

## SECTION XIV - SEXUAL AND OTHER HARASSMENT

- A. General Information: The county is committed to maintaining a work environment that is free of discrimination and harassment based on a person=s sex, race, color, age, religion, disability, ancestry, or national origin, consistent with applicable laws. All employees should respect the rights, opinions, and beliefs of others. Harassment of any person because of sex, race, color, age, religion, disability, ancestry, or national origin is strictly prohibited, whether directed at an employee, vendor, or customer. Any such harassment is prohibited by this policy whether or not it also violates the equal employment opportunity laws. This policy applies to all employees, department heads, and elected officials of the county.
- B. Sexual Harassment: No one may threaten or imply that an employee=s submission to or rejection of sexual advances will in any way influence any decision about that employee=s employment, advancement, duties, compensation, or other terms or conditions of employment. No one may take any personnel action based on an employee=s submission to or rejection of sexual advances. No one may subject another employee to any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. This includes both unwelcome physical conduct, such as touching, blocking, staring, making sexual gestures, and making or displaying sexual drawings or photographs, and unwelcome verbal conduct, such as sexual propositions, slurs, insults, jokes, and other sexual comments. An employee=s conduct will be considered unwelcome and in violation of this policy when the employee knows or should know it is unwelcome to the person subjected to it.
- C. Other Harassment: No one may harass anyone because of that person=s race, color, age, religion, ancestry, or national origin. Examples of conduct prohibited by this policy include using racial and ethnic slurs or offensive stereotypes and making jokes about these characteristics.
- D. Making Complaints and Reporting Violations: If you are the victim of harassment, you are requested and encouraged to make a complaint to the county. You are not required to complain to the person who is harassing you. It is requested that you contact a responsible supervisor, a member of human resources personnel, or a member of the county commission. Similarly, if you observe harassment of another employee, you are requested and encouraged to report this to one of the persons described above. No reprisal, retaliation, or other adverse action will be taken against any employee for making in good faith a complaint or report of harassment, or for assisting in good faith in the investigation of any such complaint or report. Any suspected retaliation or

intimidation should be reported immediately to one of the persons described above.

- E. Investigation of Complaints and Reports: The county will promptly and thoroughly investigate any complaint or report of a violation of this policy. A thorough investigation can take several weeks in some cases. You may at any time ask the person you complained or reported to about the status of the investigation.
  
- F. Penalties for Violations: The county will take prompt disciplinary and remedial action if its investigation shows a violation of this policy. Depending on the circumstances, the disciplinary action may range from a warning to a discharge. A complaint or report that this policy has been violated is a serious matter. Dishonest complaints or reports are also against our policy, and the county will take appropriate disciplinary action if its investigation shows that deliberately dishonest and bad faith accusations have been made.
  
- G. Additional Information: If you have any questions about this policy, or if you have other questions or concerns about discrimination or harassment, you may ask a member of human resources personnel as listed above or contact the local office of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

