
**The Roman Catholic Church of the Diocese of Phoenix
Catholic Schools Office Policies and Procedures**

Policy 3-1 Catholic Schools; APPENDICES

Appendix A.3

**DIOCESE OF PHOENIX
HARASSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

PHILOSOPHY

The Diocese of Phoenix affirms the dignity of every man, woman and child, and is committed to an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work or learn in an atmosphere that is free from discriminatory practices. Therefore,

1. HARASSMENT POLICY: (Policies 3.1.3.25 and 3.1.4.29, DIOCESAN HANDBOOK OF POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND NORMS FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS)

THE DIOCESE STRONGLY OPPOSES AND PROHIBITS ALL FORMS OF HARASSMENT (e.g. harassment based on an individual's race, color, age, religion, sex, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, and disability), WHETHER VERBAL, PHYSICAL, OR ENVIRONMENTAL. ANY EMPLOYEE WHO VIOLATES THIS POLICY WILL BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION, UP TO AND INCLUDING TERMINATION.

- a. It is the policy of the educational programs of the Diocese to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from any type of harassment. No employee, volunteer or student associated with these programs shall be subjected to any type of harassment.
- b. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee, staff member, volunteer, parent, or student to harass another employee, staff member, volunteer, parent, or student through conduct or communications as defined in Section 2 below.
- c. Each administrator shall be responsible for promoting understanding and acceptance of and assuring compliance with, local state and federal laws and diocesan policy and procedures governing harassment within his or her educational program or office.

**The Roman Catholic Church of the Diocese of Phoenix
Catholic Schools Office Policies and Procedures**

2. DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT

- a. Harassment on the basis of race, color, age, religion, sex, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, and disability constitutes discrimination and, as such, violates civil law and the policies of the Diocese of Phoenix.
- b. Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, age, religion, sex, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, or disability, or that of his/her relatives, friends, or associates, and that:
 - i. has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment;
 - ii. has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance; or
 - iii. otherwise adversely affects an individual's opportunities.
- c. Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - i. epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts, that relate to race, color, age, religion, gender, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, or; and
 - ii. written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability and that is circulated within or placed on walls, bulletin boards, or elsewhere on premises where the educational program operates.
- d. The standard for determining whether verbal or physical conduct relating to race, color, religion, sex, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, or disability is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create a hostile or abusive environment is whether a reasonable student or person in the same or similar circumstances would find the conduct intimidating, hostile, or abusive. The "reasonable person" standard includes consideration of the perspective of persons of the alleged victim's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability. It is not necessary to make a showing that the victim was psychologically harmed.
- e. Prevention is the best tool for the elimination of harassment. The Catholic Schools Office recommends an educational program at each school so that the school maintains an environment free of harassment on any of these bases.

**The Roman Catholic Church of the Diocese of Phoenix
Catholic Schools Office Policies and Procedures**

3. PROCEDURES

- a. Any person who alleges harassment by an employee, volunteer, or student files a complaint in writing directly to his or her teacher, immediate supervisor, Principal/Preschool Director or Superintendent of Schools. The complaint shall describe the perceived violation, name the perpetrator, and identify any potential witnesses to the incident.
- b. The filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting of sexual harassment will not reflect upon the filing individual's status, nor will it affect future employment or work assignments. Retaliation against a complainant is strictly prohibited.
- c. The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected consistent with legal obligations and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and to take corrective action when this conduct has occurred. If the allegation is one of sexual misconduct, the diocesan policy on Sexual Misconduct will be followed.

4. SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY OR TOWARD SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

For employees, sexual harassment is defined as illegal sex discrimination and includes unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature which meets any one of the following criteria:

- a. Submission to the conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the individual's employment, status, or promotion
- b. Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the harassed employee
- c. The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment
- d. Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct is the basis for any decision affecting benefits, services, honors, programs or other available activities.

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Catholic Schools Office Policies and Procedures**

5. SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY OR TOWARD STUDENTS

Sexual harassment toward students is defined as including, but not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual conduct or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed toward a student under any of the following conditions:

- a. Submission to or toleration of sexual conduct is an explicit or implicit term or condition of any services, benefits, or programs sponsored by the Diocese or school
- b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for an academic evaluation affecting a student
- c. The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

6. EXAMPLES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to the following forms:

- Verbal: Sexually demeaning comments, sexual statements, questions, slurs, jokes, anecdotes, or epithets
- Written: Suggestive or obscene letters, notes, e-mails, or invitations
- Physical: Sexual assault, touching, impeding or blocking movement
- Visual: Leering, gestures, display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters

7. SANCTIONS

- a. A substantiated charge against an employee or volunteer shall subject such employee or volunteer to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.
- b. A substantiated charge against a student in one of the schools in the diocese shall subject that student to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion, consistent with the student discipline code.

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Catholic Schools Office Policies and Procedures**

8. NOTIFICATIONS

Notice of this policy and procedures will be circulated to all schools in the diocese and incorporated in employee, volunteer and student handbooks. Training sessions on this policy and the prevention of harassment shall be held for employees, volunteers and students in all schools of the diocese.

I have read and understand the above policy and procedure and agree to abide by it

Employee Name [please print]

School

Employee Signature

Date