
Omaha Public Library (OPL) Third-Party Sexual Harassment Policy



PURPOSE:

OPL is committed to providing a safe and supportive workplace. This policy addresses employee harassment coming from people outside of the organization (patrons, contractors, outside vendors and organizations, etc.). OPL will not tolerate this kind of behavior to ensure staff are treated with respect and dignity.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to everyone outside the organization, including vendors, patrons, contractors, partners, and any other people we are connected to or do business with.

OPL aims to protect every employee, intern, or volunteer regardless of level, function, seniority, status, or protected characteristics like race, color, religion, gender, gender expression, age, national origin, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.

This document serves to supplement the policy of the City of Omaha. For a more detailed explanation of our stance towards harassment, please refer to the City of Omaha Executive Order No. N-6-25.

DEFINITION:

Sexual harassment is defined by the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example: a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individuals, or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment can be physical and/or psychological in nature. Sexual harassment can happen in person, over the phone, via email, or through other online applications. An aggregation of incidents can constitute sexual harassment even if one of the incidents considered on its own would not be harassing.

POLICY & PROCEDURES:

It is not the intent of OPL to regulate the social interactions or relationships freely entered into by employees on their own time. However, OPL strictly prohibits sexually unacceptable or improper behavior and all employees have the right to work in a safe environment free from sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is a very serious matter that has far reaching effects on individuals' lives and careers. For this reason, OPL strives to maintain a work environment free of employee sexual harassment. Any employee who is being harassed, or witnesses another employee being harassed, shall immediately report it.

Employee

If an employee feels that they are being subjected to sexual harassment they should immediately inform the harasser that the conduct is unwelcome and needs to stop. If the inappropriate conduct does not stop, or if the employee is unable to or uncomfortable with addressing the alleged harasser directly, they should report the incident to their own supervisor, to the employee's division manager, to the library director, or to the human resources (HR) director for investigation if possible. It is helpful, but not required, to provide a written record of the date, time and nature of the incident(s) and the names of any witnesses.

It is important to report all concerns of sexual harassment or inappropriate sexual conduct to the HR director or a supervisor/manager as soon as possible. Management must be made aware of the situation so that it can initiate an immediate and impartial investigation and/or take appropriate action to remediate or prevent the prohibited conduct from continuing.

No employee will be retaliated against for complaining of offensive behavior of sexual harassment, for offering evidence of such conduct, or for assisting in any fashion the investigation of a complaint submitted pursuant to this policy.

Managers and Supervisors

Managers and supervisors must deal expeditiously and fairly when they have any knowledge of sexual harassment within their departments, whether or not there has been a written or formal complaint. They must:

- Take all complaints or concerns of alleged or possible harassment seriously, no matter how minor or who is involved.
- Report all incidents to Administration or Human Resources immediately so that remedial measures can be taken and a prompt investigation can occur if possible.
- Take any appropriate action to prevent retaliation or prohibited conduct from recurring during and after any investigations or complaints.

Managers and supervisors will record as much of the following information as possible:

1. The name and affiliation of the person or person(s) allegedly committing harassment.
2. A description of the incident(s), including the date(s), location(s), and the presence of any witnesses.
3. The effect of the incident(s) on the complainant's ability to perform their job or any other terms or conditions of their employment.
4. The names of other individuals who might have been subject to the same or similar harassment.
5. What, if any, steps the complainant has taken to try to stop the harassment.
6. Any other information the complainant believes to be relevant to the harassment complaint.
7. If Library management feel the harassing behavior is excessively egregious, they maintain the discretion to proceed directly to established Ban & Bar procedures.

Managers and supervisors who knowingly allow or tolerate sexual harassment or retaliation, including the failure to immediately report such misconduct to Administration or Human Resources, are in violation of this policy. They are subject to discipline up and including termination.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

All complaints and investigations are treated confidentially to the extent possible and information is disclosed strictly on a need-to-know basis. Since the identity of the complainant is usually revealed to the parties involved during the investigation, the HR director takes adequate steps to ensure the complainant is protected from retaliation during and after the investigation.

IMPLEMENTATION:

All OPL personnel are responsible for enforcing this policy.

Approved by the Board of Trustees
of the Omaha Public Library, August 20, 2025