

## All Personnel

BP 4119.11(a)

4219.11

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

4319.11

Note: Education Code 231.5 **mandates** the district to have a written policy on sexual harassment. As part of this mandate, the district also should adopt a sexual harassment policy related to students; see BP/AR 5145.7 - Sexual Harassment.

Generally, courts recognize two types of conduct as constituting sexual harassment. "Quid Pro Quo" ("this for that") sexual harassment is considered to have occurred when a person in a position of authority makes another individual's educational or employment benefits conditional upon that other person's willingness to engage in unwanted sexual behavior (e.g., promising a promotion for sex). "Hostile environment" sexual harassment, on the other hand, is conduct by the perpetrator that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates a hostile, intimidating, or abusive educational or professional environment for another. Sexual harassment also covers retaliatory behavior against a complainant, witness, or other participant in the complaint process. Pursuant to Government Code 12940 and 2 CCR 11009, interns, volunteers, and job applicants are entitled to the same protection against sexual harassment as applicable to employees.

Sexual harassment is prohibited pursuant to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 USC 2000e-2000e-17) and/or Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 USC 1681-1688), as well as the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (Government Code 12900-12996).

Pursuant to Government Code 12940, employers may be held liable for sexual harassment committed against their workers by clients, customers, or other third parties if they knew or should have known of the harassment and failed to take immediate and appropriate corrective action to stop the harassment.

The Governing Board is committed to providing a safe work environment that is free of harassment and intimidation. The Board prohibits sexual harassment against district employees and retaliatory behavior or action against any person who complains, testifies, or otherwise participates in the complaint process established for the purpose of this policy.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, harassment that is based on the gender, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation of the victim.

This policy shall apply to all district employees and to other persons on district property or with some employment relationship with the district, such as interns, volunteers, contractors, and job applicants.

*(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)*

*(cf. 4030 - Nondiscrimination in Employment)*

Note: In addition to district discipline imposed on employees who engage in sexual harassment, Government Code 12940 provides that such employees may be held personally liable in a court of law for any damage to the victim(s).

Any district employee who engages or participates in sexual harassment or who aids, abets, incites, compels, or coerces another to commit sexual harassment in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

*(cf. 4117.7/4317.7 - Employment Status Reports)*

*(cf. 4118 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action)*

*(cf. 4218 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action)*

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)

Note: Federal and state courts have provided guidance that may help employers avoid liability or mitigate damages in sexual harassment cases. In Department of Health Services v. Superior Court (McGinnis), the California Supreme Court outlined measures that may constitute mitigating factors in the assessment of damages, including establishing anti-harassment policies, communicating those policies to employees, consistently enforcing the policies, preserving the confidentiality of employees who report harassment, and preventing retaliation against reporting employees. The U.S. Supreme Court in Burlington Industries v. Ellerth held that, for certain claims under federal law, an employer may defend against sexual harassment claims by proving that (1) reasonable care was exercised to prevent and promptly correct any sexually harassing behavior, and (2) the employee (victim) failed to take advantage of the preventive and corrective opportunities provided by the employer.

Pursuant to Government Code 12950.1, employers with 50 or more employees are required to provide two hours of sexual harassment training to supervisory employees. See the accompanying administrative regulation for timelines and training requirements.

Items #1-4 below reflect the courts' guidance and Government Code 12950.1, and should be modified to reflect district practice.

The Superintendent or designee shall take all actions necessary to ensure the prevention, investigation, and correction of sexual harassment, including but not limited to:

1. Providing training to employees in accordance with law and administrative regulation
2. Publicizing and disseminating the district's sexual harassment policy to employees and others to whom the policy may apply

*(cf. 4112.9/4212.9/4312.9 - Employee Notifications)*

3. Ensuring prompt, thorough, and fair investigation of complaints
4. Taking timely and appropriate corrective/remedial action(s), which may require interim separation of the complainant and the alleged harasser and subsequent monitoring of developments

Note: The following **optional** paragraph reflects a recommendation of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's informal guidance Promising Practices for Preventing Harassment and may be revised to reflect district practice.

The Superintendent or designee shall periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the district's strategies to prevent and address harassment. Such evaluation may involve conducting regular anonymous employee surveys to assess whether harassment is occurring or is perceived to be tolerated, partnering with researchers or other agencies with the needed

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)**

expertise to evaluate the district's prevention strategies, and using any other effective tool for receiving feedback on systems and/or processes. As necessary, changes shall be made to the harassment policy, complaint procedures, or training.

