

# **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

## **I. PURPOSE**

This policy provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and employment applicants without regard to race, religion, creed, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ancestry, physical or mental disability, genetic information, marital status, or any other classification protected by applicable local, state or federal laws.

## **II. POLICY**

Webster University prohibits unlawful discrimination based on the basis of race, religion, creed, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ancestry, physical or mental disability, genetic background, marital status, or other classification protected by applicable local, state or federal laws, or is associated with a person who has or is perceived as having any of those characteristics. The University expects all employees to support this policy, and to take all steps necessary to maintain a workplace free from unlawful discrimination and harassment and to accommodate to the fullest extent required by law. The University will not discriminate against any person who has complained about discrimination, filed a charge of discrimination, or participated in an employment discrimination investigation or lawsuit.

## **III. POLICY SCOPE**

This policy applies to all full-time and part-time University employees, on all University campuses or other teaching/learning locations, and to all aspects of employment, including, but not limited to, hiring, job assignment, working conditions, compensation, promotion, benefits, scheduling, training, discipline and termination.

## **IV. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS**

The University will make reasonable accommodations in line with this policy to the fullest extent required by law. For example, the University will make reasonable accommodations for employees' observance of religious holidays and practices unless the accommodation would cause an undue hardship on the University's operations. If you desire a specific accommodation, you are required to request the accommodation in writing and submit it to the Office of Human Resources as far in advance as possible. If you are requesting an accommodation based on a disability, please refer to the [Disability and Accommodation Policy](#).

## **V. SEXUAL AND OTHER UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT**

The University is committed to providing a workplace free of sexual harassment, as well as harassment based on such factors as race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other basis protected by local, state or federal law. The University strongly disapproves of and will not tolerate harassment of employees, applicants,

students, or independent contractors by anyone. Similarly, the University will not tolerate harassment by its employees of non-employees with whom the University employees have a business, service, or professional relationship. The University will also protect employees from harassment by non-employees in the workplace.

Harassment includes verbal, physical, and visual conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile working environment or that interferes with work performance. Such conduct constitutes harassment when: (1) submission to the conduct is made either an explicit or implicit condition of employment; (2) submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for an employment decision; or (3) the harassment interferes with an employee's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Harassing conduct can take many forms and include, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, statements, gestures, assault, impeding or blocking another's movement or otherwise physically interfering with normal work, pictures, drawings, or cartoons based upon an employee's sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, medical condition, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veterans status.

## **VI. COMPLAINT PROCESS**

If you believe you have been discriminated, harassed, or retaliated against you should report it to the Office of Human Resources, the University's Title IX Coordinator, or the University's Deputy Title IX Coordinator. The complaint process will be handled in accordance with the University's [Grievance Policy and Procedures](#). The Office of Human Resources is responsible for overseeing the investigation of all discrimination, harassment, or retaliation complaints for University employees. A prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation of the complaint will be conducted. Any complaints filed that relate to sexual misconduct or a sexual offense/assault should be filed pursuant to the University's Policy on Sexual Assault, Harassment, and Other Sexual Offenses and all investigations of such complaints will be handled in accordance with that policy. Regardless of which policy an individual utilizes for any complaint of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, the University will evaluate the complaint and address the complaint pursuant to the appropriate University policy that is implicated by the complaint. When appropriate, any employee who violates this policy will be subject to corrective action up to and including termination of employment. The University prohibits any form of retaliation against employees for reporting a complaint or providing information about discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.

## **VII. INVESTIGATIONS**

Every reported complaint of discrimination or harassment will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and in a confidential manner to the extent possible. However, given the nature of an investigation, which typically requires interviews with witnesses, the University cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality.

Upon completion of the investigation, the University will communicate its findings and intended actions to the complainant and alleged harasser as expeditiously as possible. If the investigator finds that harassment occurred, the harasser will be subject to appropriate instructive and/or disciplinary procedures. In the case of University employees, if harassment is established, disciplinary action for a violation of this policy may range from verbal or written warnings up to and including immediate termination of

employment, depending upon the circumstances. With regard to acts of harassment by non-employees, corrective action will be taken after consultation with appropriate University personnel.

The University takes all complaints pursuant to this policy seriously. Accordingly, any individual found to have knowingly made a false report or complaint in bad faith will be subject to corrective action up to and including separation of employment.

## **VIII. RETALIATION**

Retaliation in any form is illegal and will not be tolerated. This includes retaliation against an employee for cooperating in an investigation or for making a good faith complaint. Retaliation itself is a serious violation of this policy and of the law, and should be reported immediately. Any person who engages in retaliatory conduct towards any employee who cooperated in an investigation or made a complaint regarding harassment or other unlawful or unethical conduct will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Sexually harassing conduct, in particular, includes all of these prohibited actions as well as other unwelcome conduct such as requests for sexual favors, conversation containing sexual comments, and unwelcome sexual advances. All such harassment, regardless of form, is a violation of Webster policies, which may subject the harasser to disciplinary action up to and including termination, and/or State and Federal Laws which may subject the harasser to personal liability for any such unlawful conduct. Because a hostile-free work environment is important, Webster may take disciplinary action against an employee who exhibits poor judgment or engages in inappropriate behavior, including sexually inappropriate conduct, even if it is welcome or falls short of being severe or pervasive. Harassing behavior is unacceptable in the workplace itself as well as in other work-related settings, such as business trips, business-related social events, and other University-related circumstances.

## **IX. CONFIDENTIALITY**

The University attempts to maintain confidentiality in investigations where possible. However, given the nature of an investigation, which typically requires interviews with witnesses, the University cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. The University will only reveal information relating to an investigation to those individuals with a need to know or to the extent otherwise required by law.

Additionally, your medical information is confidential. Disclosure of your medical information is restricted to limited situations where a manager or supervisor has a job-related reason to know it. Employees who disclose employee medical information without proper authorization will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including separation of employment.

*Revised  
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