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# Board Policy



## Anti-Harassment Policy

### Policy Statement

Pierce County Library System commits to promoting a workplace environment that reflects the diversity of its community, and is free of unlawful harassing behaviors.

### Purpose

It is the Pierce County Library System's goal to provide a work environment that promotes mutual respect and is free from all forms of harassment because it damages the workplace and negatively affects morale, motivation, and job performance.

This policy affirms the Library's commitment to the elimination of unlawful harassment which limits human potential, or impedes communication, understanding or access to information. The Library complies with state and federal law.

### Definitions

Sexual Harassment: is defined as a form of unlawful discrimination. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other physical, verbal, or visual conduct based on sex constitute sexual harassment when (1) submission to the conduct is an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment, (2) submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for an employment decision, or (3) the conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Workplace Harassment: Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is based upon a person's protected status, such as age, sex, marital or family status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, race, creed, color, national origin, religion, military or honorably discharged veteran status, gender identity, ancestry, disability, genetic information, citizenship or immigration status, or other protected group status. The Library will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects tangible job benefits, that interferes unreasonably with an individual's work performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Such harassment is prohibited by Library policy, even if it occurs off the work site while the employee engaging in the behavior is performing work related duties or representing the Library as the Library's employee.

Examples of Harassment. Library employees are expected to exercise good judgment and avoid engaging in conduct that could be perceived by others as harassment. Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal: repeated sexual comments or innuendoes, racial or sexual epithets, derogatory slurs, off-color jokes, propositions, threats or suggestive or insulting sounds;

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- Visual/Non-verbal: derogatory posters, cartoons, drawings or emails; suggestive objects or pictures; graphic commentaries; leering; or obscene gestures;
- Physical: unwanted physical contact including touching, interference with an individual's normal work movement or assault; and
- Other: making or threatening reprisals as a result of a negative response to harassment.

## Policy

The Library will not tolerate any form of harassing conduct that affects tangible job benefits, that interferes unreasonably with an individual's work performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. The Library will not tolerate harassment by employees or of Library employees by anyone, including any co-worker, contractor, vendor, member of the public, or other third party.

All employees are expected to act in a professional and respectful manner that promotes diversity and maintains a harassment-free work environment.

It is the responsibility of all staff members to:

- Not engage in behavior that constitutes unlawful harassment.
- Fully cooperate in carrying out this policy.
- Communicate any concerns regarding harassment, or retaliation to the Staff Experience Director or a Human Resources Generalist.

Complaint Procedure. The Library will not tolerate harassment by employees or of Library employees by anyone, including any co-worker, contractor, vendor, member of the public, or other third party. Any employee who believes that they have been discriminated against should report it to their supervisor, any Library manager, or the Staff Experience Department. The Library encourages employees to use this policy without worrying about whether the conduct involved is considered harassment in a legal sense. Any manager who receives such a complaint should report it to the Staff Experience Department immediately. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Library will investigate and take appropriate corrective action as may be warranted, up to and including termination. The Library prohibits retaliation or adverse action against employees because of their good faith report of harassment or participation in an investigation regarding the same.

**Board Policy 4.4 Adopted by the Pierce County Library System Board of Trustees June 13, 2012  
(as Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy)**

**First Revision: February 10, 2021**