

### Sexual Harassment of District Personnel

Chenango Valley Central School District is committed to maintaining a workplace free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of workplace discrimination. Chenango Valley Central School District has a zero-tolerance policy for any form of sexual harassment, and all employees are required to work in a manner that prevents sexual harassment in the workplace. This Policy is one component of Chenango Valley's commitment to a discrimination-free work environment.

The Board of Education affirms its commitment to non-discrimination and recognizes its responsibility to provide for all district employees an environment that is free of sexual harassment, including sexual violence and intimidation. Sexual harassment, including sexual violence, is a violation of law and stands in direct opposition to district policy. Therefore, the Board prohibits and condemns all forms of sexual harassment by employees, school volunteers, students, and non-employees such as contractors and vendors which occur on school grounds and at all school-sponsored events, programs and activities including those that take place at locations off school premises and in another state. Since sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment, the term "sexual harassment" as used in this policy will implicitly include sexual violence even if it not explicitly stated.

Sexual harassment is against the law. All employees have a legal right to a workplace free from sexual harassment, and employees can enforce this right by filing a complaint internally with Chenango Valley CSD, or with a government agency or in court under federal, state or local antidiscrimination laws.

#### Policy:

- 1) Chenango Valley Central School District Policy applies to all employees, applicants for employment, interns, whether paid or unpaid, contractors and persons conducting business with Chenango Valley.
- 2) Sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Any employee or individual covered by this policy who engages in sexual harassment or retaliation will be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- 3) Retaliation Prohibition: No person covered by this Policy shall be subject to adverse employment action including being discharged, disciplined, discriminated against, or otherwise subject to adverse employment action because the employee reports an incident of sexual harassment, provides information, or otherwise assists in any investigation of a sexual harassment complaint. Chenango Valley Central School District has a zero-tolerance policy for such retaliation against anyone who, in good faith complains or provides information about suspected sexual harassment. Any employee of Chenango Valley Central School District who retaliates against anyone involved in a sexual harassment investigation will be subjected to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Any employee, paid or unpaid intern, or non-employee<sup>1</sup> working in the workplace who believes they have been subject to such retaliation should inform a supervisor, manager, or the District's Sexual Harassment Compliance Officers. Any employee, paid or unpaid intern or non-employee who believes they have been a victim of such retaliation may also seek compensation in other available forums, as explained below in the section on Legal Protections.

<sup>1</sup> A non-employee is someone who is (or is employed by) a contractor, subcontractor, vendor, consultant, or anyone providing services in the workplace. Protected non-employees include persons commonly referred to as independent contractors, "gig" workers and temporary workers. Also included are persons providing equipment repair, cleaning services or any other services provided pursuant to a contract with the employer.

- 4) Sexual harassment is offensive, is a violation of our policies, is unlawful, and subjects Chenango Valley Central School District to liability for harm to victims of sexual harassment. Harassers may also be individually subject to liability. Employees of every level who engage in sexual harassment, including managers and supervisors who engage in sexual harassment or who knowingly allow such behavior to continue, will be penalized for such misconduct.
- 5) Chenango Valley Central School District will conduct a prompt, thorough and confidential investigation that ensures due process for all parties, whenever management receives a complaint about sexual harassment, or otherwise knows of possible sexual harassment occurring. Effective corrective action will be taken whenever sexual harassment is found to have occurred. All employees, including managers and supervisors, are required to cooperate with any internal investigation of sexual harassment.
- 6) All employees are encouraged to report any harassment or behaviors that violate this policy. Chenango Valley Central School District will provide all employees a complaint form for employees to report harassment and file complaints.
- 7) Managers and supervisors are required to report any complaint that they receive, or any harassment that they observe to the District's Compliance Officers.
- 8) This policy applies to all employees, paid or unpaid interns, and non-employees and all must follow and uphold this policy. This policy must be posted prominently in all work locations and be provided to employees upon hiring.

#### What Is "Sexual Harassment"?

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. Sexual harassment includes harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and the status of being transgender.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct which is either of a sexual nature, or which is directed at an individual because of that individual's sex when:

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, even if the complaining individual is not the intended target of the sexual harassment;
- Such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; or
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting an individual's employment.

