LOUISIANA HOUSING CORPORATION		
Policy Number 8	**Policy Name** SEXUAL HARASSMENT	**Original Effective Date** February 19, 2013
Issuing Department Human Resources	**Revision Dates** September 9, 2021, April 20, 2022	
Contact Human Resources	**Signature**	
Appointing Authority Joshua G. Hollins, Executive Director	**Signature**	

I. Objective

The objective of this policy is to define workplace sexual harassment and to outline procedures for filing complaints, investigating sexual harassment claims, and issuing appropriate disciplinary measures in the case of violations.

II. Applicability

This policy shall be applicable to employees, visitors, vendors, and Board Members of the Louisiana Housing Corporation (LHC), hereinafter referred to as "LHC." The workplace includes actual worksites, any setting where work-related business is being conducted (during or after normal business hours), company-sponsored events, or company-owned/controlled property.

III. Defining Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

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

Sexual harassment includes various forms of offensive behavior based on sex. The following is a non-exhaustive list of the types of conduct prohibited by this policy:

- Unwanted sexual advances or propositions (including repeated and unwelcome requests for dates);
- Offers of employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors;
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances;
- Visual conduct: leering, making sexual gestures, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters, websites, emails, or text messages;
- Verbal conduct: making or using sexually derogatory comments, innuendos, epithets, slurs, sexually explicit jokes, or comments about an individual's body or dress, whistling or making suggestive or insulting sounds;
- Verbal and/or written abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal and/or written sexually degrading commentary about an individual's body or dress, sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, invitations, emails, text messages, tweets, or other social media postings;
- Physical conduct: touching, assault or impeding or blocking normal movements;
- Retaliation for making reports or threatening to report sexual harassment.

IV. Policy

The Louisiana Housing Corporation (LHC) is committed to maintaining a work environment free from sexual harassment. Further, the LHC strives to provide a safe, comfortable, and productive work environment for all employees. In keeping with this commitment, sexually harassing behavior directed toward LHC employees will not be tolerated. This includes actions by any individual, including any supervisor, co-worker, vendor, client, Board Member, or customer of the LHC.

All LHC employees are responsible for helping to assure the absence of harassment. Any employee who feels that he/she has experienced or witnessed harassment should immediately report this as directed below.

Managers and supervisors are required to report any complaint that they receive or any harassment that they observe or become aware of to Human Resources.

The LHC forbids retaliation against anyone who has reported sexual harassment or participated in an investigation.

The LHC will investigate all such complaints thoroughly and promptly to the fullest extent possible under the law. The LHC keeps the investigation confidential to the extent possible. Effective corrective action will be taken whenever sexual harassment is found to have occurred. All employees, including managers and supervisors, are required to cooperate with any internal investigation of sexual harassment.

If an investigation confirms that harassment has occurred, the LHC shall take disciplinary action, including up to termination of employment.

V. Mandatory Training

LHC recognizes that a policy prohibiting sexually inappropriate workplace behavior alone is insufficient to prevent and address such behavior. To support this policy and create a culture wherein employees willingly report concerns and lodge complaints, LHC requires all employees to successfully complete training on this policy upon hire and on a continuing basis thereafter. LHC requires its employees to complete the following training:

- Upon hire, employees must attend New Hire Orientation which covers important personnel policies, including the Sexual Harassment policy.
- Within thirty (30) days of the hiring date, all new employees are required to complete the online training on sexual harassment provided through the Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP) and the training on reporting sexual harassment provided through the LHC learning management system.
- On an annual calendar year basis, all employees are required to complete CPTP online or in-person training on sexual harassment.

- Within forty-five (45) days of attaining a supervisory position, all new supervisors are required to complete the online training on sexual harassment designated for supervisors provided by CPTP. This training must be completed once on a calendar year basis thereafter.

VI. Complaint Procedure

Preventing sexual harassment is everyone's responsibility. Any employee who believes they have been subjected to sexual harassment by a co-worker, supervisor, manager, client, visitor, vendor, customer, temporary worker, or Board Member of LHC or who believes another individual has been subject to such conduct should report it immediately.

Complaints can be made verbally or in writing to your direct supervisor or any supervisor or Human Resources. Employees are not required to report any prohibited conduct to a supervisor or manager who may be hostile, who has engaged in such conduct, who is a close associate of the person who has engaged in such conduct, or with whom the employee is uncomfortable discussing such matters. Complaints may also be made anonymously using the Ethics Hotline at:

- **Website: https://www.lighthouse-services.com/lhc**
- **Toll-Free Telephone:**
  - **English speaking USA and Canada: 855-222-0916**
  - Spanish speaking USA and Canada: **800-216-1288**
- **Email:** reports@lighthouse-services.com (must include company name with report)
- **Fax:** 215-689-3885 (must include company name with report)

Employees are encouraged but not required to communicate to the offending person that the person's conduct is offensive and unwelcome. Any supervisor or manager who receives a complaint of harassment or retaliation must immediately report the allegation to Human Resources.

To ensure the prompt and thorough investigation of a sexual harassment complaint, the complainant should provide as much of the following information as is possible:

- The name, department, and position of the person or persons allegedly committing harassment.
- A description of the incident(s), including the date(s), location(s), and the presence of any witnesses.
- The effect of the incident(s) on the complainant's ability to perform his or her job, or on other terms or conditions of his or her employment.
- The names of other individuals who might have been subject to the same or similar harassment.
- What, if any, steps the complainant has taken to try to stop the harassment.
- Any other information the complainant believes to be relevant to the harassment complaint.

