARASSMENT POLICY

1. Purpose

The Washington Parish Assessor's Office is committed to providing an environment for our employees and persons served by our Office that is comfortable, safe, and free from harassment of any kind. Any type of harassment is a violation of this policy and may be illegal. All employees are required to take the one-hour course, "Preventing Sexual Harassment", provided by the State Civil Service Department. The Assessor and the Chief Deputy are also required to take the one-hour course "Preventing Sexual Harassment for Supervisors". An annual report on training, complaints, findings, and time to resolve will be made available to the public in the manner provided by the Public Records Law.

2. Definition

Harassment can take many forms. It may be, but is not limited to, the following: words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation, physical contact, or violence. Harassment does not have to be sexual in nature. Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature when such conduct creates an intimidating environment or prevents an individual from effectively performing the duties of his or her position, or when such conduct is made a condition of employment or compensation, either implicitly or explicitly. It is not the intent of the behavior by the offender that determines if harassment has occurred but whether the behavior is welcome by the receiver.

3. Responsibility

A covered person is responsible for helping keep our work environment free of harassment, including the work environment of clients or the public with whom you have contact. If you become aware of an incident of harassment, whether by witnessing the incident or being told of it, you must report it to the Chief Deputy or the Assessor with whomever you feel comfortable. When the Office becomes aware of harassment, it is obligated by law to take prompt and appropriate action, regardless of whether the victim wants the office to do so.

4. Complaint Procedure

Any Covered Person, who believes that he or she has suffered harassment in violation of the Harassment Policy, should take the following action:

- a. If you are able to do so without conflict or danger, tell the harasser as clearly as possible that the behavior is unwelcome;
- b. If the behavior continues, advise your direct supervisor of your complaint. Clearly identify the behavior surrounding the complaint.

5. Confidentiality

The Company, including all persons to whom a violation of this Harassment Policy has been reported and persons who have become aware of a complaint, must maintain confidentiality, to the extent possible given the need to investigate. All complaints shall be considered confidential to the maximum extent possible.

6. Retaliation

The Office, Assessor, Chief Deputy, or any employee may not retaliate against any victim, or witness, who reports a violation of the Harassment Policy. Any person who believes that he or she has been retaliated against should consult with the Assessor or Chief Deputy.