A sexually harassing hostile work environment consists of words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation or physical violence which are of a sexual nature, or which are directed at an individual because of that individual's sex. Sexual harassment also consists of any unwanted verbal or physical advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements or sexually discriminatory remarks made by someone which are offensive or objectionable to the recipient, which cause the recipient discomfort or humiliation, which interfere with the recipient's job performance.

Sexual harassment also occurs when a person in authority tries to trade job benefits for sexual favors. This can include hiring, promotion, continued employment or any other terms, conditions or privileges of employment. This is also called "quid pro quo" harassment.

Any employee who feels harassed should complain so that any violation of this policy can be corrected promptly. Any harassing conduct, even a single incident, can be addressed under this policy.

#### Examples of sexual harassment

The following describes some of the types of acts that may be unlawful sexual harassment and that are strictly prohibited:

- Physical assaults of a sexual nature, such as:
  - Touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another employee's body or poking another employees' body;
  - Rape, sexual battery, sexual coercion, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults.
- Unwanted sexual advances or propositions, such as:
  - Requests for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning the victim's job performance evaluation, a promotion or other job benefits or detriments;
  - Subtle or obvious pressure for unwelcome sexual activities.
- Sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks, jokes or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience, which create a hostile work environment.
- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the workplace, such as:
  - Displaying pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional material, reading materials or other materials that are sexually demeaning or pornographic. This includes such sexual displays on workplace computers or cell phones and sharing such displays while in the workplace.
- Hostile actions taken against an individual because of that individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and the status of being transgender, such as:
  - Interfering with, destroying or damaging a person's workstation, tools or equipment, or otherwise interfering with the individual's ability to perform the job;
  - Sabotaging an individual's work;
  - Bullying, yelling, name-calling.

### Who can be a target of sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment can occur between any individuals, regardless of their sex or gender. New York Law protects employees, paid or unpaid interns, and non-employees, including independent contractors, and those employed by companies contracting to provide services in the workplace. A perpetrator of sexual harassment can be a superior, a subordinate, a coworker or anyone in the workplace including an independent contractor, contract worker, vendor, client, customer or visitor.

### Where can sexual harassment occur?

Unlawful sexual harassment is not limited to the physical workplace itself. It can occur while employees are traveling for business or at employer sponsored events or parties. Calls, texts, emails, and social media usage by employees can constitute unlawful workplace harassment, even if they occur away from the workplace premises or not during work hours.

### What is “Retaliation”?

Unlawful retaliation can be any action that would keep a worker from coming forward to make or support a sexual harassment claim. Adverse action need not be job-related or occur in the workplace to constitute unlawful retaliation.

Such retaliation is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. The New York State Human Rights Law protects any individual who has engaged in “protected activity.” Protected activity occurs when a person has:

- filed a complaint of sexual harassment, either internally or with any anti-discrimination agency;
- testified or assisted in a proceeding involving sexual harassment under the Human Rights Law or other anti-discrimination law;
- opposed sexual harassment by making a verbal or informal complaint to management, or by simply informing a supervisor or manager of harassment;
- complained that another employee has been sexually harassed; or
- encouraged a fellow employee to report harassment.

### Prohibition of Retaliatory Behavior (Commonly Known as "Whistle-Blower" Protection)

The Board prohibits any retaliatory behavior directed against complainants, victims, witnesses, and/or any other individuals who participated in the investigation of a complaint of sexual harassment. Follow-up inquiries shall be made to ensure that sexual harassment has not resumed and that all those involved in the investigation of the sexual harassment complaint have not suffered retaliation.

### Reporting Sexual Harassment

Preventing Sexual Harassment is everyone's responsibility. Chenango Valley Central School District cannot prevent or remedy sexual harassment unless it knows about it. Any employee, paid or unpaid intern or non-employee who has been subjected to behavior that may constitute sexual harassment is encouraged to report such behavior to a supervisor, manager or District Compliance Officer. Anyone who witnesses or becomes aware of potential instances of sexual harassment should report such behavior to a supervisor, manager or District Compliance Officer.

Reports of sexual harassment may be made verbally or in writing. A form for submission of a written complaint is attached to this Policy, and all employees are encouraged to use this complaint form.

Employees who are reporting sexual harassment on behalf of other employees should use the complaint form and note that it is on another employee's behalf.

