



City of Arts & Innovation

Human Resources Board

TO: HUMAN RESOURCES BOARD

FROM: HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: HARASSMENT FREE WORKPLACE (III-6)

DATE: MAY 5, 2025

ISSUE:

Approve revisions to the Harassment Free Workplace Policy (III-6).

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Human Resources Board approve revisions to the Harassment Free Workplace Policy (III-6).

BACKGROUND:

The Harassment Free Workplace Policy (III-6) was last revised in June 2013. As part of the Human Resources Department's practice of regularly reviewing and updating policies and procedures, this policy was reviewed and refined.

DISCUSSION

The Harassment Free Workplace Policy (III-6) includes revisions to support and preserve the right of employees to be free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation in the workplace and set uniform guidelines for the resolution of complaints.

The revisions to the Harassment Free Workplace Policy were broadened to ensure accountability and now explicitly include visitors, board and commission members, elected officials, interns and prospective employees ensuring that workplace protections cover interactions beyond traditional employee relationships. This addition acknowledges that harassment can originate from individuals outside of the workplace and ensures employees are protected in all workplace interactions.

Additionally, the definitions of harassment have been expanded to acknowledge inappropriate behavior occurring during public meetings. This change reflects concerns about inappropriate conduct from constituents who may cross the line into harassment and reinforces that all participating parties in these settings must adhere to the standards outlined within this policy.

This list of examples of what may constitute prohibited harassment was expanded to include unwanted physical contact, speech, visual contact, and explicit or implicit suggestions of sex in return for favorable employment.

The retaliation section of the policy was also revised to encourage employees to report retaliation to their supervisor, another manager, or the Human Resources Department, giving the employee great accessibility to the reporting process.

The text contained within the reporting procedures was refined to strengthen the definition of retaliation and ensure broader protection for employees who witness and report inappropriate conduct. The changes within this section ensure that employees feel safe reporting misconduct without fear or negative consequences.

The employee obligation section was strengthened to ensure that employees formalize any forms of harassment by completing a Harassment Compliant Form to ensure that all allegations are properly documented.

In addition, a training section was added to the policy to ensure compliance with Assembly Bill (AB 1825).

Furthermore, this policy also includes administrative changes to reflect process changes and to conform to a citywide format.

This policy was reviewed by City Management, the City Attorney's Office, a City-Wide Policy Committee, and if applicable sent to the respective Union for their concurrence with all policy changes.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This item contributes to Strategic Priority No. 5 High Performing Government and Goal No. 5.3 – Enhance communication and collaboration with community members to improve transparency, build public trust, and encourage shared decision-making.

This item aligns with EACH of the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – The policy contained within this report has been reviewed and approved by the City Attorney's Office, will be reviewed by the Human Resources Board, and a Public Hearing will be held to receive public input and build community trust.
2. **Equity** – Policies and procedures reflect the City's vision, values and culture and ensures equality for all employees.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – There is no funding associated with this report. However, updated policies and procedures ensure that quality services are provided to all.
4. **Innovation** – A collaborative and innovative approach was used to revise this policy to meet the City's current and changing needs while ensuring compliance with various rules and regulations.

5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – To maintain a sustainable and resilient workforce it is important to keep all policies and procedures up-to-date to ensure equitable applicability of personnel rules.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Colene Torres, Deputy Human Resources Director

Attachments:

Harassment Free Workplace Policy (III-6)