



## *Reddell-Vidrine Water District*

5114 Vidrine Road

Ville Platte LA 70586

Phone: (337)363-7223

Fax: (337)363-3228

Email: [reddell.vidrine7223@gmail.com](mailto:reddell.vidrine7223@gmail.com)



# **RVWD Sexual Harassment Policy**

## **The Policy Statement**

The Reddell-Vidrine Water District is committed to providing a safe environment for all its employees free from discrimination on any ground and from harassment at work including sexual harassment. The Reddell-Vidrine Water District will operate a zero tolerance policy for any form of sexual harassment in the workplace, treat all incidents seriously and promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment. Any person found to have sexually harassed another will face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment.

All complaints of sexual harassment will be taken seriously and treated with respect and in confidence. No one will be victimized for making such a complaint.

## **Definition of Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated. It includes situations where a person is asked to engage in sexual activity as a condition of that person's employment, as well as situations which create an environment which is hostile, intimidating or humiliating for the recipient. Sexual harassment can involve one or more incidents and actions constituting harassment may be physical, verbal and non-verbal. Examples of conduct or behavior which constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

### **Physical conduct**

- Unwelcome physical contact like patting, pinching, stroking, kissing, hugging, fondling, or inappropriate touching
- Physical violence, including sexual assault
- Physical contact, e.g. touching, pinching
- The use of job-related threats or rewards to solicit sexual favors

### **Verbal conduct**

- Comments on a worker's appearance, age, private life, etc.
- Sexual comments, stories and jokes
- Sexual advances
- Repeated and unwanted social invitations for dates or physical intimacy
- Insults based on the sex of the worker
- Condescending or paternalistic remarks
- Sending sexually explicit messages (by phone or by email)

## **Non-verbal conduct**

- Display of sexually explicit or suggestive material
- Sexually-suggestive gestures
- Whistling
- Leering

Anyone can be a victim of sexual harassment, regardless of their sex and of the sex of the harasser. [name of company] recognizes that sexual harassment may also occur between people of the same sex. What matters is that the sexual conduct is unwanted and unwelcome by the person against whom the conduct is directed.

The Reddell-Vidrine Water District recognizes that sexual harassment is a manifestation of power relationships and often occurs within unequal relationships in the workplace, for example between manager or supervisor and employee. Anyone, including employees of [company name], clients, customers, casual workers, contractors or visitors who sexually harasses another will be reprimanded in accordance with this internal policy.

All sexual harassment is prohibited whether it takes place within the Reddell-Vidrine Water District premises or outside, including at social events, business trips, training sessions or conferences sponsored by the Reddell-Vidrine Water District.

## **Complaints Procedures**

Anyone who is subject to sexual harassment should, if possible, inform the alleged harasser that the conduct is unwanted and unwelcome. The Reddell-Vidrine Water District recognizes that sexual harassment may occur in unequal relationships (i.e. between a supervisor and his/her employee) and that it may not be possible for the victim to inform the alleged harasser. If a victim cannot directly approach an alleged harasser, he/she can approach one of the designated Board/staff members responsible for receiving complaints of sexual harassment. When a designated person receives a complaint of sexual harassment, he/she will:

- immediately record the dates, times and facts of the incident(s)
- ascertain the views of the victim as to what outcome he/she wants
- ensure that the victim understands the company's procedures for dealing with the complaint
- discuss and agree the next steps: either informal or formal complaint, on the understanding that choosing to resolve the matter informally does not preclude the victim from pursuing a formal complaint if he/she is not satisfied with the outcome
- keep a confidential record of all discussions
- respect the choice of the victim
- ensure that the victim knows that they can lodge the complaint outside of the company through the relevant country/legal framework

Throughout the complaints procedure, a victim is entitled to be helped by a counsellor within the company. The Reddell-Vidrine Water District will appoint a counsellor and provide them with special on-line training to enable them to assist victims of sexual harassment. The Reddell-Vidrine Water District recognizes that because sexual harassment often occurs in unequal relationships within the workplace, victims often feel that they cannot come forward. The Reddell-Vidrine Water District understands the need to support victims in making complaints.