### **Sexual Harassment Reports and Complaints**

Note: Pursuant to 2 CCR 11034, the district may be liable for sexual harassment committed by a supervisor, coworker, or a third party. In addition, as part of its affirmative duty to prevent sexual harassment, the district is required pursuant to 2 CCR 11023 to instruct supervisors to report complaints.

Any district employee who feels that he/she has been sexually harassed in the performance of his/her district responsibilities or who has knowledge of any incident of sexual harassment by or against another employee shall immediately report the incident to his/her direct supervisor, another supervisor, the district's coordinator for nondiscrimination, the Superintendent, or, if available, a complaint hotline or an ombudsman. A supervisor or administrator who receives a harassment complaint shall promptly notify the coordinator.

Note: In *Faragher v. City of Boca Raton*, one of the factors relied on by the U.S. Supreme Court in finding liability for harassment by a supervisor was the failure of the policy to provide an assurance to its employees that harassing supervisors may be bypassed in registering complaints.

Complaints of sexual harassment shall be filed and investigated in accordance with the complaint procedure specified in AR 4030 - Nondiscrimination in Employment. An employee may bypass his/her supervisor in filing a complaint where the supervisor is the subject of the complaint.

All complaints and allegations of sexual harassment shall be kept confidential to the extent necessary to carry out the investigation or to take other subsequent necessary actions. (2 CCR 11023)

*Legal Reference: (see next page)*

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)

### *Legal Reference:*

#### EDUCATION CODE

200-262.4 *Prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex*

#### GOVERNMENT CODE

12900-12996 *Fair Employment and Housing Act, especially:*

12940 *Prohibited discrimination*

12950 *Sexual harassment; distribution of information*

12950.1 *Sexual harassment training*

#### LABOR CODE

1101 *Political activities of employees*

1102.1 *Discrimination: sexual orientation*

#### CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 2

11009 *Employment discrimination*

11021 *Retaliation*

11023 *Harassment and discrimination prevention and correction*

11024 *Sexual harassment training and education*

11034 *Terms, conditions, and privileges of employment*

#### CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

4900-4965 *Nondiscrimination in elementary and secondary education programs receiving state financial assistance*

#### UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1681-1688 *Title IX prohibition against discrimination*

#### UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42

2000e-2000e-17 *Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended*

#### CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

106.1-106.9 *Nondiscrimination on the basis of sex in education programs or activities*

106.51-106.61 *Nondiscrimination on the basis of sex in employment in education program or activities*

#### COURT DECISIONS

*Department of Health Services v. Superior Court of California*, (2003) 31 Cal.4th 1026

*Faragher v. City of Boca Raton*, (1998) 118 S.Ct. 2275

*Burlington Industries v. Ellreth*, (1998) 118 S.Ct. 2257

*Gebser v. Lago Vista Independent School District*, (1998) 118 S.Ct. 1989

*Oncala v. Sundowner Offshore Serv. Inc.*, (1998) 118 S.Ct. 998

*Meritor Savings Bank, FSB v. Vinson et al.*, (1986) 447 U.S. 57

### *Management Resources:*

#### U.S. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION PUBLICATIONS

*Promising Practices for Preventing Harassment*, November 2017

#### WEB SITES

California Department of Fair Employment and Housing: <http://www.dfeh.ca.gov>

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: <http://www.eeoc.gov>

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>

**All Personnel**

AR 4119.11(a)

4219.11

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

4319.11

Note: The following administrative regulation is **mandated** pursuant to Education Code 231.5 and includes reasonable steps for preventing the occurrence of discrimination and harassment as required pursuant to Government Code 12940 (California Fair Employment and Housing Act). The focus of this administrative regulation is on sexual harassment by and of employees. Pursuant to Government Code 12940 and 2 CCR 11009, interns, volunteers, and job applicants are entitled to the same protection against sexual harassment as applicable to employees.

For information related to sexual harassment involving students, see BP/AR 5145.7 - Sexual Harassment.

This administrative regulation shall apply to all allegations of sexual harassment involving employees, interns, volunteers, and job applicants, but shall not be used to resolve any complaint by or against a student.

**Definitions**

Note: In Oncale v. Sundowner Offshore Services, Inc., the U.S. Supreme Court held that same-sex sexual harassment could be actionable under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 USC 2000e-2000e-17).

*Prohibited sexual harassment* includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, unwanted requests for sexual favors, or other unwanted verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature made against another person of the same or opposite sex in the work or educational setting when: (Education Code 212.5; Government Code 12940; 2 CCR 11034)

1. Submission to the conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the individual's employment.
2. Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for an employment decision affecting the individual.
3. Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits, services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through the district.

