



Administrative Policy

Title: Harassment Policy			
Administered By: Human Resources Department			
Issue Date	Revision Date	Department Head Approved	City Manager Approved
1/3/2017	7/15/2025	Signed by: <i>Lori Sassoon</i> <small>F6039B40F6F94B8...</small>	DocuSigned by: <i>Jacob Ellis</i> <small>8CB6AE0895944B4...</small>

ARTICLE I - PURPOSE

Section 1.1 General Purpose

The City of Corona ("City") is committed to preventing discrimination, harassment, and retaliation in the workplace. Harassment of any sort -- verbal, physical, or visual -- will not be tolerated. This includes sexual harassment and harassment based on an employee's status in a protected classification. This policy also prohibits unlawful harassment based on the perception that someone has any protected characteristics or is associated with a person who has, or is perceived to have, any protected characteristics.

Section 1.2 Superseded Policies

This policy supersedes and replaces the following policy, which is hereby eliminated in its entirety and is of no further force and/or effect:

- Policy 01400.004 – Workplace Harassment administered by the Human Resources Department.

ARTICLE II - DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE

Section 2.1 Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

- A. **Protected Classification.** The term “Protected Classification” includes race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, reproductive health decision making, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, or related medical conditions), gender identity, gender expression, age (40 and over), sexual orientation, military and veteran status, or any other basis protected by law.
- B. **Protected Activity.** The term “Protected Activity” includes, but is not limited to, the following activities: (1) making a request for an accommodation for a disability; (2) making a request for accommodation for religious beliefs or practices; (3) making a complaint under this policy; (4) opposing violations of this policy; or (5) participating in an investigation under this policy; (6) refusing to follow orders that would result in discrimination; (7) resisting sexual advances, or intervening to protect others. This policy prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation because of an individual’s protected activity.
- C. **Discrimination.** This policy prohibits treating a covered individual differently and adversely because of the individual’s actual or perceived protected classification, because the individual associates with a person who is or is perceived to be a member of a protected classification, or because the individual participates in a protected activity as defined in this policy.
- D. **Harassment.** This policy prohibits harassment of a covered individual because of the individual’s actual or perceived protected classification. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following conduct:
 - 1. Derogatory, offensive, or inappropriate speech, such as epithets, slurs, stereotypical comments, or verbal propositions made on the basis of the individual’s protected classification. This includes, but is not limited to, comments, stories, and jokes about appearance, dress, physical features, gender identification, and race.
 - 2. Physical acts, such as assault, intentional impeding or blocking movement for the purpose of confinement, offensive touching, or physical interference with normal work or movement. This includes, but is not limited to, pinching, grabbing, patting, or making explicit or implied job threats or promises in return for submission to, or refusal of, physical acts.

3. Visual acts, such as derogatory, offensive, or inappropriate posters, cartoons, emails, pictures, or drawings related to a protected classification.
4. Unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other acts of a sexual nature, where submission is made a term or condition of employment, where submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions, or where the conduct is intended to or actually does unreasonably interfere with an individual's work performance or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

The following sets forth specific guidance on identifying certain types of harassment:

Conduct that is not intended as to harass: Conduct may violate this policy if the conduct is directed at, or implicates a protected classification and the recipient reasonably finds the conduct to be offensive or inappropriate, even if its well-intentioned conduct (e.g., gifts, over-attention, endearing nicknames, hugs) may nevertheless constitute harassment if the conduct is directed at, or implicates a protected classification, and if the individual reasonably finds such conduct inappropriate or offensive. The City will consider the totality of the facts when evaluating the conduct to which a recipient appeared to have consented.

Conduct to which the recipient appears to have consented: The City does not recognize as a defense that the recipient appeared to have consented to the conduct at issue by failing to protest about the conduct. A recipient may not protest offensive or inappropriate conduct for many legitimate reasons, including, but not limited to, the need to avoid being perceived as insubordinate or to avoid being ostracized or subjected to retaliation.

Conduct about which no employees previously complained: The fact that no employee previously complained about the same or substantially similar conduct does not mean that the conduct is inoffensive or appropriate nor does that fact preclude an employee from complaining about such conduct if it is repeated.

Conduct witnessed by a third party or about which a third party learns, even if they did not witness such conduct: Visual, verbal, or physical conduct between two (2) people who do not find such conduct to be offensive or inappropriate may constitute harassment of a third-party witnesses. Conduct can constitute harassment even if it is not explicitly or specifically directed at a particular individual.

- E. Retaliation. "Retaliation" occurs when an employer takes adverse action against a covered individual because of the individual's protected activity as defined in this policy.

- F. **Adverse action.** “Adverse Action” may include, but is not limited to, the following actions: (1) discipline; (2) counseling; (3) taking sides because an individual has reported harassment or discrimination; (4) spreading rumors about a complainant or about someone who supports or assists the complainant or who participates in the investigation; (5) shunning or avoiding an individual who reports harassment or discrimination; or (6) making real or implied threats of intimidation to prevent or deter an individual from reporting harassment or discrimination.

Section 2.2 General Scope

This policy covers applicants for employment at the City of Corona, City of Corona employees regardless of rank or title, elected or appointed officials of the City of Corona, interns, volunteers, and contractors.

