

# **COVINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

**Subject: SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

**Date of Issue: 01-01-1999**

**Number of Pages: 2**

**Policy No. A211**

**Review Date: 06-01-2007**

**Distribution: Departmental**

**Revision Date:**

## **I. Purpose**

To establish a procedure for handling employee complaints relating to alleged sexual and other forms of illegal harassment. The Covington Police Department hereby adopts the City of Covington's Sexual Harassment policy (Personnel Policy #503).

## **II. Statement of Policy**

It shall be the policy of the Covington Police Department to provide equal employment opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, age, handicap, or disability in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leave of absence, compensation and training.

In support of this policy, the City of Covington expressly prohibits any form of conduct which constitutes harassment directed against any employee because of his or her race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap or disability. The term "harassment" includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, offensive or non professional conduct, or other verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, national origin, citizenship, age, disability or other protected status. "Harassment" also includes sexual favors, unwelcomed or offensive touching, and other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, including cartoons, calendars, and posters. Improper interference with the ability of employees to perform their expected job duties will not be tolerated.

## **III. Forms of Harassment**

It shall be the intent of this policy to make it especially clear to City employees, at all levels, that sexual harassment and other illegal forms of harassment will not be tolerated. Specifically, the Covington Police Department expressly prohibits:

- A. Unwelcomed sexual advances;
- B. Request for sexual favors; and
- C. All other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or otherwise offensive nature where:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; and/ or
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the individual; and/ or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

It is the responsibility of each supervisor to create an atmosphere free of illegal harassment, sexual or otherwise. In addition, it is the responsibility of every police department employee to respect the rights of co-workers, supervisory personnel and subordinates and to conduct oneself professionally and courteously at all times when representing the City of Covington.

#### **IV. Complaint Procedure**

- A. If an employee believes that he or she has been treated in an unlawful, discriminatory manner, the employee should promptly report the matter to his or her immediate supervisor, the Chief of Police or the Personnel Director. In the event the offending party is in the employee's chain of command, the employee may report the offenses directly to the Personnel Director.
- B. Upon receipt of a complaint, the supervisor, Chief of Police or Personnel Director will undertake an investigation, protecting confidentiality to the maximum extent possible.
- C. Should the investigation show that any individual is guilty of harassing another employee, appropriate disciplinary action – up to and including termination – will be taken against the offending party.
- D. The Covington Police Department expressly prohibits any form of retaliatory action against any employee for filing a bona fide complaint under this policy or for assisting in a complaint investigation.
- E. If, after the investigation of a complaint of harassment, the supervisor, Chief of Police, or Personnel Director finds that the complaint was not bona fide or that an employee has knowingly provided false information regarding the complaint, disciplinary action may be taken against the individual who filed the complaint or who knowingly gave such false information.

***This SOP supersedes any SOP previously issued.***

BY ORDER OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE:

*Stacey L. Cotton*

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Chief of Police