Note: Pursuant to Government Code 12940, conduct may meet the definition of sexual harassment regardless of whether or not the alleged harasser is motivated by sexual desire for the victim.

*Prohibited sexual harassment* also includes conduct which, regardless of whether or not it is motivated by sexual desire, is so severe or pervasive as to unreasonably interfere with the victim's work performance or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Note: Pursuant to Government Code 12940, the district may be held liable for sexual harassment committed against employees by clients, customers, or other third parties if the district knew, or should have known, of the harassment and failed to take immediate and appropriate corrective action to stop the harassment. The following paragraph clarifies that sexual harassment may include acts by supervisors, co-workers, or other parties and should be modified to reflect district practice.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)

Examples of actions that might constitute sexual harassment in the work or educational setting, whether committed by a supervisor, a co-worker, or a non-employee, include, but are not limited to:

1. Unwelcome verbal conduct such as sexual flirtations or propositions; graphic comments about an individual's body; overly personal conversations or pressure for sexual activity; sexual jokes or stories; unwelcome sexual slurs, epithets, threats, innuendoes, derogatory comments, sexually degrading descriptions, or the spreading of sexual rumors
2. Unwelcome visual conduct such as drawings, pictures, graffiti, or gestures; sexually explicit emails; displaying sexually suggestive objects
3. Unwelcome physical conduct such as massaging, grabbing, fondling, stroking, or brushing the body; touching an individual's body or clothes in a sexual way; cornering, blocking, leaning over, or impeding normal movements

### Training

Note: The following paragraph is consistent with a district's affirmative duty to protect its employees from sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, pursuant to 2 CCR 11023. In its informal guidance, Promising Practices for Preventing Harassment, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission recommends that employers provide sexual harassment training to all employees, not just supervisors and managers. In addition, since BP/AR 5145.7 - Sexual Harassment requires employees to report sexual harassment against students, training employees to recognize and address sexual harassment incidents furthers the district's interest in protecting both employees and students against prohibited conduct. Thus, it is strongly recommended that districts periodically provide sexual harassment training or information to all their employees, especially those who work at school sites.

Provision of periodic training to all district employees could also help foster a positive work environment and mitigate damages against a district in the event of sexual harassment litigation. In Department of Health Services v. Superior Court (McGinnis), the California Supreme Court held that employers that have taken reasonable steps to prevent and correct workplace sexual harassment may be able to reduce damages in the event of a lawsuit. Such steps may include establishing anti-harassment policies and communicating those policies to employees.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that all employees receive training regarding the district's sexual harassment policies when hired and periodically thereafter. The training shall include how to recognize prohibited or harassing conduct, the procedures for reporting and/or filing complaints involving an employee, employees' duty to use the district's complaint procedures, and employee obligations when a sexual harassment report involving a student is made to the employee. The training shall also include information about processes for employees to informally share or obtain information about harassment without filing a complaint.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)

*(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)*  
*(cf. 4030 - Nondiscrimination in Employment)*  
*(cf. 5145.7 - Sexual Harassment)*

Note: Government Code 12950.1 requires districts with 50 or more employees to provide two hours of sexual harassment training and education once every two years to every supervisory employee, defined as any employee with the authority to take employment action, including hiring, transferring, suspending, and disciplining other employees, or recommend such action if the exercise of that authority is not merely routine or clerical in nature. All newly hired supervisors or employees promoted to a supervisory position must receive the training within six months of their hire or assumption of the supervisory position. Compliance with this law does not insulate the district from any liability for harassment.

Governing Board members, as elected officials, are not usually considered "supervisors"; however, since Board members have the authority to hire, reward, or discipline the Superintendent and other employees, Board members may also be required to receive sexual harassment training. Districts should consult with legal counsel to ensure that the appropriate individuals receive training.

Although the law does not require districts with fewer than 50 employees to provide sexual harassment training to supervisors, court decisions have held that providing training may help mitigate damages in sexual harassment lawsuits. The provision of supervisor training may also be a factor in determining whether a district has taken reasonable steps to prevent discrimination and harassment pursuant to Government Code 12940. Therefore, it is recommended that all districts, regardless of the number of employees, provide sexual harassment training. Districts with fewer than 50 employees that do not provide sexual harassment training may revise the remainder of this section to reflect district practice.

