



SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT
Wyndmoor, Pennsylvania

Policy 1-20

Policy Title: Sexual and Improper Harassment

Date of Issue: December 1, 2022

Rescinds: None

By Authority of:

Chief of Police

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy 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. Federal law provides for the protection of classes of persons based on race, color, sex, religion, age, disability, and national origin. Also protected by this policy is harassment and discrimination based on sexual orientation.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Springfield Township Police Department that all employees have the right to work in a healthy environment free from all forms of harassment. Employees have a duty to be business-like, non-hostile, and professional to each other. This department will not tolerate, condone, or allow harassment by employees, whether sworn, civilian or volunteer, or other non-employees who conduct business with this department. This department considers harassment and discrimination of others a form of serious employee misconduct. Therefore, the department shall take direct and immediate action to prevent such behavior, and to remedy all reported instances of harassment and discrimination. A violation of this department policy can lead to discipline, up to and including termination, with repeated violations resulting in greater levels of discipline as appropriate.

III. Prohibited Activity

- A. No member shall either explicitly or implicitly ridicule, mock, deride, or belittle any person regarding race, color, gender, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, or national origin.
- B. Members shall not make offensive or derogatory comments to any person, either directly or indirectly, based on race, color, sex, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, or national origin. Such harassment is a prohibited form of discrimination under state and federal

employment law and / or is also considered misconduct subject to disciplinary action by this department.

- C. Members shall not use certain words and phrases that are in and of themselves offensive, inflammatory, or considered derogatory towards persons regarding race, color, gender, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, or national origin.
- D. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
 - 1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly, or implicitly, a term or condition of employment; or,
 - 2. Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by a member is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the member; or
 - 3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a member's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.
- E. This policy applies to all department members, whether sworn, civilian, full-time, part-time, and / or volunteer.

IV. Employee Responsibilities

- A. Each supervisor shall be responsible for preventing acts of harassment. This responsibility includes:
 - 1. Monitoring the unit work environment on a daily basis for signs that harassment may be occurring;
 - 2. Counseling all members on the types of behavior prohibited, and the department procedures for reporting and resolving complaints of harassment;
 - 3. Stopping any observed acts that may be considered harassment, and taking appropriate steps to intervene, whether or not the involved members are within their line of supervision; and
 - 4. Taking immediate action to prevent retaliation towards the complaining party and to eliminate the hostile work environment where there has been a complaint of harassment, pending investigation.
 - i. If a situation requires separation of the parties, care should be taken to avoid actions that appear to punish the complainant.

- ii. Transfer or reassignment of any of the parties involved should be voluntary if possible and, in non-voluntary situations, should be temporary pending the outcome of the investigation.
- 5. Failure to carry out these responsibilities will be considered in any evaluation or promotional decision, and may be grounds for discipline.
- B. Each supervisor has the responsibility to assist any member of this department, who comes to that supervisor with a complaint of harassment, in documenting and filing an internal complaint in accordance with internal investigation procedures.
- C. Each member of this department is responsible for assisting in the prevention of harassment through the following acts:
 - 1. Refraining from participating in, or encouragement of, actions that could be perceived as harassment;
 - 2. Reporting acts of harassment to a supervisor; and
 - 3. Encouraging any employee who confides that they are being harassed or discriminated against to report these acts to a supervisor.
- D. Failure of any member to carry out the above responsibilities will be considered in any performance evaluation or promotional decision, and may be grounds for discipline.

V. Complaint Procedures

- A. Where an employee suspects that they have encountered sexual harassment, discrimination, or other forms of harassment, they have the option of:
 - 1. Communicating clearly to the offender that the behavior is not humorous or welcome and should cease immediately; and / or
 - 2. Consulting with the next level of supervision above that of the offender, if they desire primarily to seek advice, or to discuss personal thoughts and feelings or consider ways in which to deal individually with the incidents; and / or
 - 3. Filing a complaint in writing with the Chief of Police.
- B. Employees who suspect that they have encountered sexual harassment, discrimination, or other forms of harassment, should keep a record of what occurred, to include the names of witnesses, and when it took place.
- C. Supervisors and / or management personnel shall report immediately, in writing, to the Chief of Police through the chain of command, any known incident or complaint of sexual harassment, discrimination, or other forms of harassment.

- D. Supervisors and / or management personnel approached by employees for advice shall objectively listen and provide counsel to the employee(s).
- E. Written complaints of sexual harassment, discrimination, or other forms of harassment received by the Chief of Police, shall be investigated in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Internal Affairs Policy.
- F. The Chief of Police shall maintain a record of each reported complaint and the action taken.
- G. Improper conduct committed by a supervisor or superior officer should be reported to the next highest rank. If the improper conduct committed involves the Chief of Police, the reporting employee should file a report with the Township Manager.