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200 New River Town Center
Beckley, WV 25801

Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment

The Region 1 Workforce Development Board is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination and unlawful harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's religion, age, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, race, or color will not be tolerated. Discrimination and harassment are considered to be serious acts of misconduct and are grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including the termination or employment.

If you believe you have been the victim of harassment, or know of another employee who has, report it to your supervisor, the Human Resources Manager/EO Officer and the Executive Director immediately. Employees should raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. If you are reporting the conduct of your own supervisor, you are not required to report to this supervisor, but must instead make the report to the Human Resources Manager/EO Officer or Executive Director.

Any supervisor who becomes aware of possible harassment must promptly advise his/her own supervisor and/or the Human Resources Manager/EO Officer who will handle the matter in a timely and confidential manner. If you are reporting the conduct of the Executive Director, the HR Manager/EO Officer, you may utilize the grievance policy discussed later in this manual. Promptly reporting instances of discrimination or harassment help R1WDB to help employees in appropriate circumstances, and create a more professional work atmosphere. The report of harassment or discrimination, or participation in an investigation, is important to the Board. In the event that the remedy taken by R1WDB does not adequately address the employee's concerns, or if the employee feels as if they have been the subject of retaliation for the complaints made or the information provided while participating in an investigation, the employee should provide the Organization with any additional information so that R1WDB may conduct a follow-up inquiry and determine what additional steps might be necessary.

The R1WDB will investigate all claims and all parties of discrimination and harassment, and determine the appropriate action if harassment or discrimination is found to have occurred. Appropriate actions may include training, referral to counseling, or disciplinary action ranging from warnings and reprimands up to and including termination of employment. In conducting an investigation, R1WDB will respect the privacy of all concerned, however, complete confidentiality may not always be possible because of the need to conduct an investigation and take steps necessary to eliminate the problem.

Retaliation against any employee raising a complaint or providing information concerning an alleged violation of this policy is strictly prohibited.

-Harassment is defined as unwelcome or unsolicited comments or conduct targeting a person which is so severe or so pervasive that it interferes with an employee's job performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

-Verbal Harassment

Derogatory or vulgar comments regarding a person's race, gender, religion, national origin (including accent), ethnic heritage, physical appearance, age, disability, or other protected characteristic. Verbal harassment also includes threats of physical harm. Distribution of written or graphic material which relates to race, age, gender, disability or other protected characteristic and which could be viewed as offensive, vulgar or derogatory may also constitute harassment.

-Physical Harassment

Hitting, pushing or other aggressive physical contact, touching or threats to take such action may constitute harassment where such actions are based on an individual's race, gender, religion, national origin (including accent), ethnic heritage, physical appearance, age, disability, or other protected characteristic.

-Sexual Harassment

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other physical, verbal, or visual conduct based on gender constitutes sexual harassment when 1) submission to such conduct is an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment; 2) submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for an employment decision; or 3) the conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. This can include threats that are not carried out.

A sexual advance is not needed for conduct to constitute sexual harassment. Threats, harassing remarks, insults, and demeaning behavior on the basis of gender is considered sexual harassment. Sexual harassment may also include explicit sexual propositions, sexual innuendo, suggestive comments, gender-based slurs, sexually oriented or gender-based "kidding" or "teasing," "practical jokes," jokes about gender-specific traits, and improper physical contact, such as patting, pinching or brushing against another's body. Sexual harassment may include verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or gender-based nature engaged in by a person of the same sex as well as of the opposite sex. Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature or welcome social relationships.

I have read and understand the Harassment Statement as outlined in this document that has been put forth by the Region1 Workforce Development Board.

Employee's Name

Date