

House of Destiny Ministries, Inc.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

I. POLICY

It is the goal of House of Destiny Ministries, Inc. (H.D.M.) to promote a workplace which is professional and which treats all employees with dignity and respect. H.D.M., believes all employees should be able to enjoy a work environment free of harassment, and therefore will not tolerate sexual harassment in the workplace. No employee, either male or female, should be subject to unwelcome verbal or physical conduct that is sexual in nature or that shows hostility to the employee because of the employee's gender. Sexual harassment refers to behavior, which is unwelcome, personally offensive, impairs morale or interferes with the work effectiveness of employees.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE IS UNLAWFUL.

Any harassment of employees by other employees or people conducting business with the organization will not be permitted, regardless of their working relationship, whether occurring within or without the confines of the work site, during work hours or outside of normal work hours, while performing work-related functions, or at social gatherings. H.D.M. takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously and will respond promptly to complaints. Where it is demonstrated to its satisfaction that such harassment has occurred, it will act promptly to eliminate the sexual harassment and to impose corrective action that may be necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

II. DESCRIPTION AND EXAMPLES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment, under current Massachusetts law, means sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions; or (b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment. Discrimination on the basis of sex shall include, but not be limited to, sexual harassment. These definitions are broad and include any sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a work place environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to male or female workers. While it is not possible to list all those circumstances, which constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples:

- Unwelcome sexual advances or repeated flirtations, whether or not they involve physical touching;
- Offering or implying an employment related reward such as favorable reviews, salary increases, promotions, increased benefits or continued employment in exchange for sexual favors or submissions to sexual conduct;
- Threatening or taking a negative employment action such as termination, demotion, denial or a leave of absence if sexual conduct is rejected;
- Unwelcome whistling, staring or leering at another person;
- Unwelcome sexual jokes
- Unwelcome intentional touching of another person or other unwanted intentional physical contact including patting, pinching or brushing against another person's body;
- Use of sexual epithets, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Unwelcome sexually suggestive or flirtatious gifts, letters, notes, email or voice mail;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or cartoons;
- Conduct or remarks that are sexually suggestive or that demean or show hostility to a person because of the person's gender including jokes, pranks, teasing, obscenities, obscene or rude gestures or noises, slurs, epithets, taunts, negative stereotyping, threats, blocking of physical movement;
- Assault or coerced sexual acts.

Please also note that while it is not H.D.M.'s intent to become involved in consensual activity, co-workers who are parties to a relationship must conform their workplace interactions to professional standards.

III. INTERNAL COMPLIANT PROCEDURE

An employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment in the workplace is encouraged, but not required, to promptly tell the person that the conduct is unwelcome and ask the person to stop the conduct. A person who receives such a request must immediately comply with it and must not retaliate against the employee for rejecting the conduct.

Complaints may be done in writing or orally, and may be brought to the attention of the Director of Human Resources, Cheryl Ortiz or the Director of Quality and Improvement, Jose Figueroa, or any other member of the management team. An employee may also choose to file a complaint through his or her immediate supervisor, who will in turn contact the Director of Human Resources. All complaints will be handled in a confidential, need to know basis. Given the nature of this type of discrimination, H.D.M. also recognizes that false accusations of sexual harassment can have serious effects on innocent women and men. Therefore, it will make every effort to protect the confidentiality of the parties involved.

Upon notification of a complaint of sexual harassment, an investigation of the allegation will be completed in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and any relevant witnesses. The investigation will also include an interview the person alleged to have committed sexual harassment. After the investigation has been completed, the management team of H.D.M. regarding the resolution prompt action would be taken to eliminate the offending conduct, and where it is appropriate, impose disciplinary action against the person or persons who have been found to commit sexual harassment. Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to: Termination from employment; suspension with or without pay; counseling, informal or formal; warnings, informal or formal; reduction in pay, duties or benefits; transfers; or other formal sanctions deemed to be appropriate.

When the investigation is completed, the person filing the complaint will be notified of the results of the investigation.

IV. EXTERNAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

An employee, who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment, may have certain rights, which may be enforced by the appropriate state and federal employment discrimination enforcement agencies. These agencies may be contacted by mail, in person or by phone to file a formal complaint with either or both of the following government agencies:

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination: website: www.mass.gov.mcad

Boston Office:

One Ashburton Place – Rm. 601
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 727-3990

Springfield Office:

424 Dwight Street
Springfield, MA 01103455
(413) 739-2145

Worcester Office:

Worcester City Hall
Main Street, Room 100
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 799-8010

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: website: www.eeoc.gov

One Congress Street
10th Floor, Room 1001
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 565-3200

V. RETALIATION

It is unlawful to retaliate against an employee for filing a complaint of sexual harassment or for cooperating in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint. Any person found to have retaliated against an employee for filing a complaint or for cooperating in an investigation would be subject to discipline up to and including termination. Any employee bringing a sexual harassment complaint or assisting in the investigation of such complaint will not be adversely affected in terms of conditions of employment, nor discriminated against or discharged because of the complaint.