

**NEIGHBORHOOD LEGAL SERVICES, INC.
PROGRAM SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY
October 2018**

Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc. (NLS) is committed to maintaining a workplace free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of workplace discrimination. NLS has a zero-tolerance policy for any form of sexual harassment, and all employees are required to work in a manner that prevents sexual harassment in the workplace. This policy is one component of NLS' commitment to a discrimination-free work environment.

Sexual harassment is against the law. All employees have a legal right to a workplace free from sexual harassment, and employees can enforce this right by filing a complaint internally with NLS, or with a government agency or in court under federal, state or local anti-discrimination laws.

Policy:

1. NLS' policy applies to all employees, applicants for employment, interns, whether paid or unpaid, members of the board of directors, contractors and persons conducting business with NLS.
2. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Any employee or individual covered by this policy who engages in sexual harassment or retaliation will be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
3. Retaliation Prohibition: No person covered by this policy shall be subject to adverse employment action including being discharged, disciplined, discriminated against, or otherwise subject to adverse employment action because the employee reports an incident of sexual harassment, provides information, or otherwise assists in any investigation of a sexual harassment complaint. NLS has a zero-tolerance policy for such retaliation against anyone who, in good faith complains or provides information about suspected sexual harassment. Any employee of NLS who retaliates against anyone involved in a sexual harassment investigation will be subjected to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Any employee, paid or unpaid intern, or non-employee¹ working in the workplace who believes he/she/they have been subject to such retaliation should inform a supervisor, manager, the office manager or executive director. Any employee, paid or unpaid intern or non-employee who believes he/she/they have been a victim of such retaliation may also seek compensation in other available forums, as explained below in the section on Legal Protections.

¹ A non-employee is someone who is (or is employed by) a contractor, subcontractor, vendor, consultant, or anyone providing services in the workplace. Protected non-employees include persons commonly referred to as independent contractors, "gig" workers and temporary workers. Also included are persons providing equipment repair, cleaning services or any other services provided pursuant to a contract with the employer.

4. Sexual harassment is offensive, is a violation of our policies, is unlawful, and subjects NLS to liability for harm to victims of sexual harassment. Harassers may also be individually subject to liability. Employees of every level who engage in sexual harassment, including managers and supervisors who engage in sexual harassment or who knowingly allow such behavior to continue, will be penalized for such misconduct.
5. NLS will conduct a prompt, thorough and confidential investigation that ensures due process for all parties, whenever management receives a complaint about sexual harassment, or otherwise knows of possible sexual harassment occurring. Effective corrective action will be taken whenever sexual harassment is found to have occurred. All employees, including managers and supervisors, are required to cooperate with any internal investigation of sexual harassment.
6. All employees are encouraged to report any harassment or behaviors that violate this policy. NLS will provide all employees a complaint form for employees to report harassment and file complaints.
7. Managers and supervisors are **required** to report any complaint that they receive, or any harassment that they observe to the office manager or the executive director.
8. This policy applies to all employees, paid or unpaid interns, and non-employees and all must follow and uphold this policy. This policy must be posted prominently in all work locations and be provided to employees upon hiring.

What Is “Sexual Harassment”?

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. Sexual harassment includes harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and the status of being transgender.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct that is either of a sexual nature, or that is directed at an individual because of that individual’s sex when:

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, even if the complaining individual is not the intended target of the sexual harassment;
- Such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; and/or

- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting an individual's employment.

A sexually harassing hostile work environment consists of words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation or acts of physical violence that are of a sexual nature, or that are directed at an individual because of that individual's sex. Sexual harassment also consists of any unwanted verbal or physical advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements or sexually discriminatory remarks made by someone, which are offensive or objectionable to the recipient, cause the recipient discomfort or humiliation, and/or interfere with the recipient's job performance.

Sexual harassment also occurs when a person in authority tries to trade job benefits for sexual favors. This can include hiring, promotion, continued employment or any other terms, conditions or privileges of employment. This is also called "quid pro quo" harassment.

Any employee who feels harassed should complain so that any violation of this policy can be corrected promptly. Any harassing conduct, even a single incident, can be addressed under this policy.

