



# POLICY & PROCEDURE

## PORTAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE** NUMBER: 1.04  
ISSUED: 04/09/2021  
SCOPE: All Department Personnel EFFECTIVE: 04/09/2021  
DISTRIBUTION: Policy & Procedures Manual  RESCINDS  
 AMENDS  
REFERENCE: WI State Statutes: 111.33-39, 175.22 WILEAG 5<sup>TH</sup> EDITION  
STANDARDS: 1.2.4, 1.2.5

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**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Policy & Procedure is to maintain a healthy work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity and to provide procedures for reporting, investigating, and resolving complaints of harassment and discrimination. All members of the Portage Police Department must be aware that they may not engage in any acts that threaten, intimidate, harass, demean, or torment fellow employees irrespective of whether the employee is a member of a protected class.

It is a violation of this Policy & Procedure, even if the act is not as severe or pervasive as to alter the condition of the victim's employment and/or create an abusive work environment. However, the complaint of activity must be objectively unreasonable. A single act may suffice. To determine if the activity is unreasonable, the totality of the circumstances surrounding the incident must be assessed.

This Policy & Procedure consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. POLICY
- II. DEFINITIONS
- III. REPORTING PROCEDURE
- IV. LOCKER ROOM POLICY
- V. SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY
- VI. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES
- VII. NON-RETALIATION

VIII. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

IX. STATE OF WISCONSIN AGENCY

X. TRAINING

I. POLICY

- A. It is the policy of the Portage Police Department to create and maintain a pleasant working environment among all employees, free of the various forms of harassment enumerated in Section II of this Policy & Procedure and based upon mutual respect among employees.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. HARASSMENT: Any unwanted, deliberate or repeated unsolicited comments, conduct, gestures, graphic materials, physical contacts or solicitation of favors based upon:

1. Race
2. Color
3. Creed
4. Ancestry
5. National Origin
6. Age (40 and up)
7. Disability
8. Sex
9. Arrest or Conviction Record
10. Marital Status
11. Sexual Orientation
12. Membership in military

- a) It involves a pattern of abusive and degrading conduct directed against a protected class member that is sufficient to interfere with their work or create an offensive and hostile work environment.

- B. **SEXUAL HARASSMENT:** Unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature or unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. "Unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature" includes, but is not limited to, the deliberate, repeated making of unsolicited gestures or comments, or the deliberate, repeated display of offensive sexually graphic materials which is not necessary for business purposes.
- C. Harassment, including sexual harassment, is a violation of this Policy & Procedure as well as state and federal statutes if it is based on the criteria listed in the harassment definitions of this Policy & Procedure, and:
1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; or,
  2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or,
  3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.
- D. **DISCRIMINATION:** A failure to treat all persons equally where no reasonable distinction can be found between those favored and those not favored.
- E. **PHYSICAL:** Unsolicited or unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature, which may include touching, hugging, massages, kissing, pinching, patting, or regularly brushing against the body of another person.
- F. **VERBAL HARASSMENT:** Sexual innuendoes, degrading or suggestive comments, repeated pressure for dates, jokes of a sexual nature, unwanted sexual flirtations, degrading words used to describe an individual, obscene and/or graphic descriptions of an individual's body or threats that job, wages, assignments, promotions or working conditions could be affected if the individual does not agree to a suggested sexual relationship.
- G. **NON-VERBAL:** Sexually suggestive or offensive objects or pictures, inappropriate usage of voicemail, e-mail, the internet or other such sources as a means to express or obtain sexual material, comments etc., printed or written materials including offensive cartoons, suggestive or offensive sounds, whistling, catcalls or obscene gestures. Any material, which inappropriately raises the issues of sex or discrimination. Treating an employee differently than other employees when they have refused an offer of sexual relations.
- H. **OTHER FORMS OF HARASSMENT:** Persistent and unwelcome conduct or actions on the basis of disability, sex, arrests or conviction record, marital status, sexual orientation, membership in the military reserve, or use or nonuse of lawful products away from work is prohibited under this policy and Wis. Stats. 111.31-111.39.
- I. **HARASSMENT ON ANY BASIS:** (race, sex, age, disability etc.) exists whenever:

Submission to harassing conduct is made, either explicit or implicit, a term or condition of an individual's employment; submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for an employment decision affecting an individual; the conduct interferes with an employee's work or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. Such conduct is prohibited under this policy and Wis. Stats. 111.31-111.39.