Employees, paid or unpaid interns or non-employees who believe they have been a victim of sexual harassment may also seek assistance in other available forums, as explained below in the section on Legal Protections.

### Board Responsibilities

The Board acknowledges that in determining whether sexual harassment has occurred the totality of the circumstances should be evaluated. The Board recognizes that sexual harassment can originate from a person of either sex against a person of the opposite or same sex, and from co-workers as well as supervisors, and from a third party such as a school visitor, volunteer, or vendor, or any other individual associated with the school district. The district will designate, at a minimum, two (2) complaint officers.

In order for the Board to enforce this policy, and to take corrective measures as may be necessary, it is essential that any employee who believes he/she has been a victim of sexual harassment in the work environment, as well as any other person who is aware of and/or who has knowledge of or witnesses any possible occurrence of sexual harassment, immediately report such alleged harassment to the district's designated complaint officers through informal and/or formal complaint procedures as developed by the district. Such complaints are recommended to be in writing, although verbal complaints of alleged sexual harassment will also be promptly, thoroughly and equitably investigated in accordance with the terms of this policy. In the event that the complaint officer is the alleged offender, the employee should report his/her complaint to the next level of supervisory authority.

### Supervisory Responsibilities

All supervisors and managers who receive a complaint or information about suspected sexual harassment, observe what may be sexually harassing behavior or for any reason suspect that sexual harassment is occurring, are required to report such suspected sexual harassment to the District's Compliance Officer(s).

In addition to being subject to discipline if they engaged in sexually harassing conduct themselves, supervisors and managers will be subject to discipline for failing to report suspected sexual harassment or otherwise knowingly allowing sexual harassment to continue.

Supervisors and managers will also be subject to discipline for engaging in any retaliation.

### Complaint And Investigation Of Sexual Harassment

Upon receipt of an informal/formal complaint (even an anonymous complaint), the district will conduct a thorough, prompt and equitable investigation of the charges. However, even in the absence of a complaint, if the district has knowledge of or has reason to know of or suspect any occurrence of sexual harassment, the district will investigate such conduct promptly, equitably and thoroughly. All procedures developed by the district will provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of the sexual harassment.

All complaints or information about suspected sexual harassment will be investigated, whether that information was reported in verbal or written form. Investigations will be conducted in a timely manner, and will be confidential to the extent possible.

An investigation of any complaint, information or knowledge of suspected sexual harassment will be prompt and thorough, and should be completed within 30 days. The investigation will be confidential to the extent possible. All persons involved, including complainants, witnesses and alleged perpetrators will be accorded due process to protect their rights to a fair and impartial investigation.

To the extent possible, within legal constraints, all complaints will be treated as confidentially and privately as possible. However, disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation of the charges, and any disclosure will be provided on a "need to know" basis. The Superintendent will inform the Board of Education of investigations involving findings of harassment.

Any employee may be required to cooperate as needed in an investigation of suspected sexual harassment. Employees who participate in any investigation will not be retaliated against.

Investigations will be done in accordance with the following steps:

- Upon receipt of complaint, the District Compliance Officer(s) will conduct an immediate review of the allegations, and take any interim actions, as appropriate. If complaint is oral, encourage the individual to complete the "Complaint Form" in writing. If he or she refuses, prepare a Complaint Form based on the oral reporting.
- If documents, emails or phone records are relevant to the allegations, take steps to obtain and preserve them.
- Request and review all relevant documents, including all electronic communications.
- Interview all parties involved, including any relevant witnesses;
- Create a written documentation of the investigation (such as a letter, memo or email), which contains the following:
  - A list of all documents reviewed, along with a detailed summary of relevant documents;
  - A list of names of those interviewed, along with a detailed summary of their statements;
  - A timeline of events;
  - A summary of prior relevant incidents, reported or unreported; and
  - The final resolution of the complaint, together with any corrective actions action(s).

- Keep the written documentation and associated documents in the employer's records.
- Promptly notify the individual who complained and the individual(s) who responded of the final determination and implement any corrective actions identified in the written document.
- Inform the individual who complained of their right to file a complaint or charge externally as outlined below.

