

# MARYLAND STATE FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION

*Representing the Volunteer Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services Personnel*

[www.msfa.org](http://www.msfa.org)



## **SOP No: A005**

Title: Sexual Harassment and Discrimination  
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Effective Date: 12/2/2017  
Authorized By: President Bilger

The Maryland State Firemen's Association (MSFA) is committed to full compliance with the letter and spirit of the Federal and State Laws governing the prevention of and appropriate response to employment discrimination or sexual harassment with the Maryland State Firemen's Association. These practices undermine the integrity of the individual work relationship, adversely affect morale, and interfere with our ability to provide quality service to the citizens of the State of Maryland. Officers, committee members, agents, and employees of the Maryland State Firemen's Association shall not:

- 1) Fail or refuse to accept any applicant, discharge any officer, committee member, agent, or employee, or otherwise discriminate against any person based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, or because the individual has a physical or mental disability, except where these disabilities will not allow the individual to perform the requirement of his or her duties.
- 2) Limit, segregate or classify a member, or otherwise adversely affect the status of an individual, because of the individual's race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, and marital status, physical or mental disabilities.
- 3) Engage in acts of sexual harassment. Sexual Harassment consist of unwelcome sexual advance, requests of sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
  - a) Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of membership.
  - b) Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for membership.
  - c) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidation, hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment can take the form of deliberate or repeated verbal abuse, joking, ridiculing, offensive gestures, or less subtle overtures, such as touching, patting, pinching, and displaying pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional material, reading materials, or other materials (including electronic mail messages) that are sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning, and/or pornographic or other inappropriate physical conduct. Telling of jokes or stories or teasing of a sexual nature may create a hostile or offensive working environment. It may also be created by the display of sexually explicit materials in the work place.

Not only is harassment of any kind unlawful, it is harmful to the victim and other employees and members of the MSFA. Incidents of harassment can result in a general atmosphere in which many individuals suffer. Sexually oriented acts or sex-based conduct have no legitimate business purpose. If you engage in prohibited conduct you will be subject to corrective action, which may include expulsion from MSFA activities.

**REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS:**

Except as herein stated, Complaints shall be handled according to the MSFA Disciplinary Policy. All reasonable accommodations shall be made to ensure that the Complainant shall have no contact with person alleged to have committed the conduct.

Any member, who files a complaint under this regulation, will not be subject to harassment, intimidation, coercion, discrimination or reprisal. Any act constituting retaliation toward a Complainant shall be considered a separate violation of this policy. Member discrimination and sexual harassment are serious forms of misconduct that will not be tolerated and the MSFA will act positively to effectively remedy the valid claims of such conduct. A member who is found to have sexually harassed another member or to have discriminated against another member will be appropriately disciplined.

The MSFA reserves the right to refer any complaint to law enforcement.