

Sexual Harassment Policy

Ascension Parish Library does not tolerate sexual harassment.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has issued guidelines setting forth the commission's interpretation regarding sexual harassment as a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. These guidelines are consistent with the library's policy that conduct creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment will not be tolerated, and those violating this practice may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other unwelcome verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature when such conduct creates an offensive, hostile, and intimidating working environment and prevents an individual from effectively performing the duties of their position.

Any employee, male or female, who is affected by sexual harassment is directed to immediately report the incident to their supervisor or an administrator. The supervisor must then inform Administration. Complaints will be handled confidentially and impartially.

Furthermore, all Ascension Parish Library employees, and particularly supervisors, have a responsibility for keeping our work environment free of harassment. Any employee who becomes aware of an incident of harassment, whether by witnessing the incident or being told of it, must report it to their immediate supervisor, who in turn reports it to Library Administration. When Library Administration becomes aware that harassment might exist, it is obligated by law to take prompt and appropriate action, whether or not the victim wants the library to do so.

The Library will thoroughly investigate any allegations of sexual harassment and will maintain confidentiality to the extent consistent with a thorough investigation. Ascension Parish Library will also take any additional action necessary to appropriately remedy the situation. No adverse employment action will be taken for any employee making a good faith report of alleged harassment.

Ascension Parish Library accepts no liability for harassment of one employee by another employee. The individual who makes unwelcome advances, threatens, or in any way harasses another employee is personally liable for such actions and their consequences. Ascension Parish Library will not provide legal, financial, or any other assistance to an individual accused of harassment if a legal complaint is filed.

Library staff should be free from harassment not only by their coworkers, but also from library patrons, vendors, trustees, or anyone else with whom they interact while at work. Patrons who sexually harass staff or other patrons will be required to vacate library property and may lose temporary or permanent access to library services. Staff are required to report harassment from any source to supervisors and/or administration.

Sexual Harassment Training

Effective January 1, 2019, Act 270 of the 2018 legislative session requires all public library trustees and employees to have annual training on preventing sexual harassment. Proof of training will be kept in the employee's personnel file.

Also required of each employee is a signed form indicating that he/she has read this document and understands its content. All employees must attest annually through signature verification that they have read Ascension Parish Library's sexual harassment policy.

Adopted by the Library Board on February 23, 2022.