Based upon the results of the investigation, if the district determines that an employee has violated the terms of this policy and/or accompanying regulations, immediate corrective action will be taken, as warranted, up to and including termination of the offender's employment in accordance with legal guidelines, district policy and regulation, the district's Code of Conduct, and the applicable collective bargaining agreement(s). Third parties (such as school volunteers, vendors, etc.) who are found to have violated this policy and/or accompanying regulations will be subject to appropriate sanctions as warranted and in compliance with law.

#### Knowingly Makes False Accusations

Employees and/or students who *knowingly* make false accusations against another individual as to allegations of harassment may also face appropriate disciplinary action.

#### Privacy Rights

As part of the investigation, the district has the right to search all school property and equipment including district computers. Rooms, desks, cabinets, lockers, computers, etc. are provided by the district for the use of students and staff, but the users do not have exclusive use of these locations or equipment and should not expect that materials stored therein will be private.

#### Legal Protections And External Remedies

Sexual harassment is not only prohibited by Chenango Valley Central School District but is also prohibited by state, federal, and, where applicable, local law.

Aside from the internal process at Chenango Valley CSD, employees may also choose to pursue legal remedies with the following governmental entities at any time.

#### New York State Division of Human Rights (DHR)

The Human Rights Law (HRL), codified as N.Y. Executive Law, art. 15, § 290 et seq., applies to employers in New York State with regard to sexual harassment, and protects employees, paid or unpaid interns and non-employees regardless of immigration status. A complaint alleging violation of the Human Rights Law may be filed either with DHR or in New York State Supreme Court.

Complaints with DHR may be filed any time within one year of the harassment. If an individual did not file at DHR, they can sue directly in state court under the HRL, within three years of the alleged discrimination. An individual may not file with DHR if they have already filed a HRL complaint in state court.

Complaining internally to Chenango Valley Central School District does not extend your time to file with DHR or in court. The one year or three years is counted from date of the most recent incident of harassment.

You do not need an attorney to file a complaint with DHR, and there is no cost to file with DHR.

DHR will investigate your complaint and determine whether there is probable cause to believe that discrimination has occurred. Probable cause cases are forwarded to a public hearing before an administrative law judge. If discrimination is found after a hearing, DHR has the power to award relief, which varies but may include requiring your employer to take action to stop the harassment, or redress the damage caused, including paying monetary damages, attorney's fees and civil fines.

DHR's main office contact information is: NYS Division of Human Rights, One Fordham Plaza, Fourth Floor, Bronx, New York 10458, (718) 741-8400 [appropriate other contact info], [www.dhr.ny.gov](http://www.dhr.ny.gov).

Contact DHR at (888) 392-3644 or visit [dhr.ny.gov/complaint](http://dhr.ny.gov/complaint) for more information about filing a complaint. The website has a complaint form that can be downloaded, filled out, notarized and mailed to DHR. The website also contains contact information for DHR's regional offices across New York State.

### United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

The EEOC enforces federal anti-discrimination laws, including Title VII of the 1964 federal Civil Rights Act (codified as 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq.). An individual can file a complaint with the EEOC anytime within 300 days from the harassment. There is no cost to file a complaint with the EEOC. The EEOC will investigate the complaint, and determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that discrimination has occurred, at which point the EEOC will issue a Right to Sue letter permitting the individual to file a complaint in federal court.

The EEOC does not hold hearings or award relief, but may take other action including pursuing cases in federal court on behalf of complaining parties. Federal courts may award remedies if discrimination is found to have occurred.

If an employee believes that he/she has been discriminated against at work, he/she can file a "Charge of Discrimination." The EEOC has district, area, and field offices where complaints can be filed. Contact the EEOC by calling 1-800-669-4000 (1-800-669-6820 (TTY)), visiting their website at [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov) or via email at [info@eeoc.gov](mailto:info@eeoc.gov)

If an individual filed an administrative complaint with DHR, DHR will file the complaint with the EEOC to preserve the right to proceed in federal court.

### Local Protections

Many localities enforce laws protecting individuals from sexual harassment and discrimination. An individual should contact the county, city or town in which they live to find out if such a law exists. For example, employees who work in New York City may file complaints of sexual harassment with the New York City Commission on Human Rights. Contact their main office at Law Enforcement Bureau of the NYC Commission on Human Rights, 40 Rector Street, 10th Floor, New York, New York; call 311 or (212) 306-7450; or visit [www.nyc.gov/html/cchr/html/home/home.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/cchr/html/home/home.shtml).



