

Anti-Harassment/Discrimination Policy for Town Officials, Board/Commission Members, and Volunteers

Statement of Policy

The act of harassing or discriminating against any resident, employee or visitor to the Town of Barrington is unacceptable, as well as potentially illegal. Further, no person should be disadvantaged on account of inherent personal characteristics such as race, color, religion, gender identification or expression, national origin, age, membership in or application for uniformed military service, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation or any other status protected by law. Harassment can include offensive remarks about a particular protected class. For example, it is unacceptable, and in some cases illegal, to harass a woman by making offensive comments about women in general. Harassment shall not be tolerated in the interactions of officials, board/commission members, and/or volunteers, between and among themselves, or with anyone with whom they come into contact in the course of their Town responsibilities, whether or not the harassment is aimed at a member or group in a protected class.

“Harassing or discriminating” as used in this policy shall mean a course of conduct directed at a person which seriously alarms, annoys, or bothers the person, and which serves no legitimate purpose. To qualify as “harassing or discriminating,” the course of conduct would be of a kind that would cause a reasonable person to suffer substantial emotional distress or be in fear of bodily injury.

Report and Investigation Procedure

When anyone within the Town experiences or witnesses unlawful harassment or discrimination (“reporting person”), they are encouraged to promptly report such incidents through the appropriate channels. If the reporting person is an employee of the Town, they must report incidents pursuant to the Human Resource Department’s Harassment Prevention Policy. If the reporting person is not a Town employee, then they should report incidents to the Human Resources Director and any member of the Town Council not involved in the incident.

Upon the reporting of an incident to the Town Council, the members of the Town Council shall thoroughly investigate pursuant to §2-1-5 of the Town Charter, with any member of the Town Council allegedly involved in the incident recusing themselves from the matter. For individuals subject to appointment and removal by the Town Manager, the Town Manager shall conduct an investigation.

Consequences

Any appointed Town official or appointed member of any Town board or commission is subject to removal from his or her appointment by the appropriate appointing authority for any act of harassment or discrimination that is proven to the satisfaction of the appointing authority. Any elected official found in violation of this policy shall be subject to public censure from the Town Council, at its discretion, and, if a member of the Town Council is the subject of the unlawful harassment or discrimination complaint, said member shall recuse from consideration of the public censure by the Town Council. Provided however, that every person so accused, shall have the right to defend themselves against such accusation. The consequences outlined herein shall be in addition to, and shall not supplant, any remedy available to the victim of sexual harassment at law.