WEST NORRITON TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Subject: Harassment in the Workplace		Policy # 1.8.2
Accreditation 1.8.2		
Effective Date: July 23, 2008	Revised Date: April 20, 2023	
By Authority Of: Chief Michael A. Kelly	Signature: Michael A. Kelly	

1.8.2 HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a healthy work environment and to provide procedures for reporting, investigating and resolving complaints of harassment, sexual or otherwise and discrimination.

B. POLICY

It is the policy of West Norriton Township to maintain an environment free from harassment based on sex, race, age, religion, ethnicity, disability, sexual preference and other protected classification and discrimination. Such harassment or discrimination in any manner or form by anyone is expressly prohibited. Retaliation against any individual for complaining about alleged harassment or discrimination or for cooperating with an investigation of alleged harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated either.

All reported or suspected violations of this policy will be promptly and thoroughly investigated in a manner designed to protect the privacy of those involved to the extent possible. Where a violation of this policy has occurred, West Norriton Township will take appropriate corrective action, including, without limitation, suspension or termination.

C. DEFINITIONS

1. Racial, age-based, religious, sex, sexual orientation, ethnic, disability and other forms of harassment are best described as conduct that has the purpose or effect of:

   a. Unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, or
   b. Creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

2. Examples of harassment prohibited under this policy include use of epithets or other derogatory words or actions based upon someone's sex, race, gender, color, national origin, ethnic origin, religion, age physical or mental impairment or sexual preference.

3. Sexual harassment, as one form of harassment, has been defined by the EEOC to be any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

    a. Submission to such conduct is an explicit or implicit condition of employment;
    b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions; or
    c. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of:

        i. Unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, or
        ii. Creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

4. Employees are required to avoid all conduct that can contribute to sexual harassment by refraining from actions, language and jokes of a sexual nature or based upon gender and by disposing of materials, such as posters or magazines depicting people as sexual objects.

5. Discrimination – The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of ethnicity, age, sex or disability.

D. PERSONS COVERED

1. This policy applies to anyone who works for the West Norriton Township Police Department as well as business invitees and people who come into the West Norriton Police Station. It prohibits sexual harassment or discrimination of employees, applicants for employment and non-employees. The gender of the alleged harasser and the alleged victim is immaterial.

E. EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSIBILITY

1. Each supervisor shall be responsible for preventing acts of harassment or discrimination. This responsibility includes:

    a. Monitoring the unit work environment on a daily basis for signs that harassment may be occurring;
    b. Counseling all employees on the types of behavior prohibited and the Department procedures for reporting and resolving complaints of harassment or discrimination.
    c. Stopping any observed acts that may be considered harassment or discrimination and taking appropriate steps to intervene, whether or not the involved employees are within his/her line of supervision; and
    d. Taking immediate action to limit the work contact between two employees where there has been a complaint of harassment or discrimination pending investigation.

2. Each supervisor has the responsibility to assist any employee of the Department who comes to that supervisor with a complaint of harassment or discrimination in documenting and filing the complaint.

3. Each employee of this Department is responsible for assisting in the prevention of harassment or discrimination through the following acts;

   a. Refraining from participation in or encouragement of actions that could be perceived as harassment or discrimination;
   b. Reporting acts of harassment or discrimination to a supervisor; and
   c. Encouraging any employee who confides that he/she is being harassed or discriminated against to report these acts to a supervisor.

4. Failure to take action to stop known harassment or discrimination shall be grounds for disciplinary action.

F. REPORTING HARASSMENT

1. All complaints of harassment, sexual or otherwise, or discrimination shall be promptly and thoroughly investigated and prompt remedial action shall be taken should the West Norriton Township Police Department conclude that harassment or discrimination has taken place.

2. Employees encountering harassment or discrimination shall tell the person that their actions are unwelcome and offensive. The employee shall document all incidents of harassment or discrimination in order to provide the fullest basis for investigation. Employees encountering harassment, whether sexual or otherwise, or discrimination are strongly encouraged to report the incident immediately.

3. Any employee who believes that he/she is being harassed or discriminated against shall report the incidents to his/her immediate supervisor as soon as possible so that steps may be taken to protect the employee from further harassment or discrimination, and appropriate investigative and disciplinary measures may be initiated. If the offender is the employee's supervisor the employee shall report the incident to offender's supervisor.

4. The supervisor or other person to whom a complaint is given shall meet with the employee and document the incidents complained of, the person(s) performing or participating in the harassment or discrimination and the dates on which it occurred.

5. The Department employee taking the complaint shall expeditiously deliver the complaint to the appropriate investigative authority.

6. The Chief of Police or his designee shall be responsible for the investigation of any complaint of alleged harassment or discrimination.

a. The investigator shall immediately notify the Chief of Police if the complaint contains evidence of criminal activity, such as assault, rape or attempted rape.
b. The investigation report shall include a determination whether other employees are being harassed or discriminated against by the person(s) and whether other agency members participated in or encouraged the harassment or discrimination.
c. The investigator shall inform all parties involved of the outcome of the investigation.
d. A file of harassment or discrimination complaints shall be maintained by the Chief of Police.

7. There shall be no retaliation against any employee for filing a harassment or discrimination complaint or assisting, testifying or participating in the investigation of such complaints. Any employee who believes that they have been retaliated against because of their participation in a harassment or discrimination type investigation shall immediately report this to the Chief of Police.

8. Complainants may file a grievance/appeal in accordance with the Departments' procedures when they disagree with the investigation or disposition of a harassment or discrimination claim.

9. This policy does not preclude any employee from filing a complaint or grievance with an appropriate outside agency.

10. Management

    a. West Norriton Township is committed to making certain that its actions, and those of its agents and supervisory employees, are free from harassment or discrimination of employees and applicants for employment and to taking appropriate corrective actions in instances in which it learns of harassment or discrimination. West Norriton Township will also take appropriate corrective action against those agents, supervisory employee, or others who know of or should have known of harassment or discrimination of any employee or applicant for employment by any employee.