## **Informal Complaints Mechanism**

If the victim wishes to deal with the matter informally, the designated person will:

- give an opportunity to the alleged harasser to respond to the complaint
- ensure that the alleged harasser understands the complaints mechanism 4
- facilitate discussion between both parties to achieve an informal resolution which is acceptable to the complainant, or refer the matter to a designated mediator within the company to resolve the matter
- ensure that a confidential record is kept of what happens
- follow up after the outcome of the complaints mechanism to ensure that the behavior has stopped
- ensure that the above is done speedily and within 3 to 4 working days of the complaint being made

## **Formal Complaints Mechanism**

If the victim wants to make a formal complaint or if the informal complaint mechanism has not led to a satisfactory outcome for the victim, the formal complaint mechanism should be used to resolve the matter.

The designated person who initially received the complaint will refer the matter to the Board President to instigate a formal investigation. The Board President may deal with the matter him/herself, refer the matter to an internal or external investigator or refer it to the rest of the Board in accordance with this policy.

The person carrying out the investigation will:

- interview the victim and the alleged harasser separately
- interview other relevant third parties separately
- decide whether or not the incident(s) of sexual harassment took place
- produce a report detailing the investigations, findings and any recommendations
- if the harassment took place, decide what the appropriate remedy for the victim is, in consultation with the victim (i.e.- an apology, a change to working arrangements, a promotion if the victim was demoted as a result of the harassment, training for the harasser, discipline, suspension, dismissal)
- follow up to ensure that the recommendations are implemented, that the behavior has stopped and that the victim is satisfied with the outcome
- if it cannot determine that the harassment took place, he/she may still make recommendations to ensure proper functioning of the workplace
- keep a record of all actions taken
- ensure that the all records concerning the matter are kept confidential
- ensure that the process is done as quickly and in any event within 3 to 4 days of the complaint being made

## **Outside Complaints Mechanisms**

A person who has been subject to sexual harassment can also make a complaint outside of the Reddell-Vidrine Water District. They can do so through legal channels.

## **Sanctions & Disciplinary Measures**

Anyone who has been found to have sexually harassed another person under the terms of this policy is liable to any of the following sanctions:

- verbal or written warning
- adverse performance evaluation
- reduction in wages
- transfer
- demotion
- suspension
- dismissal

The nature of the sanctions will depend on the gravity and extent of the harassment. Suitable deterrent sanctions will be applied to ensure that incidents of sexual harassment are not treated as trivial. Certain serious cases, including physical violence, will result in the immediate dismissal of the harasser.

## **Implementation of Policy**

The Reddell-Vidrine Water District will ensure that this policy is widely disseminated to all relevant persons. It will be included in the staff handbook. All new employees must be trained on the content of this policy as part of their induction into the company. Every year, the Reddell-Vidrine Water District will require all employees to engage in a refresher on-line training course on the content of this policy. It is the responsibility of the Reddell-Vidrine Water District to ensure that all their employees are aware of the policy.

## **Monitoring & Evaluation**

The Reddell-Vidrine Water District recognizes the importance of monitoring this sexual harassment policy and will ensure that it anonymously collects statistics and data as to how it is used and whether or not it is effective. The Reddell-Vidrine Water District and those responsible for dealing with sexual harassment cases will report on compliance with this policy, including the number of incidents, how they were dealt with, and any recommendations made. This will be done on a yearly basis. As a result of this report, the Board will evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and make any changes needed.



## *Reddell-Vidrine Water District*

5114 Vidrine Road

Ville Platte LA 70586

Phone: (337)363-7223

Fax: (337)363-3228

Email: [reddell.vidrine7223@gmail.com](mailto:reddell.vidrine7223@gmail.com)



### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the Harassment policy of the Reddell-Vidrine Water District. I understand that failure to comply with the policy could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

---

**Employee's Name (please print)**

---

**Employee's Signature**

**Date**

*Employee: Please return this form to your employer*

*Employer: Please place in Employee 's Personnel file*