



## Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedure

*Original: March 10, 2000*

*Revised: July 3, 2014*

### A. Introduction

#### 1. Applicability

This procedure applies to students, employees and applicants for employment who, either allege that they have personally suffered sexual harassment discrimination or retaliation, or to an individual who learned of the alleged conduct in his or her official capacity. Any oral or written complaint of sexual harassment discrimination or retaliation must be made to one of the individuals identified in paragraph B below within one year of the date of the alleged harassment or retaliation, or within one year of the date on which the Complainant knew or should have known of the facts underlying the alleged unlawful discrimination.

#### 2. Definitions

**Complainant:** A student, employee or applicant for employment who believes that they have been personally sexually harassed, or an individual who learned of it in his or her official capacity.

**Respondent:** The individual who allegedly sexually harassed or took reprisals upon the Complainant, or an individual who participated in the complaint procedure.

**Complaint:** A written statement which contains as much detail as possible as to the circumstances surrounding the alleged harassment including date(s), time(s), description of incident(s), witnesses and the desired remedy.

**Informal Complaint:** An unwritten complaint, which the Complainant has verbally provided to a District supervisor or management employee and which contains the information described in the Complaint definition above.

**Days:** Days, as used in this procedure, mean days in which the District is open for business.

### B. Reporting Unwelcome Conduct

Sexual harassment is unlawful only when it is conduct which is not solicited, welcome or voluntarily engaged in or participated in. Therefore, where possible or practicable, an individual who believes that such unwelcome conduct constitutes sexual harassment should clearly inform the perpetrator that such conduct is not wanted, not appropriate and should cease. Where it is not possible or practicable to do so, or if the harassment continues after clear notice to the alleged harasser that the conduct is unwelcome, employees, applicants and students should take the action set forth below.

**Employees** should immediately inform their supervisor or the Responsible Officer. If it is not practicable to inform the immediate supervisor, or that individual is the alleged harasser, employees shall promptly report any charges of discrimination to the next higher level supervisor or the Responsible Officer. Immediate supervisors who learn of such a complaint shall immediately report it to the Responsible Officer or President as appropriate. All charges shall be reported to the District Responsible Officer.

**Students** should immediately report any allegations of sexual harassment to the Director of Student Affairs, the Assistant Superintendent/Vice President of Student Services, or, if not available, to the Responsible Officer. Any such report shall be promptly reported to the Responsible Officer. Any District employee to whom an oral or written harassment complaint is reported shall immediately notify the Responsible Officer.

### C. Informal Complaint Procedure

Upon the receipt of notice of the filing of a timely, within one (1) year of the date of the alleged harassment or retaliation, written or oral harassment complaint, the District Responsible Officer shall:

1. Clarify the specific nature of the allegations whether written or oral, and attempt to informally resolve the complaint.
2. Advise the individual that he or she need not participate in any informal efforts to resolve the complaint, and that he or she may file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education (OCR), or the Chancellor for California Community Colleges.
3. Take appropriate action to assist in preventing conduct by the alleged harasser or others which may constitute or appear to constitute reprisal for filing the complaint.
4. Within ten (10) days of the receipt of the complaint, provide a copy of this Policy to both the Respondent and the Complainant; provide to the Respondent written notice of the substance of the allegations of the complaint where oral, a copy of the complaint where written, and request that the Respondent provide a written response to the written complaint or to the summary of the allegations provided within ten (10) days. Failure or refusal of the individual making the complaint to provide requested information regarding the allegations, other facts or circumstances surrounding the charges, or necessary for the continued processing of the complaint, or to cooperate in the complaint procedure shall result in dismissal of the complaint without investigation or any further action.
5. Within ten (10) days of receipt of the statement of the Respondent, or if no statement is submitted within ten (10) days of the notice to the Respondent in paragraph 4 above, the Responsible Officer shall provide the Respondent the opportunity to discuss the allegations of the complaint and any possible resolution of them. If within the above ten (10) day period no statement is submitted, the Responsible Officer shall review what information is available to determine whether the allegations are sufficiently serious to warrant the initiation of a formal complaint.
6. If the matter is resolved, the Responsible Officer will put the agreed upon resolution in writing and shall meet individually with both parties who will review and sign an agreement which shall include the specific nature of the allegations and all of the terms of the resolution.
7. If the parties agree that there has been no sexual harassment and are satisfied with the resolution, the written agreement shall state these facts, and that the parties agree. The documents and the original of the agreement shall be retained by the Responsible Officer for a period of three (3) years, after which time the documents and the agreement will be shredded. The documents and the agreement will not be filed in the personnel files of either party.
8. If the parties agree that sexual harassment has occurred, but are satisfied with the resolution, then the agreement, specifically describing the conduct alleged, the resolution and the complaint shall be placed in a sealed envelope in the personnel file of the Respondent marked to the effect that it may be opened only at the direction of the President, or if otherwise required by law.
9. If the Complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint, or if the Responsible Officer determines that an informal resolution either cannot be reached or cannot be reached within thirty (30) days of the submission of the complaint at the informal level, the Responsible Officer will provide written notice of that determination to the parties and of the Complainant's right to file a formal complaint with the Responsible Officer under this Policy and/or with any federal or state enforcement agency such as the Office of Civil Rights, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or the Department of Fair Employment and Housing.
10. Even if the Complainant is satisfied with the resolution of the complaint, or agrees that no sexual harassment or retaliation occurred, the Responsible Officer shall determine, subject to the approval of the President, whether the alleged conduct is of such a serious nature under all of the facts and circumstances that, if true, corrective action in addition to that agreed upon by the parties, if any, and/or disciplinary action would be appropriate. In such cases, the Responsible Officer will direct the formal investigation of the Complaint as provided in paragraph D below, provide a copy of the report of the investigation to the Respondent for review, comment and submission of any statement or evidence not previously provided within the time required to submit a statement in response to documents to be placed in the personnel file. The Responsible Officer shall submit such report and statement to the President for appropriate disposition.