Every two years, the Superintendent or designee shall ensure that supervisory employees receive at least two hours of classroom or other effective interactive training and education regarding sexual harassment. All such newly hired or promoted employees shall receive training within six months of their assumption of the new position. (Government Code 12950.1)

A *supervisory employee* is any employee having the authority, in the interest of the district, to hire, transfer, suspend, lay off, promote, discharge, assign, reward, or discipline other employees, or the responsibility to direct them, adjust their grievances, or effectively recommend such action, when the exercise of the authority is not of a merely routine or clerical nature, but requires the use of independent judgment. (Government Code 12926)

*(cf. 4300 - Administrative and Supervisory Personnel)*

Note: Government Code 12950.1 and 2 CCR 11024 require that the training for supervisory employees contain specified components and be presented by trainers or educators with knowledge and expertise in the prevention of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation.

The district's sexual harassment training and education program for supervisory employees shall be aimed at assisting them in preventing and effectively responding to incidents of

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT** (continued)

sexual harassment, as well as implementing mechanisms to promptly address and correct wrongful behavior. The training shall include, but is not limited to, the following: (Government Code 12950.1; 2 CCR 11024)

1. Information and practical guidance regarding federal and state laws on the prohibition, prevention, and correction of sexual harassment, the remedies available to sexual harassment victims in civil actions, and potential district and/or individual exposure or liability
2. The types of conduct that constitute sexual harassment and practical examples which illustrate sexual harassment, discrimination, and retaliation using training modalities such as role plays, case studies, and group discussions, based on factual scenarios taken from case law, news and media accounts, and hypotheticals based on workplace situations and other sources
3. A supervisor's obligation to report sexual harassment, discrimination, and retaliation of which he/she becomes aware and what to do if the supervisor himself/herself is personally accused of harassment
4. Strategies for preventing harassment, discrimination, and retaliation and appropriate steps to ensure that remedial measures are taken to correct harassing behavior, including an effective process for investigation of a complaint
5. The essential elements of the district's anti-harassment policy, including the limited confidentiality of the complaint process and resources for victims of unlawful sexual harassment, such as to whom they should report any alleged sexual harassment, and how to use the policy if a harassment complaint is filed
6. A copy of the district's sexual harassment policy and administrative regulation, which each participant shall acknowledge in writing that he/she has received
7. The definition and prevention of abusive conduct that addresses the use of derogatory remarks, insults, or epithets, other verbal or physical conduct that a reasonable person would find threatening, intimidating, or humiliating, and the gratuitous sabotage or undermining of a person's work performance

Note: Item #8 below is required pursuant to Government Code 12950.1, as amended by SB 396 (Ch. 858, Statutes of 2017).
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8. Practical examples of harassment based on gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT** (continued)

The Superintendent or designee shall retain for at least two years the records of any training provided to supervisory employees. Such records shall include the names of trained employees, date of the training, the type of training, and the name of the training provider. (2 CCR 11024)

**Notifications**

Note: Education Code 231.5 requires that the district provide copies of its policy on sexual harassment to staff, as specified below. In addition, 2 CCR 11024 requires that supervisory employees undergoing mandatory training receive a copy of the district's policy and acknowledge receipt of the policy; see item #6 in the section "Training" above.

A copy of the Board policy and this administrative regulation shall: (Education Code 231.5)

1. Be displayed in a prominent location in the main administrative building, district office, or other area of the school where notices of district rules, regulations, procedures, and standards of conduct are posted
2. Be provided to every district employee at the beginning of the first quarter or semester of the school year or whenever a new employee is hired

*(cf. 4112.9/4212.9/4312.9 - Employee Notifications)*

3. Appear in any school or district publication that sets forth the school's or district's comprehensive rules, regulations, procedures, and standards of conduct

Note: Government Code 12950 requires the Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) to develop an information sheet on employment discrimination and the illegality of sexual harassment. This document is available on DFEH's web site.

All employees shall receive a copy of an information sheet prepared by the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) or the district that contains, at a minimum, components on: (Government Code 12950)

1. The illegality of sexual harassment
2. The definition of sexual harassment under applicable state and federal law
3. A description of sexual harassment, with examples
4. The district's complaint process available to the employee

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT** (continued)

5. The legal remedies and complaint process available through DFEH and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
6. Directions on how to contact DFEH and the EEOC
7. The protection against retaliation provided by 2 CCR 11021 for opposing harassment prohibited by law or for filing a complaint with or otherwise participating in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing conducted by DFEH and the EEOC

Note: Government Code 12950, as amended by SB 396 (Ch. 858, Statutes of 2017), requires districts to post, in a prominent and accessible location, a poster developed by DFEH regarding transgender rights. This poster is available on DFEH's web site.

In addition, the district shall post, in a prominent and accessible location, the DFEH poster on discrimination in employment and the illegality of sexual harassment and the DFEH poster regarding transgender rights. (Government Code 12950)