

FIREFIGHTERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM (FRS)
Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment
Policy No. 06102013

Employees have an expectation and right to be treated with respect and dignity, and to work in a professional environment free of harassment and discrimination. Left unchecked, harassment and discrimination, regardless of nature or degree, undermine the integrity of the employment relationship, debilitate morale, dedication and loyalty, compromise equal employment opportunities, and significantly interfere with the mission of the organization.

Firefighters' Retirement System (FRS) strives to maintain a workplace that fosters mutual respect and promotes harmonious, productive working relationships. Prevention and elimination of sexually inappropriate behavior requires the personal involvement and commitment of every FRS employee. Through this policy and related training requirements, FRS seeks to reinforce its unyielding intolerance of sexually inappropriate behavior, and encourage employees who experience, observe or are informed of such behavior to promptly initiate the reporting process set forth in this policy.

Sexually inappropriate behavior takes many forms. It can be explicit and overt, such as a demand for sexual favors, or subtle and implied, such as leering and innuendo. It can be intended or unintended, with the determination of inappropriateness evaluated from the perspective of the complainant and without regard for the purpose or motive of the accused. It can involve behavior by a person of either gender towards a person of the same opposite gender. It can involve conduct by a supervisor or manager towards a subordinate employee, or conduct by one employee towards another employee of equal, lesser, greater rank, status or authority. It can involve words or actions by a person external to FRS such as a visitor, vendor, maintenance personnel, client, contractor, or consultant. An employee may experience sexually inappropriate behavior merely as an observer of behavior directed towards another.

Early reporting of sexually inappropriate behavior enhances the credibility of the complainant and facilitates the investigative process. Employees are encouraged to report such behavior as soon as possible and are discouraged from waiting. The initial report should include the occurrence of words or actions that are offensive and need not provide details. This report can be verbal (in person or via telephone) or in writing (letter, memo, email, text) and does not require a specific form. The report can be made to any manager or supervisor in the FRS.

If a supervisor knows of an incident of sexual harassment, they shall take appropriate remedial action immediately. If the alleged harassment involves any type of threats of physical harm to the victim, the alleged harasser may be suspended with pay. During such suspension, an investigation will be conducted by the FRS. If the investigation supports charges of sexual harassment, disciplinary action against the alleged harasser will take place and may include termination of employment. No retaliation will be made against any person who reports an incident of sexual harassment; however, if the investigation reveals that the charges were brought falsely and with malicious intent, the charging party may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination of employment with FRS.

For illustration purposes only, sexually inappropriate behavior, includes, but is not limited to:

- **Verbal:** Unwelcomed sexual flirtations, advances, propositions, or demands; unwelcomed sexual remarks, teasing, jokes, pranks, innuendo, insults, or inquiries; sexually insensitive or derogatory comments; unwelcomed repeated requests for dates or social engagement; inappropriate comments regarding a person's physical attributes; comments regarding sexual activities, exploits, prowess, or accomplishments; use of vulgar, crude or sexually offensive language; sexually insulting noises, catcalls, or whistling; stereotypical comments; repeatedly referring to an individual as "honey", "babe", "sugar", "dear", etc.
- **Non-Verbal:** Gestures of a sexual nature; lustful looks, staring and leering; displaying sexually revealing or suggestive pictures, cartoons, caricatures, drawings, photographs, magazines, books, graffiti, or objects; transmitting sexually oriented emails, texts, letters, writings, communications, and images.
- **Physical:** Unwelcomed physical contact including kissing, touching, embracing, hugging, massaging, rubbing, fondling, groping, tickling, pinching, and patting; invading another's space by cornering, leaning over, or blocking passage; sexual assault, battery, and rape.

It is the responsibility of all employees, regardless of rank, status or authority, to ensure compliance with this policy. Employees must realize that reporting the behavior prohibited by this policy is mandatory. Similarly, cooperative participation and candor in the investigative process are mandatory.

Each FRS employee shall receive a minimum of one hour of education and training on preventing sexual harassment during each full calendar year of his/her employment with FRS.

Notes:

*** This policy was initially issued on June 10, 2013 as an internal policy that did not require board approval and was not listed in the Board Minutes.

*** The board voted to amend and reenact this policy at its October 11, 2018 Board Meeting which can be found on page 81 of the Board Minutes for the October 11, 2018 Board Meeting

*** Updated the policy on 01/22/2024 to reflect Barbara Goodson as new Executive Director

***The Board voted to amend this policy on August 14, 2025.