Examples of sexual harassment

The following describes some of the types of acts that may be unlawful sexual harassment and that are strictly prohibited:

- Physical assaults of a sexual nature, such as:
 - Touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another employee's body or poking another employees' body;
 - Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults.
- Unwanted sexual advances or propositions, such as:
 - Requests for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning the victim's job performance evaluation, a promotion or other job benefits or detriments;
 - Subtle or obvious pressure for unwelcome sexual activities.
- Sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks, jokes or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience, which create a hostile work environment.
- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the workplace, such as pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional material, reading materials or other materials that are sexually demeaning or pornographic. This includes such sexual displays on workplace computers or cell phones and sharing such displays while in the workplace.

- Hostile actions taken against an individual because of that individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and the status of being transgender, such as: interfering with, destroying or damaging a person's workstation, tools or equipment, or otherwise interfering with the individual's ability to perform the job; sabotaging an individual's work; and/or bullying, yelling, name-calling.

Who can be a target of sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment can occur between any individuals, regardless of their sex or gender. New York Law protects employees, paid or unpaid interns, and non-employees, including independent contractors, and those employed by companies contracting to provide services in the workplace. A perpetrator of sexual harassment can be a superior, a subordinate, a coworker or anyone in the workplace including an independent contractor, contract worker, vendor, client, customer or visitor.

Where can sexual harassment occur?

Unlawful sexual harassment is not limited to the physical workplace itself. It can occur while employees are traveling for business or at employer-sponsored events or parties. Calls, texts, emails, and social media usage by employees can constitute unlawful workplace harassment, even if they occur away from the workplace premises or not during work hours.

What is "Retaliation"?

Unlawful retaliation can be any action that would keep a worker from coming forward to make or support a sexual harassment claim. Adverse action need not be job-related or occur in the workplace to constitute unlawful retaliation.

Such retaliation is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. The New York State Human Rights Law protects any individual who has engaged in "protected activity." Protected activity includes:

- filing a complaint of sexual harassment, either internally or with any anti-discrimination agency;
- testifying or assisting in a proceeding involving sexual harassment under the Human Rights Law or other anti-discrimination law;
- opposing sexual harassment by making a verbal or informal complaint to management, or by simply informing a supervisor or manager of harassment;
- complaining that another employee has been sexually harassed; and/or
- encouraging a fellow employee to report harassment.

Reporting Sexual Harassment

Preventing sexual harassment is everyone's responsibility. NLS cannot prevent or remedy sexual harassment unless it knows about it. Any employee, paid or unpaid intern or nonemployee who has been subjected to behavior that may constitute sexual harassment is encouraged to report such behavior to a supervisor, manager, the office manager or executive director. Anyone who witnesses or becomes aware of potential instances of sexual harassment should report such behavior to a supervisor, manager, the office manager or executive director.

Reports of sexual harassment may be made orally or in writing. **A form for submission of a written complaint is attached to this policy and also is available on the NLS employee website under Human Resource Documents.** Employees are encouraged to use this complaint form to report sexual harassment incidents. Employees who are reporting sexual harassment on behalf of other employees should use the complaint form and note that it is on another employee's behalf.

Employees, paid or unpaid interns or non-employees who believe they have been a victim of sexual harassment may also seek assistance in other available forums, as explained below in the section on Legal Protections.

Supervisory Responsibilities

All supervisors and managers who receive a complaint or information about suspected sexual harassment, observe what may be sexually harassing behavior or for any reason suspect that sexual harassment is occurring, **are required** to report such suspected sexual harassment immediately to the office manager or the executive director.

In addition to being subject to discipline if they engaged in sexually harassing conduct themselves, supervisors and managers will be subject to discipline for failing to report suspected sexual harassment or otherwise knowingly allowing sexual harassment to continue. Supervisors and managers will also be subject to discipline for engaging in any retaliation.

Complaint and Investigation of Sexual Harassment

All complaints and information about suspected sexual harassment will be investigated, whether that information was reported orally or in written form. Investigations will be conducted in a timely manner, and will be confidential to the extent possible.