This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, internships, and volunteer opportunities, including, but not limited to, selection, hiring, placement, promotion, discipline, layoff, recall, transfer, leave of absence, compensation, and training.

Section 2.3 Exemptions from Scope

NONE.

ARTICLE III – RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

Section 3.1 Proactive Approach

The City of Corona takes a proactive approach to potential policy violations and will conduct an investigation if its supervisory or management employees become aware that harassment, discrimination, or retaliation occurred or may be occurring, regardless of whether the recipient or third party reports a potential violation.

Section 3.2 Complaint Procedure

- A. A covered individual who believes they have been subjected to discrimination, harassment, or retaliation may make a complaint, either orally or in writing, to any supervisor, manager, their Department Director/Department Head or to the Chief Talent Officer, without regard to any chain of command.
- B. Any supervisory or management employee who receives a harassment complaint should immediately notify the Chief Talent Officer. If the Chief Talent Officer is accused, or a witness to the events at issue, the reporting party may notify the

Assistant City Manager and an individual with higher authority will complete and/or delegate the below enumerated steps.

- C. Upon receiving notification of a complaint regarding discrimination, harassment or retaliation, the Chief Talent Officer or their designee will complete and/or delegate the following steps:
1. Authorize and supervise the investigation of the complaint and/or investigate the complaint. The investigation will usually include interviews with the following individuals: (1) the complainant; (2) the accused (i.e., the subject of the investigation); (3) witnesses to the conduct at issue in the complaint; and (4) other persons who have relevant knowledge concerning the allegations in the complaint.
 2. Review the factual information gathered during the investigation to determine whether the alleged conduct violated the policy giving consideration to all factual information, the totality of the circumstances (including the nature of the conduct), and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred.
 3. Prepare a summary report of the determination as to whether the conduct violated this policy and provide such report to the appointing authority (i.e., City Manager and/or Department Head). If discipline or sanctions are imposed, the level of discipline or sanctions will not be communicated to the complainant.
 4. If conduct in violation of this policy occurred, take or recommend to the appointing authority prompt and effective remedial action. The remedial action will be commensurate with the severity of the offense.
 5. Take reasonable steps to protect the complainant from further harassment, discrimination or retaliation.

Section 3.3 Right to File Report with Outside Administrative Agencies

An individual possesses the right to report workplace harassment, discrimination, or retaliation to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and/or the California Civil Rights Department (CRD).

These administrative agencies provide a complaint process as well as certain legal remedies where the applicable agency determined that a violation of the law occurred.

The nearest EEOC and CRD offices are listed on the internet here (EEOC: [Los Angeles District Office | U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#); CRD: [Office Locations | CRD](#)) Employees may also check the posters that are located on City bulletin boards for EEOC and CRD office locations and telephone numbers.

Section 3.4 Confidentiality

The City will make every effort to assure the confidentiality of complaints made under this policy to the greatest extent allowed by law. However, complete confidentiality cannot be promised to ensure a thorough investigation and take appropriate remedial action.

The City expressly prohibits an employee who is interviewed during the course of an investigation from attempting to influence other employees, including employees who may have witnessed the underlying conduct at issue, while the investigation is open and ongoing.

An employee may discuss their interview with a designated representative from the employee's employee organization and/or the employee's legal representative. The City will not disclose a completed investigation report except as it deems necessary to support a disciplinary action, to take remedial action, to defend itself in adversarial proceedings, or to comply with the law or court order.

Section 3.5 Summary of Responsibilities

A. Each non-supervisor or non-manager is responsible for the following:

1. Treating all individuals in the workplace or on City worksites with respect and consideration.
2. Modeling behavior that conforms to this policy.
3. Participating in periodic trainings on personnel matters.
4. Cooperating with the City's investigations pursuant to this policy by responding fully and truthfully and in a timely manner to all questions posed during the investigation.
5. Taking no actions to influence the complainant or any potential witness while the City's investigation is ongoing.
6. Reporting any act they believe in good faith constitutes harassment, discrimination or retaliation as defined in this policy, to their immediate supervisor or manager, or Department Director, or the Chief Talent Officer.

- B. In addition to the responsibilities listed above, each manager and supervisor is responsible for:
1. Informing employees under their supervision of this policy.
 2. Taking all steps necessary to prevent harassment, discrimination and, retaliation from occurring, including, but not limited to, monitoring the work environment and taking immediate and appropriate action to stop violations (e.g., removing inappropriate pictures or correcting inappropriate language).
 3. Receiving and responding to complaints in a uniformly fair and serious manner
 4. Documenting the steps taken to resolve such complaints.
 5. Following up with those who have complained to ensure that the offensive conduct about which they complained has stopped and that there have been no reprisals or retaliation or threats of reprisals or retaliation.
 6. Assisting and/or advising employees regarding this policy.
 7. Assisting in the investigation of complaints involving subordinate employee(s).
 8. Where a complaint is substantiated, assisting in the development of a recommendation concerning an appropriate corrective or disciplinary action in accordance with these policies.
 9. Implementing appropriate corrective or disciplinary actions.
 10. Reporting potential violations of this policy to the Chief Talent Officer, regardless of whether an employee complained about such conduct.
 11. Participating in periodic training and scheduling employees for training.

PRIOR VERSIONS

ISSUED: 01/03/2017

REVISED: 07/15/2025