

## **Sexual Harassment Policy**

### **Policy brief & purpose**

The Board of Liquidation, City Debt (the Board) has a tradition of a professional work environment in which all the individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a professional environment which promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including sexual harassment. The Board's sexual harassment policy aims to protect individual in our company from all unwelcome and inappropriate sexual behaviors, whether verbal or physical. This sexual harassment policy will give individuals guidelines to report incidents. We will also explain how we investigate sexual harassment claims and possible disciplinary actions.

### **What is sexual harassment?**

Sexual harassment has many forms of variable seriousness. A person sexually harasses someone when they:

- Insinuate, propose or demand sexual favors of any kind.
- Invade another person's personal space (e.g. inappropriate touching.)
- Stalk, intimidate, coerce or threaten another person to get them to engage in sexual acts.
- Send or display sexually explicit objects or messages in person or electronically.
- Comment on someone's looks, dress, sexuality or gender in a derogatory, objectifying manner or a manner that makes them uncomfortable.
- Make obscene comments, jokes or gestures that humiliate or offend someone.
- Pursue or flirt with another person persistently without the other person's willing participation. Also, flirting with someone at an inappropriate time (e.g. in a team meeting) is considered sexual harassment, even when these advances would have been welcome in a different setting. This is because such actions can harm a person's professional reputation and expose them to further harassment.

### **Procedures for handling sexual harassment:**

An individual can report sexual harassment complaint to the Secretary of the Board or the Board's President by one of two ways:

- **Ask for an urgent meeting with the Secretary or Board's President.** Once in the meeting, explain the situation in as much detail as possible. If you have any hard evidence (e.g. emails), forward it or bring it with you to the meeting.

- **Send your complaint via email.** If you address it to your supervisor, please cc Board's President in the email and attach any evidence or information that can be used in the investigation. The Board's President and your supervisor will discuss the issue and contact you as soon as possible.

### **Investigating Harassment Complaints**

When the Secretary of the Board receives a complaint of sexual harassment, he/she will:

- Ask for as many details and information as possible from the person making the complaint.
- Keep copies of the complaint with dates, times and details of incidents and any possible evidence in a confidential file (separate from the personnel file.)
- Launch an investigation. If the matter is complex, the Secretary can defer to the Board's President.
- Check if there have been similar reports on the same person.
- Inform the harassed employees of our company's procedures and their options to take legal action if appropriate.
- Take into account the wishes of the harassed employee. Some might want the matter to be resolved informally and discreetly, while others might expect more radical actions. The Secretary or the Board's President should consider the circumstances and decide on appropriate action.
- Contact the harasser and set up a meeting to explain the complaint and explicitly ask for this behavior to stop, **or**,
- Arrange for mediation sessions with the two employees (harasser and perpetrator) to resolve the issue, if the harassed employee agrees **or**,
- Launch a disciplinary process depending on the severity of the harassment. The complaint shall be filed in the perpetrator's personnel file. In cases of sexual assault or coercing someone to sexual favors under threats, we will terminate the harasser immediately. We will terminate employees who are found guilty in a court of law of sexually assaulting another employee.

Allegations or complaints of sexual harassment that have been determined to be fabricated, knowingly false, or otherwise baseless shall require the Secretary or the Board's President to impose disciplinary action against the complainant as well as any other employees that participated in the false allegation or complaint.

### **Mandatory Training**

- All employees of BLCD are required to complete a minimum of one hour of education and training on preventing sexual harassment during each full calendar year of his/her employment.

## **Retaliation**

The Board of requires reporting of all incidents of sexual harassment. No employee who makes a good faith complaint under this policy, or who participates in an investigation of a charge made under this policy or any other proceeding involving a complaint of sexual harassment, shall be adversely affected because of his complaint or participation. Acts of retaliation shall be reported immediately and will be promptly investigated and addressed.

## **Discipline**

Employee violations of this policy may subject the employee to disciplinary action and possible termination of employment, including suspension and demotion. Each violation may constitute a separate offense. Any discipline imposed by the Board shall be separate and apart from any penalty imposed by any fines or penalties imposed by a court of law or state or federal agency.

**See further resources regarding sexual harassment complaints at:**

Louisiana Revised Statutes (R.S.) 42:341-344 (Act 270 of 2018)

<http://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/Law.aspx?d=99421>

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) website

[https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/sexual\\_harassment.cfm](https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/sexual_harassment.cfm)