An investigation of any complaint, information or knowledge of suspected sexual harassment will be prompt and thorough, and shall be completed within 30 days. The investigation will be confidential to the extent possible. All persons involved, including

complainants, witnesses and alleged perpetrators will be accorded due process to protect their rights to a fair and impartial investigation.

Any employee may be required to cooperate as needed in an investigation of suspected sexual harassment and shall not suffer any retaliation for such participation.

Investigations will be done in accordance with the following steps:

- Upon receipt of complaint by a supervisor or manager, the supervisory or manager shall report the complaint to the office manager or the executive director. The office manager and the executive director will conduct an immediate review of the allegations, and take any interim actions, as appropriate. If complaint is oral, the office manager and/or executive director shall encourage the individual to complete the "Complaint Form" in writing. If the complainant refuses, the office manager shall prepare a Complaint Form based on the oral reporting.
- If documents, emails or phone records are relevant to the allegations, NLS management shall take steps to obtain and preserve them.
- Request and review all relevant documents, including all electronic communications.
- Interview all parties involved, including any relevant witnesses;
- Create a written documentation of the investigation (such as a letter, memo or email), which contains the following:
 - List of all documents reviewed, along with a detailed summary of relevant documents;
 - List of names of those interviewed, along with a detailed summary of their statements;
 - Timeline of events;
 - Summary of prior relevant incidents, reported or unreported; and
 - Final resolution of the complaint, together with any corrective actions action(s).
- Keep the written documentation and associated documents in NLS' records.
- Promptly notify the individual who complained and the individual(s) who responded of the final determination and implement any corrective actions identified in the written document.

- Inform the individual who complained of this/her/their right to file a complaint or charge externally as outlined below.

Legal Protections and External Remedies

Sexual harassment is not only prohibited by NLS, but is also prohibited by state, federal, and, where applicable, local law.

Aside from the internal process at NLS, employees also may choose to pursue legal remedies with the following governmental entities **at any time**.

New York State Division of Human Rights (DHR)

The Human Rights Law (HRL), codified as N.Y. Executive Law, art. 15, § 290 et seq., applies to employers in New York State with regard to sexual harassment, and protects employees, paid or unpaid interns and non-employees regardless of immigration status. A complaint alleging violation of the Human Rights Law may be filed either with DHR or in New York State Supreme Court.

Complaints with DHR may be filed any time **within one year** of the harassment. If an individual did not file at DHR, he/she/they can sue directly in state court under the HRL, **within three years** of the alleged discrimination. An individual may not file with DHR if he/she/they have already filed a HRL complaint in state court.

Complaining internally to NLS does not extend the time to file with DHR or in court. The one year or three years is counted from date of the most recent incident of harassment.

A person alleging sexual harassment does not need an attorney to file a complaint with DHR, and there is no cost to file with DHR.

DHR will investigate a filed complaint and determine whether there is probable cause to believe that discrimination has occurred. Probable cause cases are forwarded to a public hearing before an administrative law judge. If discrimination is found after a hearing, DHR has the power to award relief, which varies but may include requiring the complainant's employer to take action to stop the harassment, or redress the damage caused, including paying monetary damages, attorney's fees and civil fines.

DHR's main office contact information is: NYS Division of Human Rights, One Fordham Plaza, Fourth Floor, Bronx, New York 10458, (718) 741-8400, www.dhr.ny.gov. Contact DHR at (888) 392-3644 or visit dhr.ny.gov/complaint for more information about filing a complaint. The website has a complaint form that can be downloaded, filled out, notarized and mailed to DHR. The website also contains contact information for DHR's regional offices across New York State.

United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

The EEOC enforces federal anti-discrimination laws, including Title VII of the 1964 federal Civil Rights Act (codified as 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq.). An individual can file a complaint with the EEOC anytime within 300 days from the harassment. There is no cost to file a complaint with the EEOC. The EEOC will investigate the complaint, and determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that discrimination has occurred, at which point the EEOC will issue a Right to Sue letter permitting the individual to file a complaint in federal court.

