



Sexual and other Harassment POLICY

The following policy was approved by the AIA Connecticut Board of Directors on July 23, 2018

Introduction

AIA Connecticut (a component of the American Institute of Architects (AIA)) believes that employees have the right to work in an environment that is free of discrimination and sexual and other types of harassment and it is the policy of AIA Connecticut to maintain such a workplace environment. Harassment and discrimination are prohibited whether such conduct involves a co-worker, supervisor, or third-party and whether such behavior occurs in the workplace or in other settings in which employees find themselves that are connected to the workplace.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment refers to behavior of a sexual nature that is not welcome, is personally offensive, fails to respect the rights of others, or lowers morale, and therefore, interferes with work effectiveness. Sexual harassment means any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. The conduct is unwelcome if the individual did not solicit it or invite it, and if the individual regards the conduct as undesirable or offensive.

While it is not possible to list all circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct which, if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending upon the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwelcome sexual advances or propositions, including subtle or overt requests or pressure for sexual involvement, whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Suggestive or offensive comments, lewd remarks or jokes, or written or verbal references to sexual conduct;
- Unwanted or unwarranted reference to or comments about an individual's physical appearance, body, or sexuality;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; comments or gossip about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Discussion of one's sex life, sexual activities, or fantasies;



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- Unwelcome and/or unwanted hugs, kisses, massages, brushing against a person's body, or other physical contact of a sexual nature, or sexual assault;
- Displaying or sending sexually suggestive or obscene objects, pictures, photographs, drawings, screen savers, e-mails, texts, calendars, or cartoons; and
- Sexual or obscene gestures, whistling or catcalls, leers or stares.

The definition of sexual harassment is broad and, in addition to the above examples, other sexually oriented conduct – whether it is intended to offend or not – that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a workplace environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to other employees may also constitute sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment can occur between members of the opposite sex and/or between members of the same sex. Employees can be harassed by colleagues or subordinates as well as by managers, contractors, consultants, vendors, members, other non-employees or anyone with whom they come in contact while working. AIA Connecticut opposes all forms of harassment of its employees and endeavors to take appropriate action to eliminate harassment from all of these sources. This policy also applies to job applicants.

Other Harassment

AIA Connecticut is dedicated to fostering a community that condemns all forms of harassment or intolerance based on protected characteristics. An act of intolerance is any form of harassing behavior directed toward an individual or group because of race, color, religious creed, age, sex, marital status, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, present or past history of mental disability, learning disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Examples of conduct that may be considered other forms of prohibited harassment or acts of intolerance include, but are not limited to: slurs; negative stereotyping; denigrating written, electronic, or graphic material (including graffiti and jokes); or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts which relate to any of the protected characteristics listed in the preceding paragraph.

Complaint Procedure

- A. If an employee believes that he/she is being or has been harassed or discriminated against, or has observed such conduct/behavior, and is comfortable doing so, that person should feel free to inform the person who engaged in the inappropriate or harassing conduct that his/her conduct/behavior is offensive or unwelcome and that he/she must stop the conduct/behavior immediately.



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- B. In addition, if any employees (or applicants for employment) believe that they have been subjected to harassment or discrimination of any kind by an AIA Connecticut employee, contractor, consultant, vendor, member, or other non-employee, the individual must report the conduct/behavior using the complaint procedure below:
1. The alleged behavior, conduct, incident, or situation should be reported to the Executive Director immediately.
 2. If the Executive Director is unavailable, if the employee believes the Executive Director would be ineffective in addressing the issue, or the employee is uncomfortable with making or would prefer not to make a report to the Executive Director, the employee should make the report to any member of the Board of Directors immediately.
- C. Supervisors that become aware of any complaints or issues, or observe any inappropriate, offensive, harassing, or discriminatory conduct/behavior, must report it to the Executive Director or a member of the Board of Directors immediately.
- D. Depending on the circumstances, the Executive Director or Board Member may determine that an investigation is needed or may attempt to resolve the matter between the individuals including using informal mediation. If it is determined that an investigation must be conducted, the Board of Directors will oversee such investigation. Investigations will be conducted with discretion and the details of such investigation will be kept confidential to the extent practicable and consistent with relevant law.

Reporting a Violation

Employees may make complaints orally or in writing. In making a report of discrimination or harassment, the complainant (employee making the complaint) should strive to provide as much information as possible, including the following:

Name and position of complainant:

Date of complaint:

Name of respondent (individual against whom the complaint is made):

Date and place of incident:

Description of conduct/behavior:

Name of witness(es) (if any):

Have there been any previous incidents with this person?

If yes, when?

Disciplinary Action

Any employee found to have engaged in inappropriate behavior in violation of this policy, including potentially unlawful harassing or discriminatory behavior, may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. The disciplinary action taken in a particular case will be at the sole discretion of AIA Connecticut and will depend on the facts and circumstances of the specific incident or incidents. A contractor, consultant, vendor, member, or other non-employee



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who subjects an employee to inappropriate conduct or harassment in the workplace will be informed of AIA Connecticut's policy and appropriate action will be taken.

Retaliation

Employees may bring their good faith complaints of harassment or discrimination without fear of retaliation. AIA Connecticut will not tolerate retaliation against any employee who, in good faith, complains of harassment or discrimination or provides information in connection with any complaint. Any person who believes he/she has been subjected to retaliation must utilize the complaint procedure. Any employee found to have engaged in retaliatory conduct may be subject to disciplinary action as set forth above.

Reports of harassment that are brought in bad faith (for example, false claims brought out of malice), or intentionally or maliciously providing false information in connection with an investigation, are prohibited and may result in disciplinary action as set forth above.

Alleged Violations of the AIA Code of Ethics

Certain acts may also violate other AIA Connecticut policies, rules, standards, and expectations including the AIA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, and therefore might be the subject of a complaint to the Institute's National Ethics Council.

Conclusion

In summary, it is not AIA Connecticut's intention to regulate social relationships that are freely entered into by employees. It is, however, our affirmative duty to develop and maintain a workplace free of sexual or other harassment and unlawful discrimination. We expect the full support and cooperation of every employee to achieve this goal.