

**ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC LIBRARY  
HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

St. Joseph Public Library (SJPL) intends to provide its patrons and employees an environment that is free from all forms of harassment or discrimination. All employees are expected to be sensitive to and respectful of their co-workers and others with whom they come into contact while representing SJPL. SJPL prohibits all employees and patrons from engaging in any form of harassment or discrimination, whether due to age (when such discrimination is disallowed by state or federal law), race, color, religion, gender, national origin, ancestry, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and protected membership of the uniformed services.

The Library Director should promptly be notified if at any time an employee or patron believes they are subject to harassment or discrimination, or if an employee or patron becomes aware of such conduct being directed at someone else, whether by another staff member or a library patron. If the Library Director is involved in the conduct, a Branch Manager should promptly be notified, and the Branch Manager will notify the Board of Trustees. All reported incidents will be investigated under the following guidelines:

- All employees and patrons are expected to adhere to this Policy and the Behavior Policy.
- All complaints will be kept confidential and will be disclosed only as necessary to allow time for an investigation and response to the complaint. No one will be involved in the investigation or response except those with a need to know. Any concerns about confidentiality will be addressed at the time they are raised.
- Any employee who is found to have violated this policy is subject to corrective action up to and including termination of employment.
- All employees, including any employee who raises a complaint, are required to cooperate with the investigation. Persons who are asked to provide testimony during the investigation are expected to cooperate fully and truthfully. Employees who fail to cooperate or who provide false testimony may be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to termination.
- Library patrons who violate this policy will be referred to and dealt with according to the procedures and restrictions outlined in the Behavior Policy.
- SJPL does not permit retaliation against anyone making a complaint or cooperating in the investigation of a complaint. Any employee who feels that he or she is being retaliated against in violation of this policy should contact his or her supervisor or the Library Director and his or her concerns will be promptly and thoroughly reviewed.

### Unlawful Discrimination and Harassment Defined

Discrimination and harassment can occur in a variety of forms among any combination of individuals at SJPL.

Unlawful harassment is a form of unlawful discrimination. SJPL prohibits harassment on the basis of any classification protected by federal, state, and local law. Unlawful harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome or inappropriate verbal, physical, or other communication or conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion to an individual and/or group and:

- Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment or library environment; or
- Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's work performance or use of the library.

The terms "intimidating," "hostile," or "offensive" as used above include conduct which has the effect of humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort.

Unlawful harassment may include, but is not limited to the following: jokes; epithets; slurs; negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts; or written or graphic material including email that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group on the basis of a protected characteristic.

Other unwelcome conduct may constitute harassment, such as:

- Verbal: derogatory slurs, off-color jokes, propositions, threats, or suggestive or insulting sounds;
- Visual/non-verbal: derogatory posters, cartoons, or drawings; suggestive objects or pictures; graphic commentaries; leering; or obscene gestures;
- Physical: unwanted physical contact, including touching, interference with an individual's normal work movement, or assault; and
- Other: making or threatening reprisals to an individual who opposes, objects to, or complains about illegal discrimination including harassment.

Verbal and physical conduct may constitute harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions; or
- 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 for staff or library environment for patrons.

### Sexual Harassment Defined

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination and harassment that is against the law and prohibited by this Policy. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and may include harassment on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, or the status of being transgender. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct which is either of a sexual nature, or which is directed at an individual because of that individual's gender.

Prohibited sexual harassment includes verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct.

- Examples of verbal sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, explicit sexual propositions, sexual innuendo, suggestive comments, foul or obscene language, sexual stereotyping, insults of a sexual nature, and humor or jokes about sex, or gender-specific traits.
- Examples of non-verbal sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, suggestive or insulting sounds, leering, whistling, obscene gestures, display of foul or obscene printed or visual material.
- Examples of physical sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, sexual touching, patting, or pinching of a sexual nature, intentionally brushing the body, coerced sexual intercourse, and sexual assault.

#### Work Environment

All employees of SJPL have a right to work in an environment free of sexual harassment from other employees and patrons. Sexual harassment in the workplace includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment for staff, or offensive library environment.

#### Library Employee/Patron Relationship

SJPL affirms its commitment to ensuring an environment for all patrons free of any type of discrimination or harassment. SJPL views harassment or discrimination of patrons by library employees as an abuse of authority, and such harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated. Harassment or discrimination against library employees by patrons will not be tolerated.