

# **District Six Fire / Rescue *Standard Operating Guidelines***

## **General Organization Section**

### **Prevention of Sexual Harassment**

The District Six Fire Department is committed to the maintenance of a positive work environment that promotes professionalism, common courtesy and mutual respect among all personnel. This sexual and workplace harassment guideline has been adopted in furtherance of that commitment.

District Six Fire Department does not tolerate sexual harassment in the workplace or during any Department – related activity. The Department provides internal procedures for victims of sexual harassment to report sexual harassment and disciplinary penalties for those who commit sexual harassment.

### **Prohibition of Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited by the department. No person employed by the department shall be made to submit to sexual advances or to suffer a sexual hostile, intimidating or offensive work environment that unreasonably interferes with such person's work performance. Prohibited sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, sexual suggestive remarks or propositions, verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about a person's body, sexual and degrading words used to describe a person, and the display of sexually suggestive objects, cartoons or pictures. It is a violation of the department guidelines for any officer to engage in such actions; to use authority in making sexual advances toward employees over whom such person is authorized to make or recommend employment decisions; to take, recommend or refuse to take actions because of sexual favors; or to take or fail to take action as a reprisal against any employee for rejecting sexual advances or for reporting sexual harassment. It is also a violation of department policy for any manager, supervisor or employee in supervisory position to allow an employee to be sexually harassed by another manager, supervisor, co-worker or the public. No manager, supervisor or other employee shall threaten or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, that an employee's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect such person's job, evaluation, wages, advancement, assigned duties, hours of work or any other condition of employment or career development.

### **Prohibition of Workplace Harassment**

Workplace harassment on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability is strictly prohibited. Prohibited workplace harassment also includes actions that are motivated by hostility towards a person's gender or that are gender-based even though such actions may not be sexual in nature. No person employed by the department shall be made to suffer a hostile, intimidating or offensive work environment that unreasonably interferes with such person's work performance as the result of conduct of a manager, supervisor, employee or the public, that is motivated by race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender or disability. Prohibited acts of workplace harassment include, but not limited to; racial, ethnic or gender-based slurs; and any name-calling or acts of physical violence or intimidation that is based on employee's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender or disability. It is a violation of



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department policy for any manager, supervisor or employee to engage in such conduct or for any manager, supervisor or employee in supervisory position to allow an employee to be harassed by another manager, supervisor, co-worker or the public, based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender or disability.

### Consequences of Sexual and Workplace Harassment

All members, including supervisors and managers, will be subject to severe discipline up to and including discharge for any act of sexual harassment they are believed to have committed.

### Unintentional Harassment

Even conduct that is intended to be “innocent” may still constitute sexual harassment if it falls within the terms of this policy. If any member expresses concern that your behavior may have violated this policy, please respect his / her concerns. Regardless of your intent, how others interpret your behavior is important.

### Non-Retaliation and False Allegations

District Six Fire Department prohibits retaliation made against any member who lodges a good faith complaint of sexual harassment, or who participates in any related investigation. The Department recognizes that making false accusations of harassment in bad faith can have serious consequences for those who wrongly accused. District Six prohibits deliberately making false and / or malicious harassment allegations, as well as deliberately providing false information during an investigation. Anyone who violated this rule is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### How To Report Sexual or Workplace Harassment

Any employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to acts of sexual or workplace harassment should immediately or as soon as practical inform his or her supervisor or department head. If you feel uncomfortable doing so or if your direct supervisor is the source of the problems, condones the problem, or ignores the problem, immediately report the problem to the Fire Chief. If neither of these alternatives is satisfactory to you, then you can immediately direct your questions, problems, complaints, or reports to the Board Of Commissioners. Complaints of sexual and workplace harassment will be treated confidentially, if confidentiality is requested by the complaining person. All complaints of sexual and workplace harassment will be investigated, examined impartially and resolved promptly by the department.

You are not required to directly confront the person who is the source of your report, questions, or complaint before notifying any of those individuals listed. Nevertheless, you are required to make a reasonable effort to make harassment known should it exist.

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District Six Fire Department will make every effort to ensure that those named in the report or are too closely associated with those involved in the report, will not be part of the investigative team or efforts.

District Six Fire Department reserves the right and hereby provides notice that third parties may be used to investigate sexual harassment claims.

This policy is not meant to interfere with or discourage friendship among members. However, members must be sensitive to acts or conduct that may be considered offensive by other members.

### Annual Employee Training

All members of the District are required to take an annual training course in sexual harassment and submit a certificate of completion for their training files as required by R.S. 42:342-344. Additionally, Officers are also required to complete sexual harassment prevention for supervisors. These courses are offered by the Louisiana Municipal Association at <https://lma.teachable.com/>.

### Annual Reporting

In accordance with R.S. 42:343, the Fire Chief or Board of Commissioners Chairman shall compile an annual report by February first of each year containing information from the previous calendar year regarding the Districts' compliance with the requirements of this State law including:

The number and percentage of public servants in his agency who have completed the training requirements.

The number of sexual harassment complaints received by his agency.

The number of complaints which resulted in a finding that sexual harassment occurred.

The number of complaints in which the finding of sexual harassment resulted in discipline or corrective action, and

The amount of time it took to resolve each complaint.

These reports shall be public record and available to the public in the manner provided by the Public Records Law.