



Title:
WORKPLACE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Subject: HUMAN RESOURCES & LEGAL AFFAIRS	Page: 1 of 3	Policy Number: 07.10.00
Category: DISTRICTWIDE POLICY	Approval Date: 05/12/2021	Last Revised Date:

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Forest Preserve District of Cook County (*the "District"*) is an equal opportunity employer and the District is committed to creating and maintaining a work environment that is free of all forms of discriminatory harassment and bullying. The District will not tolerate instances of bullying. The District will take preventive and corrective action to address any behavior that violates this policy or the rights it is designed to protect.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to communicate to all employees, including supervisors, managers, and executives, that the District will not in any instance tolerate bullying behavior. Employees found in violation of this policy will be disciplined, up to and including termination.

AFFECTED AREAS:

All District employees shall comply with all of the District's policies and procedures, including but not limited to this policy, the [Non-Discrimination Policy](#), the [Workplace Violence Policy](#), the [Domestic/Sexual Violence and Harassment Policy](#), and the [Cook County Personnel Rules](#), as applicable.

DEFINITIONS:

Bullying: The District defines bullying as repeated mistreatment of one or more people by one or more perpetrators. It is abusive conduct (*e.g., verbal, physical, indirect, and/or cyber*) that includes: **(1)** Threatening, humiliating, or intimidating behaviors; **(2)** Work interference/sabotage that prevents work from getting done; and/or **(3)** Verbal abuse. Such behavior violates the District's Code of Ethics, which clearly states that all employees will be treated with dignity and respect.

PROCEDURE/PROCESS:

- 1) **Evidence of Bullying:** In addition to the definition of bullying, as stated above, the following examples may constitute or contribute to evidence of bullying in the workplace:
 - a) Persistent singling out of one person.
 - b) Shouting or raising one's voice at an individual in public or in private.
 - c) Using obscene or intimidating gestures.
 - d) Not allowing the person to speak or express himself or herself (*i.e., ignoring or interrupting*).
 - e) Personal insults and use of offensive nicknames.
 - f) Public humiliation in any form.
 - g) Constant criticism on matters unrelated or minimally related to the person's job performance or description.
 - h) Repeatedly accusing someone of errors that cannot be documented.
 - i) Deliberately interfering with mail and other communications.
 - j) Spreading rumors and gossip regarding individuals.
 - k) Manipulating the ability of someone to do his or her work (*e.g., overloading, underloading, withholding information, setting deadlines that cannot be met, giving deliberately ambiguous instructions*).

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- l) Assigning menial tasks not in keeping with the normal responsibilities of the job.
 - m) Taking credit for another person's ideas.
 - n) Refusing reasonable requests for leave in the absence of work-related reasons not to grant leave.
 - o) Unwanted physical contact, physical abuse, or threats of abuse to an individual or an individual's property (*defacing or marking up property*).
- 2) **Bad Faith Reporting:** Nothing in this policy shall be construed to prevent supervisors or managers from discharging supervisory or management responsibilities, such as determining duty assignments, evaluating, or counseling employees or issuing discipline, in a manner that is consistent with established procedures.
 - 3) **Reporting An Incident:** Any District employee who, in good-faith, feels they have experienced bullying should report this to their supervisor, or to the Human Resources Department, and/or the Director of Compliance, before conduct becomes severe or pervasive. All employees are strongly encouraged to report any bullying conduct they experience or witness as soon as possible to allow the District to take appropriate action.
 - 4) **Retaliation:** Retaliation is treating a person differently or engaging in acts of reprisal or intimidation against the person because he/she/they have filed a charge of workplace bullying, participated in an investigation, etc. Retaliation will not be tolerated.
 - 5) **Confidentiality:** The District recognizes the importance of confidentiality and understands that some individuals filing complaints of harassment/discrimination/bullying or who are otherwise involved in an investigation may want their identity to remain anonymous and/or confidential. Issues of confidentiality should be balanced against the District need to investigate and take appropriate action.
 - 6) **Investigation of Complaints:** During the pendency of any investigation, the supervisor of the involved employee shall take prompt and reasonable steps to mitigate or eliminate any continuing abusive or hostile work environment. It is the policy of the District that all complaints of bullying shall be fully documented, and promptly and thoroughly investigated. The participating or opposing employee shall be protected against retaliation, and the complaint and related investigation shall be kept confidential to the extent possible.

RESPONSIBILITY:

- 1) **The Human Resources Department:** The Human Resources Department may investigate incidents/reports of discrimination on-behalf of the District.
- 2) **The Legal Department:** The Legal Department may investigate incidents/reports of discrimination on-behalf of the District.
- 3) **Director of Compliance:** The Director of Compliance may investigate incidents/reports of discrimination on-behalf of the District.
- 4) **District Employees:** All District employees shall **(a)** comply with this policy; **(b)** follow the intent of these guidelines in a manner that reflects District's mission, vision, and values; **(c)** promptly report any bullying conduct or known violations of this policy; and, **(d)** report violations of this policy to his/her immediate supervisor/the chain of command, and/or the other avenues as described in this policy- "Reporting of Incidents" section.

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- 5) **Supervisors:** All District supervisors shall: **(a)** continually monitor the work environment and strive to ensure that it is free from all types of bullying; **(b)** take prompt, appropriate action within their assigned area to avoid and minimize the incidence of any form of bullying; **(c)** ensure their subordinates understand their responsibilities under this policy; **(d)** ensure that employees who make complaints or who oppose any unlawful employment practices are protected from retaliation and that such matters are kept confidential to the extent possible; **(e)** notify the Director of Human Resources and/or the Director of Compliance in writing of the circumstances surrounding any reported allegations or observed acts of bullying no later than the next business day; and **(f)** represent the values of the District.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) All District employees shall be trained on this policy.

COMMUNICATION PLAN:

- 1) This policy should be distributed to all District employees.
2) This policy should be added to the District shared drive, intranet, and website.

REFERENCES:

[Cook County Personnel Rules](#)

Forest Preserve District of Cook County
[Employment Plan](#)
[Non-Discrimination Policy](#)
[Workplace Violence Policy](#)
[Domestic/Sexual Violence and Harassment Policy](#)

POLICY LEAD: Eileen Figel
Deputy General Superintendent

APPROVAL: Arnold Randall
General Superintendent

POLICY HISTORY:

Approved: 05/12/2021
Revised: Revised: Revised:

<p>If you have questions concerning this District policy, please contact:</p> <p>Forest Preserve District of Cook County The Human Resources Department Phone: (708) 771-1562 Email: FPD.HumanResources@cookcountyil.gov</p>
