

POLICY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT

This represents the organizational policy of the Town of Washington concerning sexual harassment. Any questions concerning the context or content of this policy should be discussed with your department head or the Mayor.

It is the belief of the Town of Washington that its employees are the primary means by which the goals and objectives of the municipality will be met. All employees of the Town of Washington must understand its position on harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, physical, or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature when the conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment or the holding of office, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace are prohibited by federal law through the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and by state law through La. R.S. 23:301 et seq. These laws prohibit both quid pro quo harassment, which arises when consent to sexual demands is made an express or implied condition of employment, and hostile work environment harassment, which arises when the workplace is permeated with discriminatory intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the victim's employment and created an abusive working environment.

Sexual harassment may be defined as unsolicited, offensive behavior that inappropriately asserts sexuality over employees including but not limited to the following:

- Verbal: Sexual innuendos, suggestive comments, threats, sexual humor;
- Non-Verbal: Leering, whistling, obscene gestures, showing inappropriate images; and
- Physical: Touching, brushing the body, coerced sexual activity, assault, impeding egress or passage.

Sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace shall not be tolerated and the Town of Washington will take appropriate action to end any such harassment and/or prevent the recurrence of any such misconduct.

If a person's behavior makes an employee uncomfortable, the employee should advise the person that, in the employee's opinion, the behavior is inappropriate, and that the employee would like it stopped.

REPORTING & INVESTIGATING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Any employee of the Town of Washington may file a complaint of sexual harassment. Any employee who believes he or she has been subjected to unlawful sexual harassment, or has been retaliated against for reporting such activities or assisting in a related investigation of such activities, must report the alleged act immediately or as soon as possible to Amber Savoie, Human Resources at 337-324-8653 or Karen Quirk, Payroll/Human Resources at 337-324-8659.

An employee does not need to report sexual harassment to the offending supervisor before making a complaint. If the employee believes the individuals listed in this paragraph are not appropriate contacts for reporting the incident, the employee should contact Mayor William Dwight Landreneau at 337-324-8651 (office) or 225-937-2518 (cell).

Whether or not a particular incident is sexual harassment requires a complete factual investigation, and the Town of Washington will conduct such investigations on all complaints in a manner so as not to cause any serious effect on innocent employees who either file a complaint and/or may be the subject of a filed complaint. In all instances, a prompt and thorough investigation will take place, giving careful consideration to protect the rights and dignity of all persons involved.

It is mandatory that all parties to an allegation of sexual harassment participate in the investigation of the incident, and cooperation in the investigation of claims of harassment is an express element of each employee's employment with the Town of Washington. The Town of Washington will take steps it feels necessary to resolve the problem, which may include verbal or written reprimand, suspension or termination.

The Town of Washington will investigate by gathering information, in as confidential a manner as possible, given the need to investigate the complaint, from all concerned parties, and it will not retaliate against any employee as a result of reports of alleged harassment or cooperation with any investigation. The Town of Washington may consult its legal representative for assistance in determining whether conduct that has occurred does in fact constitute sexual harassment. The Town of Washington may also make subsequent inquiries from time to time to ensure offensive conduct does not resume and/or that the subject of such harassment has not suffered any retaliation.

No retaliation of any kind will be tolerated because an employee in good faith reports an incident of suspected harassment. The supervisor, or other person to whom the complaint was made, will work to establish mutually agreed upon safeguards against retaliation while attempting to mediate any sexual harassment complaint.

Any employee, manager, or supervisor found by the Town of Washington to have unlawfully sexually harassed, or unlawfully retaliated against, another employee will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including termination. If any employee, manager, or supervisor is found by the Town of Washington to have intentionally made a false allegation of sexual harassment, that individual will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including termination.

Regardless of the outcome of the investigation by the Town of Washington, a complainant may pursue a claim under state and/or federal law.

MANDATORY TRAINING 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 a 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.

Local government entities may complete a training course request form on the State Civil Service website at:

<https://www.civilservice.louisiana.gov/Divisions/Training/PreventingSexualHarassment.aspx>

Or through Louisiana Municipal Association's online training portal at lma.org

https://lma.org/LMA/LMA/Programs/Online_Training.aspx?hkey=3a5c4334-54f9-4378-9c82-ff08c12150d2

MANDATORY AGENCY REPORTS

The Town of Washington shall compile an annual report by February first of each year containing information from the previous calendar year regarding his agency's compliance, 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

EEOC GUIDANCE

It is unlawful to harass a person (an applicant or employee) because of that person's sex. Harassment can include "sexual harassment" or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature.

Harassment does not have to be of a sexual nature, however, and can include offensive remarks about a person's sex. For example, it is illegal to harass a woman by making offensive comments about women in general.

Both victim and the harasser can be either a woman or a man, and the victim and harasser can be the same sex.

Although the law doesn't prohibit simple teasing, offhand comments, or isolated incidents that are not very serious, harassment is illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or when it results in an adverse employment decision (such as the victim being fired or demoted).

The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or someone who is not an employee of the employer, such as a client or customer.

Additional resources and guidance are available on the links on the EEOC's website at: <https://www.eeoc.gov/sexual-harassment>

The foregoing was adopted by the following vote:

YEAS: Erick Fontenot, Ricky Ducote, Rogers Malveaux, Tanya Doucet, Mary Lavergne

NAYS: none

ABSTAIN: none

ABSENT: none

CERTIFICATE

I, Halli Polotzola, Town Clerk for the Town of Washington, do hereby certify that the foregoing policy is a true and exact copy of a policy adopted at a meeting of the Washington Town Council held on June 15th, 2026.



Halli Polotzola, Louisiana Certified Municipal Clerk
Town of Washington