

**EMPLOYEE HARRASMENT POLICY
HIGHLAND AVENUE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH**

DISTRIBUTION: All Employees of Highland Avenue Fellowship Church

LOCATION: 1591 Highland Avenue, Melbourne, Florida

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

REVISION DATE: As Needed

APPROVED BY: Church Executive Board

I. INTRODUCTION

The Ministry seeks to promote a productive work environment in which all staff members reach their full spiritual and professional potential in ministry service. This ministry will not tolerate verbal or physical conduct by any staff member or other person that harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another's work performance or that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile work environment. Harassment in the workplace based on an employee's race, sex, or other protected classification will not be tolerated. Note that while the Ministry will enforce this policy to its fullest extent, this policy is not intended to waive any ministerial exception or any other ministerial or religious exemption from or exception to Title VII or any other federal, state or local antidiscrimination laws or regulations.

II. PROHIBITED CONDUCT UNDER THIS POLICY

The definition of harassment is when an employee is subjected to unwelcome verbal or physical conduct or other offensive behavior, especially where:

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

It is the Church's policy that no employee may engage in any form of racial or sexual harassment, or harassment based upon any other characteristic protected by law. Through enforcement of this policy and by education of leaders, employees, and volunteers, this Local Church will seek to prevent, correct and discipline behavior that violates this policy. All employees, regardless of their positions, are covered by and are expected to comply with this policy and to take appropriate measures to ensure that prohibited conduct does not occur.

A. Racial Harassment

This Church will not tolerate any acts or communications intended to intimidate, demean, annoy, or insult an individual on the basis of his/her race, national or ethnic origin. This Local Church prohibits any abusive and or derogatory language, behavior, print or visual documents, that in a

subtle or overt manner belittles, humiliates, defames, or demeans a person or group of persons based on race, nationality, or ethnic traits or characteristics of their heritage.

B. Sexual Harassment

This Church prohibits all forms of sexual harassment. This Church will not tolerate any offensive physical, written or spoken conduct, including the use of a computer, regarding any of the following subjects:

- (1) Unsolicited and unwelcome or unwanted written, verbal, physical and/or visual contact with sexual overtones. Written examples: suggestive or obscene letters, notes and unwelcome invitations. Verbal examples: derogatory comments, slurs, jokes and epithets. Physical examples: assault, touching, impeding or blocking movement. Visual examples: leering, gestures, display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters or magazines;
- (2) Unwelcome requests or demands for sexual favors. This includes either subtle or blatant solicitations, pressures, or requests for any type of favor, including unwelcome requests for dates, when it is known they are unwelcome, and whether or not they are accompanied by an implied or stated promise of preferential treatment or negative consequence concerning employment
- (3) Verbal abuse or kidding that is sexually oriented and considered unwelcome such as telling “dirty jokes” or any tasteless, sexually oriented comments, innuendo or actions that offend;
- (4) Creating a work environment that is intimidating, hostile, abusive or offensive because of unwelcome or unwanted conversations, suggestions, requests, demands, physical contacts, or attentions related to a prohibited form of harassment;
- (5) Continuing to express sexual or romantic interest after being informed that the interest is unwelcome. (Reciprocal or mutual attraction is not considered sexual harassment);
- (6) Making reprisals, threats of reprisals, or implied threats of reprisals following a negative response to efforts to establish a relationship, where the reprisal relates to compensation, promotion, discipline, tenure, or job assignments;
- (7) Engaging in coercive sexual behavior which is used to control, influence or affect the career, salary, and/or work environment of another employee; or which may have that effect;
- (8) Offering favors or employment benefits, such as promotions, favorable performance evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, recommendations or reclassifications in return for sexual/romantic favors;

(9) Offering sexual favors in exchange for employment benefits, such as promotions, favorable performance evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, recommendations, or reclassifications; and

(10) Sending pornographic, sexually explicit, or sexually erotic material through the computer or other means.

III. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING VIOLATIONS OF THIS EMPLOYEE HARASSMENT POLICY

If you feel you have been the subject of racial, sexual, or other harassment you should:

(1) If the circumstances permit, state firmly and clearly to the alleged violator that this behavior is unwelcome and you want it to stop. This action, in many cases, will resolve the issue.

(2) If the issue cannot be resolved through personal discussions with the alleged violator, you must inform the Senior Pastor and either your immediate supervisor, the Chair of the Executive Board or any Executive Board member. If the Senior Pastor is the subject of the Complaint, then you must report the matter to the Executive Board Chair. Employees should report any incident of abuse or misconduct in writing, if possible.

To report a violation of the Computer Usage Policy, notify the alleged violator's direct supervisor or the Executive Board Chair.

The Church will not retaliate against an employee who in good faith files a complaint alleging a violation of this Employee Harassment Policy, nor will the Church retaliate against an individual for cooperating in good faith in an investigation of harassment.

If a complaint is made, an investigation will be conducted as promptly as possible. The investigation of a complaint regarding a non-pastoral employee or non-appointed clergy will be promptly investigated as impartially and confidentially as possible. If the complaint involves an appointed member of the clergy, the matter will be referred to the Executive Board Chair for investigation and handling. If an individual is found to have violated this Church's Employee Conduct Policy, or if a complainant is found to have intentionally made false or malicious allegations, disciplinary actions may be taken up to and including termination of employment.

Clergy misconduct is subject to the procedures contained in the Church Constitution and any complaint against clergy must follow the applicable provisions contained therein. Clergy, and those who have a grievance against clergy, whether or not the complainant or the violator is lay or clergy, are encouraged to address any concerns directly with the other person as a means of resolving the issues. If the issues are between two clergy and the two cannot resolve the issues among themselves, the one claiming a violation is encouraged to seek the assistance of the Church Executive Board as a means of resolving the issues.

Note that while the Ministry will enforce this policy to its fullest extent, this policy is not intended to waive any ministerial exception or any other ministerial or religious exemption from or exception to Title VII or any other federal, state or local antidiscrimination laws or regulations.

IV. ACCEPTANCE OF POLICY

All new hires shall be provided a copy of this policy and will sign an acknowledgment thereof. Upon revision of this policy all current employees will receive the updated policy and will sign an acknowledgement thereof:

I have received, read, and agree to abide by the provisions of this Employee Conduct Policy.

DATE:
Print Name:
Signature:
Position/ Title:
Highland Avenue Fellowship Church

HAFC Employee Harassment Policy

3/26/2023

Change “Elder” to Executive”-entire document