### III. REPORTING PROCEDURE

- A. Any employee who believes he or she has been the subject of harassment shall report the alleged act(s) to his/her immediate supervisor. Should the complaint involve the employee's immediate supervisor, the employee shall report the alleged act(s) to the next supervisory/management level. Should circumstances require, the employee may report directly to:
  - 1. The Chief of Police, or
  - 2. The City Administrator
- B. The employee will be required to leave a written report on the incident(s). The complaint will be investigated and a determination made using criteria found in this Order as to the existence of harassment.
- C. Depending upon the findings of the investigation, person(s) found to have engaged in harassment will be:
  - 1. Directed by a supervisor to cease the conduct (not a disciplinary action); or,
  - 2. Face disciplinary action commensurate with the violation and past disciplinary record.
- D. Generally, the first time an employee is found to have engaged in harassment, he/she will be directed to cease the conduct unless:
  - 1. The incident is also a violation of other Policy & Procedures;
  - 2. The incident is a violation of any department written directive;
  - 3. The incident is a violation of local, state or federal law;
  - 4. The incident is so aggravated that in the opinion of the Chief of Police initial disciplinary action is called for; or
  - 5. It is the employee's second or subsequent finding of harassing conduct.

### IV. LOCKER ROOM POLICY

- A. In compliance with Wisconsin State Statute 175.22 - Privacy in Locker Rooms the following guidelines have been established.

1. Interviews of any nature (audio or video) WILL NOT be permitted in a department locker room.
  2. Excluding department tours, the media or any other interview source WILL NOT be permitted in a department locker room. Department tours will only be permitted, if the locker room is not being utilized.
  3. Recording devices ARE NOT permitted to be utilized by department personnel under any circumstances in a department locker room, unless approved by the Chief of Police and/or his designee.
  4. No person may use a cell phone to capture, record, or transfer a representation of a nude or partially nude person in the locker room.
  5. The locker room, as described in this standard, is to include the attached shower facilities and restroom facilities.
- B. Special circumstances, as determined by the Chief of Police and/or his designee, will allow the use recording devices in department locker rooms. Special circumstance authorizations will only be permitted, if the locker room is not being utilized. These include, but are not limited to:
1. Establishing a Record of Damaged City Property
  2. Repair of City Facilities
  3. Law Enforcement Tours – Police Station Design
- C. These guidelines have been established to maintain the privacy of all department employees, who utilize department locker rooms.

## V. SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY

- A. It shall be the responsibility of all supervisors to ensure that employees under their control feel free to report the forms of harassment set forth in this policy. Supervisors shall accept initial complaints from employees who believe they are being harassed, complete a written report and forward all reports to the Chief of Police.
- Supervisors will forward all complaints brought to their attention, even when such complaints appear trivial or frivolous. Supervisors shall not discourage employees from making complaints, nor shall such complaints when brought to a supervisor's attention be handled informally outside the reporting procedure set forth in this Order.
- B. All complaints received will be assigned for investigative purposes as outlined in the department's internal affairs policy, refer to Policy & Procedure 4.03: Citizen Complaints/Internal Affairs.

## VI. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Each employee of this agency is responsible for assisting in the prevention of harassment and/or discrimination by:
  - 1. Refraining from participation in or encouragement of action that could be perceived as harassment and/or discrimination;
  - 2. Reporting observed acts of harassment and/or discrimination to a supervisor; and,
  - 3. Encouraging any employee who confides that he or she is being harassed or discriminated against to report these acts to a supervisor.
- B. Failure of an employee to carry out his or her responsibilities as defined in this Policy & Procedure will be considered in any performance evaluation or promotional decision and may be grounds for discipline.

## VII. NON-RETALIATION

- A. Retaliation against any employee for filing a harassment or discrimination complaint, or for assisting, testifying, participating in the investigation of such a complaint, is illegal and is prohibited by this agency and by federal statutes.
- B. Retaliation is a form of employee misconduct. Any evidence of retaliation shall be considered a separate violation of this policy and shall be handled by the same complaint procedures established for harassment and discrimination complaints.
- C. Monitoring to ensure that retaliation does not occur is the responsibility of the chief executive officer, supervisors and appropriate internal investigative authority.

## VIII. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- A. The department views harassment and retaliation to be among the most serious breaches of work place behavior. Consequently, appropriate disciplinary or corrective action, ranging from a warning to termination, can be expected, refer to Policy & Procedure 4.02: Disciplinary Procedures.

## IX. STATE OF WISCONSIN AGENCY

- A. Any employee dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation conducted pursuant to this Order, or any employee desiring further information on the Wisconsin Harassment Laws may contact:

**STATE OF WISCONSIN  
DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
EQUAL RIGHTS DIVISION  
CIVIL RIGHTS BUREAU**

201 E WASHINGTON AVE  
ROOM A300  
PO BOX 8928  
MADISON WI 53708

Telephone Number: (608) 266-6860  
TTY Number: (608) 264-8752

Or

819 N 6th ST  
ROOM 723  
MILWAUKEE WI 53203

Telephone Number: (414) 227-4384  
TTY Number: (414) 227-4081

Or

[dwd.wisconsin.gov/er](http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/er)

## IX. TRAINING

- A. The Portage Police Department shall provide periodic and refresher training concerning the nature of harassment and/or discrimination in the workplace and prohibitions on such actions defined in this Policy & Procedure.

Keith J. Klafke  
Chief of Police

This Policy & Procedure cancels and supersedes any and all written directives relative to the subject matter contained herein.

Initial 04/09/2021  
Updated 03/12/2026