

Policy on Harassment



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

Objective

Lookout Mountain Presbyterian Church (LMPC) strives to create and maintain an environment in which employees, church members and visitors are treated with grace, dignity and respect. LMPC should be characterized by mutual trust and the absence of intimidation, oppression and exploitation. LMPC will not tolerate unlawful discrimination or harassment of any kind. Through enforcement of this policy and by the education of employees, LMPC will seek to prevent, correct and discipline behavior that violates this policy.

Our goal as LMPC staff members is to always seek to speak with love and grace to all in accordance with Colossians 4:6; "Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person." We also should be mindful of Ephesians 5:2; "Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" and Ephesians 5:4; "Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving".

All employees, regardless of their positions, are covered by and are expected to comply with this policy and to take appropriate measures to ensure that prohibited conduct does not occur. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who violates this policy. Based on the seriousness of the offense, disciplinary action may include verbal or written reprimand, suspension, or termination of employment.

Supervisors who knowingly allow or tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment or retaliation, including the failure to immediately report such misconduct to the Director of Operations and Finance, are in violation of this policy and subject to discipline.

Throughout this policy the Director of Operations and Finance fills the role of a Director of Human Resources.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when:

- Submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or used as a basis for employment decisions; or
- Such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive environment.

Both the victim and the harasser can be either a man or a woman, and the victim and harasser can be the same sex. The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, a church member, a church visitor or a vendor.

While it is not possible to list all circumstances that may violate this policy, the following are some examples of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment:

- Unwelcome sexual advances - whether they involve physical touching or not
- Requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature

- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comments on an individual's body, comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies or prowess
- Displaying in the workplace sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons
- Disseminating in the workplace sexually explicit voice mails, e-mails, graphics or downloaded material on websites
- Unwelcomed leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments
- Making offensive comments about women (or men) in general
- Inquiries into sexual experiences
- Discussion of sexual activities

Definition of Other Workplace Harassment

Other workplace harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct that insults or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, genetics, national origin, age, disability or other protected category and that:

- Contributes to or has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment
- Unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance
- Otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities

Again, while it is not possible to list all the circumstances that may constitute a violation of this policy, the following are some examples of conduct that may constitute workplace harassment:

- The use of disparaging or abusive words or phrases, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts that relate to race, color, religion, gender, genetics, national origin, age, disability or any other protected category
- Written or graphic material that insults, stereotypes, or shows aversion or hostility toward an individual or group because of race, color, religion, gender, genetics, national origin, age, disability or any other protected category and that is placed on walls, bulletin boards, e-mail, voice mail, or elsewhere on the LMPC premises, or is circulated in the workplace
- The display of symbols, slogans or items that are associated with hate or intolerance toward any such protected group
- Workplace bullying - Workplace bullying is repeated mistreatment of one or more employees using humiliation, anger, intimidation and denigration of performance. Bullying behavior can exist at any level of an organization.

Retaliation Prohibited

There shall be no retaliation against anyone who in good faith makes a report or who in good faith cooperates in an investigation regarding a report of harassment.

Complaints and Investigation of Workplace Harassment Complaints

If you witness any sexual harassment or any other form of workplace harassment or if you believe you have been subjected to sexual harassment or any other form of workplace harassment by anyone, including supervisors, co-workers, church members, church visitors or vendors, you have an obligation to report such harassment *immediately* (see below). *While not always possible, the first step in stopping harassment is to tell the harasser that the behavior is unwelcome, in violation of LMPC policy and must stop immediately.*

LMPC will conduct an immediate investigation of all complaints to attempt to determine all of the facts concerning the alleged harassment. The investigation undertaken by LMPC will strive to be fair and impartial to all parties involved. All harassment complaints will be handled as confidentially as possible. LMPC will limit disclosure to the extent necessary to conduct a complete and thorough investigation or as may be necessary to take appropriate corrective action.

Complaint procedure

1. Complaints should be submitted as soon as possible after an incident has occurred to the employee's supervisor, Director of Operations and Finance, Office Coordinator or Lead Pastor. To assist in the investigation, employees reporting harassment should provide specific details of the offending behavior, the names of the individual(s) involved and the names of witnesses, if applicable.
2. Supervisors and the Office Coordinator will refer all harassment complaints to the Director of Operations and Finance or to the Lead Pastor, who will initiate an investigation.
3. If necessary, the complainant and the respondent will be separated during the course of the investigation, either through internal transfer or administrative leave.
4. During the investigation, the Director of Operations and Finance (and possibly the Office Coordinator) or Lead Pastor will interview the complainant, the respondent, and any witnesses.
5. Upon conclusion of an investigation, the Director of Operations and Finance or Lead Pastor will submit a confidential written report of his or her findings to the Senior Associate Pastor, Lead Pastor and Vice Moderator of the Session (if a pastor is involved). After discussion, if it is determined that a violation of this policy has occurred, appropriate disciplinary action will be implemented. The appropriate action will depend on the following factors:
 - a) The severity, frequency and pervasiveness of the conduct
 - b) Prior complaints made against the respondent
 - c) The quality of the evidence (e.g., firsthand knowledge, credible corroboration)
6. If the investigation is inconclusive or if it is determined that there has been no violation of policy but potentially problematic conduct may have occurred, appropriate preventive action will be implemented.
7. Once a final decision is made the Director of Operations and Finance (or Lead Pastor) will meet with the complainant and the respondent separately and notify them of the findings of the investigation. If disciplinary action is to be taken, the respondent will be informed of the nature of the discipline.

Summary

- 1) Conduct yourself as a follower of Jesus at all times, acting with love, grace and kindness
- 2) Report any activity described above immediately, preferably in writing, but verbal is acceptable.
- 3) All reports will be treated seriously and acted upon.
- 4) When it is appropriate or needful for a female staff member to be involved, the Office Coordinator is available in lieu of a supervisor, Director of Operations and Finance or Lead Pastor to report an alleged offense.

This policy does not constitute a contract or create legal liability between LMPC and its employees / volunteers, church members or any other party. It is merely a statement of policy and general guideline which LMPC will seek to follow. LMPC makes no guarantee to any party that all aspects of this policy will be followed in any given situation.