

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY:

POLICY: It is the policy of the St. Tammany Parish Coroner's Office to not tolerate verbal or physical conduct by any employee which harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another's work performance or which creates an intimidating, offensive or hostile environment.

The St. Tammany Parish Coroner's Office is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits unlawful discriminatory practices, including harassment. Each employee has a responsibility to maintain the workplace free of any form of harassment. Therefore, the STPCO expects all relationships among persons in the office to be professional and free of bias, prejudice, and harassment.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state, and local laws. For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is defined, as in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines, as unwelcome sexual advances (intentional or not), requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example:

- submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment.
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual.
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, coercive or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not-so-subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Moreover, any suggestions made to any employee that sexual favors will affect any terms or conditions of employment with the office will not be tolerated. While all forms of harassment are prohibited, sexual harassment is specifically prohibited. Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual jokes, language, epithets/slights, advances, propositions, favors or innuendo.
- Any written content to include social media posts/messages and/or verbal abuse of a sexual nature, sexually degrading or vulgar words to describe an individual, or asking questions about sexual conduct.

- The display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, posters, or cartoons.
- Unwelcome comments about an individual's body, sexual prowess, or sexual deficiencies.
- Unwelcome leering, touching, leaning, whistling, brushing against the body, or suggestive, insulting, or obscene/verbal comments or gestures.
- Requests for sexual favors in exchange for favorable reviews, assignments, promotions, or continued employment or promises of the same.
- Any other physical, verbal, or visual conduct of a sexual nature not listed above.

These policies apply to all applicants and employees, whether related to conduct engaged in by fellow employees or someone not directly connected to the St. Tammany Parish Coroner's Office (e.g., an outside vendor, consultant, or customer). Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as during business trips, business meetings, and business-related social events.

COMPLAINT AND REPORTING PROCESS

When possible, the St. Tammany Parish Coroner's Office encourages individuals who believe they are being subjected to such conduct to promptly advise the offender that his or her behavior is unwelcome and request that it be discontinued. The STPCO recognizes, however, that an individual may prefer to pursue the matter through complaint procedures. Individuals who believe they have been the victims of conduct prohibited by this policy statement or who believe they have witnessed such conduct are encouraged to discuss their concerns with their immediate supervisor, the Coroner or the Chief HR Officer.

The Coroner's Office encourages the prompt reporting of concerns, complaints, or incidents so that rapid and constructive actions can be taken. It is the policy of the STPCO to promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of perceived incidents or harassment. Any reported allegations of harassment, discrimination or retaliation will be investigated promptly. The investigation may include individual interviews with the parties involved and, where necessary, with individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge.

All employees are assured there will be no retaliation for filing a complaint or acting as a witness. Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or discrimination or for participating in an investigation of a claim of harassment or discrimination is a serious violation of this policy and will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Acts of retaliation should be reported immediately and will be promptly investigated and addressed resulting in the possibility of disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent consistent with adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action. False and malicious complaints of harassment, discrimination or retaliation may be the subject of appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination.

COMMITMENT STATEMENT

The St. Tammany Parish Coroner's Office is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. It is the policy of the STPCO to ensure equal employment opportunity without discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty, or status as a covered veteran. The STPCO prohibits any such discrimination or harassment. The St. Tammany Parish Coroner's Office encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination or harassment.

MANDATORY TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

R.S. 42:343 Each public servant shall receive a minimum of one hour of education and training on preventing sexual harassment during each full calendar year of his public employment or term of office, as the case may be. An agency head shall require supervisors and any persons designated by the agency to accept or investigate a complaint of sexual harassment in his agency to receive additional education and training. The education and training may be received either in person or via the internet through training and education materials approved by the public servant's agency head. Each agency head shall ensure that each public servant in the agency is notified of the agency's policy against sexual harassment and the mandatory training requirement on preventing sexual harassment. The agency head, or his designee, shall be responsible for maintaining records of the compliance of each public servant in the agency with the mandatory training requirement. Each public servant's record of compliance shall be public record and available to the public in accordance with the Public Records Law. Each agency head shall ensure that its policy against sexual harassment and its complaint procedure is prominently posted on its website or, if the agency does not have a website, that a notice on how to obtain the information is posted in a conspicuous location in each of the agency's offices.