



**COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO
POLICY MANUAL**

No. 07-01

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EFFECTIVE DATE March 20, 2018

**POLICY PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION,
HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION**

APPROVED

ROBERT LOVINGOOD
Chair, Board of Supervisors

POLICY STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

The County of San Bernardino (County) is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and retaliation.

DEPARTMENTS AFFECTED

Board of Supervisors, Elected Officials, all County Agencies and Departments, Board-Governed Special Districts, and Board-Governed Entities.

POLICY

The County prohibits discrimination, harassment and retaliation by all persons involved in or related to the County's business or operations, which includes, but is not limited to: any County elected official; any employee of the County, including supervisors, managers, and co-workers; applicants; contract employees; temporary agency employees; interns; volunteers; contractors; all persons providing services pursuant to a contract, including suppliers and customers; and all other persons with whom individuals come into contact while working. Conduct does not need to rise to the level of a violation of law in order to violate this Policy.

The County prohibits and will not tolerate discrimination, harassment and/or retaliation on the basis of:

- Race
- Religion (includes religious dress and grooming practices)
- Color
- National Origin (includes language use restrictions and possession of a driver's license issued pursuant to California Vehicle Code section 12801.9 [authorizing the DMV to issue a driver's license to a person who is unable to prove that their presence in the United States is authorized under federal law])
- Ancestry
- Disability (mental and physical, including HIV and AIDS, cancer and genetic characteristics)
- Medical Condition (genetic characteristics, cancer or a record or history of cancer)
- Genetic Information
- Marital Status/Registered Domestic Partner Status
- Sex/Gender (includes pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding and/or related medical conditions)
- Gender Identity/Gender Expression/Sex Stereotype/Transgender (includes persons who are transitioning, have transitioned, or are perceived to be transitioning)
- Sexual Orientation
- Age (40 and above)
- Military and Veteran Status
- Any other basis protected by applicable federal, state or local law or ordinance or regulation.

These classes and/or categories are the "Protected Class(es)" covered under this Policy. For more information, visit www.dfeh.ca.gov/Employment.

The County also prohibits and will not tolerate discrimination, harassment and retaliation based on the perception that an individual is a member of one or more of the Protected Classes, or is associated with a person who is or is perceived to be a member of one or more of the Protected Classes.

The County also prohibits and will not tolerate retaliation against individuals who raise complaints of discrimination or harassment or who participate in workplace investigations, hearings, or other proceedings regarding a complaint under this Policy.

1. DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED

The County prohibits discrimination against any employee, job applicant or unpaid intern in hiring, training, promotions, assignments, termination, or any other term, condition, or privilege of employment on the basis of a Protected Class.

Discrimination can also include failing to reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with disabilities or an individual's religious beliefs and practices (including the wearing or carrying of religious clothing, jewelry or artifacts, and hair styles, facial hair, or body hair, which are part of an individual's observance of their religious beliefs) where the accommodation does not pose an undue hardship. Individuals needing an accommodation should contact their immediate supervisor or Human Resources Officer and discuss their need(s). The County will engage in an interactive process to identify possible accommodations. Absent undue hardship, the County will reasonably accommodate employees and applicants with disabilities to enable them to perform the essential functions of a job and will reasonably accommodate the religious beliefs and practices of an employee, applicant and unpaid intern.

Pay discrimination between employees of the opposite sex or between employees of another race or ethnicity performing substantially similar work, as defined by the California Fair Pay Act and federal law, is also prohibited. Pay differentials, however, may be valid in certain situations as defined by law. Employees will not be retaliated against for inquiring about or discussing wages.

2. PROHIBITED HARASSMENT, INCLUDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The County prohibits harassment against any employee, job applicant, unpaid intern, volunteer, contractor and any other person providing services to the County pursuant to a contract.

Prohibited harassment is not just sexual harassment but harassment based on any Protected Class.

Prohibited harassment may be made in general or directed to an individual, or a group of people. Prohibited harassment may occur regardless of whether the behavior was intended to harass. Harassing behavior is unacceptable in the workplace as in all other work-related settings, such as business trips and business-related social events.

Forms of prohibited harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

Verbal Harassment - derogatory jokes or comments, epithets or slurs; unwanted sexual advances, invitations, comments, posts or messages; derogatory or graphic comments; sexually degrading words; suggestive or obscene messages, notes or invitations; repeated romantic overtures, sexual jokes and comments or prying into one's personal affairs.

Physical Harassment - assault; impeding or blocking movement; following/stalking; unwelcome touching or any physical interference with normal work or movement when directed at an individual.

Visual Harassment - derogatory, prejudicial, stereotypical, sexually-oriented or suggestive or otherwise offensive text or email messages, web pages, screen savers and other computer images, online communications, social media tags and postings, posters, photographs, pictures, cartoons, notes, notices, bulletins or drawings and gestures; displaying sexually suggestive objects; staring or leering; or communication via electronic media of any type that includes any conduct that is prohibited by any state and/or federal law or by County Policy.