After a report is received, a thorough and objective investigation will be undertaken. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent practicable and permitted by law. Investigations will be conducted as confidentially as possible, and related information will only be shared with others on a need-to-know basis. The investigation will be completed, and a determination will be made and communicated to the employee as soon as possible. LHC expects all employees to fully cooperate with any investigation conducted by LHC into a complaint of proscribed harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, or regarding the alleged violation of any other LHC policies, and during the investigation, to keep matters related to the investigation confidential.

If a complaint of prohibited harassment or discrimination is substantiated, appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, will be taken. If a complaint cannot be substantiated, LHC may take appropriate action to reinforce its commitment to providing a work environment free from harassment. Regardless of the outcome, the complainant can pursue a claim under state or federal law. Initiation of such a claim is not dependent upon the outcome or completion of LHC's administrative investigation.

To initiate a claim under federal or state law, employee are referred to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC") and Louisiana Commission on Human Rights (LCHR). These agencies will accept and investigate unlawful discrimination and harassment charges at no charge to the complaining party. The nearest office of the EEOC is located at Hale Boggs Federal Building, 500 Poydras Street, Suite 809, New Orleans, LA 70130 or you can contact the EEOC online at

www.eeoc.gov. The LCHR is located at 1001 N. 23rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, or visit them online at https://gov.louisiana.gov/page/filing-a-complaint-with-lchr.

VII. Manager and Supervisor's Responsibilities

Managers and supervisors must deal expeditiously and fairly when they have any knowledge of sexual harassment within their departments, whether or not there has been a written or formal complaint. They must:

- Take all complaints or concerns of alleged or possible harassment seriously, no matter how minor or who is involved.
- Report all incidents to Human Resources immediately so that a prompt investigation can occur.
- Take any appropriate action to prevent retaliation or prohibited conduct from recurring during and after any investigations or complaints.

Managers and supervisors who knowingly allow or tolerate sexual harassment or retaliation, including the failure to immediately report such misconduct to Human Resources, violate this policy and are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

VIII. Employee Responsibilities

If an employee feels that he or she is being subjected to sexual harassment, he or she may immediately inform the harasser that the conduct is unwelcome and needs to stop. If the inappropriate conduct does not cease, or if the employee is unable to or uncomfortable with addressing the alleged harasser directly, he or she should report the incident to his or her supervisor or Human Resources. It is helpful but not required to provide a written record of the date, time, and nature of the incident(s) and the names of any witnesses.

It is essential to report all concerns of sexual harassment or inappropriate sexual conduct to Human Resources or a supervisor/manager as soon as possible. Management must be made aware of the situation to conduct an immediate and

impartial investigation and take appropriate action to remediate or prevent the prohibited conduct from continuing.

IX. Human Resources Responsibilities

The Human Resources Director is responsible for:

- Ensuring that both the individual filing the complaint (complainant) and the accused individual (respondent) are aware of the seriousness of a sexual harassment complaint.
- Explaining LHC's sexual harassment policy and investigation procedures to all parties involved.
- Exploring informal means of resolving sexual harassment complaints.
- Arranging for an investigation of the alleged harassment and the preparation of a written report.
- Submitting a written report summarizing the results of the investigation and making recommendations to the Appointing Authority.
- Notifying the complainant and the respondent of the corrective actions to be taken, if any, and administering those actions.

The Human Resources Director will determine if an in-house investigation will be conducted or if a third party will be contracted to complete the investigation. An external third party will handle all complaints involving senior management at the executive level.

X. Confidentiality

All complaints and investigations are treated confidentially to the extent possible and information is disclosed strictly on a need-to-know basis. The complainant's identity is usually revealed to the parties involved during the investigation and the HR Director takes adequate steps to ensure that the complainant is protected from retaliation during and after the investigation. All information pertaining to a sexual harassment complaint or investigation is maintained in secure files within the Human Resources department.

XI. Violations

Employees who violate this policy are subject to appropriate discipline. If an investigation results in a finding that this policy has been violated, the mandatory minimum discipline is a written reprimand. The discipline for very serious or repeat violations is the termination of employment. Persons who violate this policy may also be subject to civil damages or criminal penalties.

Given the devastating impact that sexual harassment and sexually inappropriate workplace behavior have on working relationships, LHC will aggressively address violations of this policy. After investigation and satisfaction of due process requirements, corrective action may be imposed for the following:

- Failure to comply with mandatory training requirements.
- Failure by a supervisor or manager to timely report a complaint of sexually inappropriate behavior.
- Failure to participate or cooperate in the investigative process.
- Providing false or withholding information during questioning.
- Filing a false, malicious, or frivolous complaint.
- Harassment, reprisal, or retaliation towards a complainant or anyone involved in the investigative process.

XII. Retaliation

Retaliation is prohibited against any person by another employee or by the LHC for using this complaint procedure, reporting proscribed harassment, objecting to such conduct or filing, testifying, assisting, or participating in any manner in any investigation proceeding or hearing conducted by a governmental enforcement agency. Prohibited retaliation includes, but is not limited to, termination, demotion, suspension, failure to hire or consider for hire, failure to give equal consideration in making employment decisions, failure to make employment recommendations impartially, adversely affecting working conditions, or otherwise denying any employment benefit.

Individuals who believe they have been subjected to retaliation, or believe that another individual has been subjected to retaliation, should report this concern to Human Resources. Any report of retaliatory conduct will be investigated thoroughly and objectively. If a report of retaliation prohibited by this policy is substantiated, appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, will be taken.

XIII. Questions

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to Human Resources.