The EEOC does not hold hearings or award relief, but may take other action including pursuing cases in federal court on behalf of complaining parties. Federal courts may award remedies if discrimination is found to have occurred.

If an employee believes that he/she/they have been discriminated against at work, he/she/they can file a "Charge of Discrimination." The EEOC has district, area, and field offices where complaints can be filed. Contact the EEOC by calling 1-800-669-4000 (1-800-669-6820 (TTY)), visiting their website at www.eeoc.gov or via email at info@eeoc.gov.

If an individual filed an administrative complaint with DHR, DHR will file the complaint with the EEOC to preserve the right to proceed in federal court.

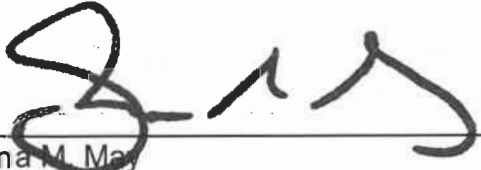
Local Protections

Many localities enforce laws protecting individuals from sexual harassment and discrimination. An individual should contact the county, city or town in which the individual resides to find out if such a law exists.

Contact the Local Police Department

If the harassment involves physical touching, coerced physical confinement or coerced sex acts, the conduct may constitute a crime. Contact the local police department.

Adopted by resolution of the NLS Board of Directors on October 5, 2018.



Sabrina M. May
NLS Board President

10/5/18

Date

**Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc.
Sexual Harassment Incident Report Form**

Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc. (NLS) has adopted a sexual harassment prevention policy pursuant to New York State Labor Law.

If you believe that you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you are encouraged to complete this form and submit it to the office manager or executive director in person or via email. Once you submit this form, NLS must follow its sexual harassment prevention policy and investigate any claims.

If you are more comfortable reporting verbally or in another manner, NLS is still required to follow its sexual harassment prevention policy by investigating the claims as outlined at the end of this form.

For additional resources, visit: ny.gov/combating-sexual-harassment

COMPLAINANT INFORMATION

Name:

Home Address:

Work Address:

Home Phone:

Work Phone:

Job Title:

Email:

Select Preferred Communication Method:

(please select one)

SUPERVISORY INFORMATION

Immediate Supervisor's Name:

Title:

Work Phone:

Work Address:

COMPLAINT INFORMATION

1. Your complaint of Sexual Harassment is made against:

Name:

Title:

Work Address:

Work Phone:

Relationship to you: Supervisor Subordinate Co-Worker Other

If Other, please specify relationship:

2. Please describe the conduct or incident(s) that is the basis of this complaint and your reasons for concluding that the conduct is sexual harassment. Please use additional sheets of paper if necessary and attach any relevant documents or evidence.

3. Date(s) sexual harassment occurred:

Is the sexual harassment continuing? Yes No

4. Please list the name and contact information of any witnesses or individuals that may have information related to your complaint:

The last two questions are optional, but may help facilitate the investigation.

5. Have you previously complained or provided information (oral or written) about sexual harassment at NLS? If yes, when and to whom did you complain or provide information?

Employees who file complaints with their employer might have the ability to get help or file claims with other entities including federal, state or local government agencies or in certain courts.

6. Have you filed a claim regarding this complaint with a federal, state or local government agency?

_____ Yes _____ No

Have you instituted a legal suit or court action regarding this complaint?

_____ Yes _____ No

Have you hired an attorney with respect to this complaint?

_____ Yes _____ No

I request that NLS investigate this complaint of sexual harassment in a timely and confidential manner as outlined below, and advise me of the results of the investigation.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**NEIGHBORHOOD LEGAL SERVICES, INC.
PROGRAM SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY
RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM**

I acknowledge that I have received the Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc. Sexual Harassment Policy. I understand that it is my responsibility to be familiar with and conform to the procedures contained in this policy. I am expected to abide by the rules and requirements contained in the policy with regard to the reporting of harassment, including the obligation to report violations of the policy and not to retaliate against anyone for exercising his/her/their rights under this policy.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc. affirms its commitment to ensuring a work environment that is free from any form of harassment, including sexual harassment.