Sexual Harassment - Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination based on sex/gender (including

pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. Sexual harassment includes verbal, physical and visual harassment, as well as unwanted sexual advances. Individuals of any gender can be the target of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment does not have to be motivated by sexual desire to be unlawful or to violate this Policy. For example, hostile acts toward an employee because of his/her gender can amount to sexual harassment, regardless of whether the treatment is motivated by any sexual desire. Sexual harassment may involve harassment of a person of the same gender as the harasser, regardless of either person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

There are two types of Sexual Harassment:

"Quid Pro Quo" sexual harassment is when someone conditions a job, promotion, or other work benefit on your submission to sexual advances or other conduct based on sex.

"Hostile Work Environment" sexual harassment occurs when unwelcome comments or conduct based on sex unreasonably interfere with your work performance or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. You may experience sexual harassment even if the offensive conduct was not aimed directly at you.

3. COMPLAINT PROCESS AND REMEDIAL ACTION

Anyone who believes they have been the subject of, becomes aware of, or observed discrimination, harassment, retaliation or other prohibited conduct, should report or make a complaint (either orally or in writing) to their supervisor, the supervisor of the offending party, a representative from the County's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Office or to a Human Resources Officer as soon as possible after the incident. Individuals may bring their report or complaint to any of these individuals. Employees are not required to confront or approach the person who is discriminating against, harassing or retaliating against them. The County's EEO Office can be reached at **1-909-387-5582 (or, TDD 7-1-1)**. Human Resources Officers can be reached by calling the County's Employee Relations Division at **1-909-387-5564 (or, TDD 7-1-1)**. For more information, visit www.sbcounty.gov/hr.

Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against or harassed, have been retaliated against for resisting or complaining about discrimination or harassment or for participating in an investigation may also file a complaint with the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH). The EEOC and DFEH investigate and prosecute complaints of prohibited discrimination, harassment, and retaliation in employment. The nearest EEOC office can be found by calling **1-800-669-4000 (or, TTY, 1-800-669-6820)**. For more information about the EEOC, visit www.eeoc.gov. The nearest DFEH office can be found by calling **1-800-884-1684 (or, TTY, 1-800-700-2320)**. For more information about the DFEH, visit www.dfeh.ca.gov.

When the County receives allegations of misconduct, it will immediately undertake a fair, timely, thorough and objective investigation of the allegations that provides all parties appropriate due process. The County will reach reasonable conclusions based on the evidence collected.

The County will maintain confidentiality to the extent possible and consistent with the rights of employees under the County's Personnel Rules and relevant laws. However, the County cannot promise complete confidentiality. The County's duty to investigate and take corrective action may require the disclosure of information to individuals with a need to know.

Complaints will be:

- Responded to in a timely manner;
- Kept confidential to the extent possible;
- Investigated impartially by qualified personnel in a timely manner;
- Documented and tracked for reasonable progress;

- Given appropriate options for remedial action and resolution; and
- Closed in a timely manner

The County prohibits behavior that is or may be perceived as discriminatory, harassing and/or retaliatory. If the County determines that harassment, discrimination or retaliation or other prohibited conduct occurred, appropriate and effective correction and remedial action will be taken. The County will also take appropriate action to deter future misconduct.

Any employee determined by the County to be responsible for discrimination, harassment, retaliation or other prohibited misconduct will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to, and including termination of employment. Employees who engage in unlawful harassment can be held personally liable for the misconduct.

4. SUPERVISOR/MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY

Supervisors and managers who are aware of or receive complaints of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation, even if the occurrence is not directly within their line of supervision or responsibility, must immediately report such conduct or complaint to the Human Resources Officer assigned to their department or any representative of the County's EEO Office so the County can try to resolve the complaint.

5. TRAINING OF SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS AND ELECTED OFFICIALS

All supervisors, managers, elected officials or other persons with supervisory authority will receive and must complete mandatory harassment prevention training as required by California law.

6. RETALIATION PROHIBITED

The County will not retaliate against anyone who reports an alleged violation of this Policy, files or assists another with a complaint under this Policy, causes information to be provided, participates (as witnesses or the accused) in an investigation, hearing or other proceeding regarding a complaint under this Policy or otherwise opposes discrimination, harassment or retaliation. The County will not retaliate against anyone who requests a reasonable accommodation and will not knowingly tolerate or permit retaliation by elected officials, management, employees or co-workers.

LEAD DEPARTMENT

Human Resources

APPROVAL HISTORY

Adopted June 7, 1994 (Item Number 71);

Amended January 26, 1999 (Item Number 11); December 16, 2003 (Item Number 104); August 30, 2005 (Item Number 113); March 20, 2018 (Item Number 22)

REVIEW DATES

MARCH 2023