



June 10, 2014

Postal Service Policy on Workplace Harassment

The United States Postal Service[®] is committed to providing a work environment free of harassment based upon race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity and gender stereotypes), national origin, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, uniformed (military) service, or in reprisal for an employee's or applicant's complaint about or opposition to discrimination or participation in any process or proceeding designed to remedy discrimination. The Postal Service's workplace must be one in which all employees are treated with dignity and respect by supervisors, subordinates, and coworkers. Supervisors and managers will take prompt action to prevent, address, and remedy workplace conduct that is contrary to this policy.

Prohibited Activities

Harassment is unwelcome verbal or physical conduct, which is so severe or pervasive that it interferes with or changes the conditions of one's employment by creating a hostile, intimidating, or abusive working environment. Examples may include, but are not limited to, making offensive or derogatory comments or engaging in physically threatening, intimidating or humiliating behavior based upon race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity and gender stereotypes), national origin, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, past, present, or future uniformed (military) service, or in reprisal for an employee's or applicant's complaint about or opposition to discrimination or participation in any process or proceeding designed to remedy discrimination. These activities are prohibited by Postal Service policy and may amount to harassment in violation of federal anti-discrimination laws. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. The Postal Service is committed to providing its employees a safe, productive, and inclusive workplace and will tolerate nothing less.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature such as, but not limited to: making or threatening to make employment decisions based on an employee's submission to, or rejection of, sexual advances or requests for sexual favors; deliberate or repeated unsolicited remarks with a sexual connotation or physical contact of a sexual nature that is unwelcome to the recipient; or behavior that creates a sustained hostile or abusive work environment so severe or pervasive that it unreasonably interferes with or changes the conditions of one's employment.

Although not every instance of inappropriate behavior may fit the legal definition of harassment, such behavior in the workplace undermines morale and violates the Postal Service's standards of conduct. Disciplinary action may result even if the conduct does not constitute harassment under the law.

Management Responsibility

All managers and supervisors are responsible for preventing harassment and inappropriate behavior that could lead to illegal harassment, and must respond promptly when they learn of any such conduct. Any manager or supervisor who receives a complaint must see that a prompt and thorough investigation is conducted. Investigations of all forms of harassment must be done in accordance with the "Initial Management Inquiry Process (IMIP)." Materials are available in Publication 552, *Manager's Guide to Understanding, Investigating, and Preventing Harassment*. When harassment or inappropriate conduct is found, managers must take prompt and effective corrective action.