#### **D. Formal Complaint Procedure**

1. Except as provided in paragraph C.10. above, the Complainant shall initiate the formal complaint procedure by filing a complaint in writing after completing the informal resolution process. A formal

complaint form is attached to this Procedure.

2. Upon receipt of the formal complaint, the Responsible Officer, or trained designee, shall investigate the complaint. Any designated investigator is required to notify the Responsible Officer immediately when it comes to his/her attention that such member is a witness to allegations, or for any other reason may not be able to fairly or impartially investigate the allegations.
3. The Responsible Officer or designee will examine the complaint, and will interview the Respondent and the Complainant, with their consent, and any other witnesses deemed necessary to make a determination as to whether the conduct alleged occurred as stated in the complaint, or if not, what conduct did occur. If sexual harassment did occur, the Responsible Officer will determine the nature and seriousness of the conduct in light of all of the surrounding facts and circumstances. The above determinations and the bases for such determinations shall be included in a written report drafted or submitted to the Responsible Officer for review within eighty (80) days of the filing of the formal written complaint. The Responsible Officer shall review the report for sufficiency and, if found to be sufficient, will review the report with the appropriate site manager and President for recommended action.
4. Within ninety (90) days of receiving the formal written complaint, the Responsible Officer shall provide the Complainant with:
  - a) A copy of the report of the District's investigation or a summary of the investigation;
  - b) A written notice of the administrative decision setting forth the determination of the President, or his or her designee, as to whether sexual harassment did or did not occur with respect to each allegation in the complaint; a description of action taken, if any, to prevent similar problems from occurring in the future; the proposed resolution of the complaint; notice of the Complainant's right to submit a written appeal to the District Governing Board within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the report; and to submit an appeal to the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges. The results of the investigation and the determination as to whether harassment occurred shall also be reported to the Respondent and to the Respondent's supervisor. The Responsible Officer shall be responsible for preparing and submitting the above notice.

#### **E. Appeal to the Governing Board**

If the Complainant timely files a written appeal to the Governing Board, the Board shall review the original complaint, the investigation report, the administrative decision, and the appeal. The Governing Board shall issue a final decision within forty-five (45) days after receiving the appeal, or the administrative decision will become final automatically upon the expiration of the forty-five (45) day period. The Complainant and the Respondent shall be notified in writing of the Governing Board's decision, or that the administrative decision has become final by operation of law.

#### **F. Further Appeal**

Within thirty (30) days after the Governing Board issues its final decision or the administrative decision otherwise becomes final, the Complainant shall have the right to file a written appeal with the Chancellor of Community Colleges. If the complaint involves allegations of employment related discrimination, the Complainant may, at any time, also file a complaint with the Department of Fair Employment and Housing or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission instead of, or in addition to, filing a petition for review with the Chancellor of Community Colleges within thirty (30) days after the Governing Board issues a final decision or permits the administrative decision to become final. Any complaint filed with the Chancellor of Community Colleges must be filed within one (1) year of the date of the alleged unlawful discrimination or within one (1) year of the date on which the Complainant knew or should have known of the facts underlying the allegation of unlawful discrimination.

#### **G. Reports**

The District Responsible Officer shall make any required reports to the Chancellor of California Community Colleges.