### Contact the Local Police Department

If the harassment involves physical touching, coerced physical confinement or coerced sex acts, the conduct may constitute a crime. Contact the local police department.

### Development and Dissemination of Administrative Regulations

Regulations have been developed for reporting, investigating and remedying allegations of sexual harassment. An appeal procedure will also be provided to address any unresolved complaints and/or unsatisfactory prior determinations by the applicable complaint officer(s).

Such regulations have been developed in accordance with federal and state law as well as any applicable collective bargaining agreement(s).

The Superintendent/designee(s) will affirmatively discuss the topic of sexual harassment with all employees, express the district's condemnation of such conduct, and explain the sanctions for harassment. Training programs will be established for employees to help ensure awareness of the issues pertaining to sexual harassment in the workplace, and to disseminate preventative measures to help reduce such incidents of prohibited conduct. Furthermore, special training will be provided for designated supervisors and managerial employees, as may be necessary, for training in the investigation of sexual harassment complaints.

A copy of this policy and its accompanying regulations will be available upon request and may be posted at various locations in each school building. The district's policy and regulations on sexual harassment will be published in appropriate school publications such as teacher/employee handbooks and/or school calendars.

Civil Rights Act of 1991, 42 United States Code (USC) Section 1981(a)

29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 1604.11(a)

Civil Service Law Section 75-B

Education Law Section 2801(1)

Executive Law Sections 296 and 297

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 United States Code (USC) Section 2000e et seq.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 United States Code (USC) Section 1681 et seq.

34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 100 et seq.

# CHENANGO VALLEY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



New York State Labor Law requires all employers to adopt a sexual harassment prevention policy that includes a complaint form for employees to report alleged incidents of sexual harassment.

If you believe that you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you are encouraged to complete this form and submit it to the Board Appointed Sexual Harassment Officers. Once you submit this form, your employer must follow its sexual harassment prevention policy and investigate any claims.

If you are more comfortable reporting verbally or in another manner, your employer is still required to follow its sexual harassment prevention policy by investigating the claims as outlined at the end of this form.

**For additional resources, visit: [ny.gov/combating-sexual-harassment](http://ny.gov/combating-sexual-harassment)**

## COMPLAINANT INFORMATION

Name:

Home Address:

Work Address:

Home Phone:

Work Phone:

Job Title:

Email:

Select Preferred Communication Method:

(please select one)

## SUPERVISORY INFORMATION

Immediate Supervisor's Name:

Title:

Work Phone:

Work Address:

## COMPLAINT INFORMATION

1. Your complaint of Sexual Harassment is made against:

Name:

Title:

Work Address:

Work Phone:

Relationship to you:  Supervisor  Subordinate  Co-Worker  Other

2. Please describe the conduct or incident(s) that is the basis of this complaint and your reasons for concluding that the conduct is sexual harassment. Please use additional sheets of paper if necessary and attach any relevant documents or evidence.

3. Date(s) sexual harassment occurred:

Is the sexual harassment continuing?  Yes  No

4. Please list the name and contact information of any witnesses or individuals that may have information related to your complaint:

*The last two questions are optional, but may help facilitate the investigation.*

5. Have you previously complained or provided information (verbal or written) about sexual harassment at [Name of employer]? If yes, when and to whom did you complain or provide information?

6. *Employees that file complaints with their employer might have the ability to get help or file claims with other entities including federal, state or local government agencies or in certain courts.*

7. Have you filed a claim regarding this complaint with a federal, state or local government agency?

Yes  No

Have you instituted a legal suit or court action regarding this complaint?

Yes  No

Have you hired an attorney with respect to this complaint?

Yes  No

*I request that [name of employer] investigate this complaint of sexual harassment in a timely and confidential manner as outlined below, and advise me of the results of the investigation.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Instructions for Employers**

If you receive a complaint about alleged sexual harassment, you must follow your sexual harassment prevention policy by investigating the allegations through actions such as:

- Speaking with the employee
- Speaking with the alleged harasser
- Interviewing witnesses
- Collecting and reviewing any related documents

You should create a written document of the findings of the investigation, along with any corrective actions taken and notify the employee and the individual(s) against whom the complaint was made. This may be done via email.