

TO: All Department Heads

SUBJECT: DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT POLICY IMPLEMENTATION
AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to confirm the City's commitment to prohibit and prevent unlawful discrimination and harassment in employment; and provide a City complainant an investigation procedure to resolve complaints of alleged discrimination or harassment in violation of the law or City Council Policy 25.2 (Discrimination and Harassment Policy).

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the City of Santa Cruz to maintain and promote a working environment free from discrimination and harassment; and to provide all current and prospective employees with equal opportunity in employment regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, disability, medical condition, sex, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), physical characteristics, marital status, age, sexual orientation, organizational affiliation, or veteran status (later referred to collectively as "Protected Categories").

This policy is promulgated in recognition of the fact that discrimination and harassment of the type prohibited by this policy, if allowed to exist, not only violates Federal, State and municipal law but also serves to undermine employee integrity, create low employee morale, reduce employee productivity, and cause skilled and valuable workers to leave their City employment. All of this, in turn, is detrimental to the general health and welfare of the community, which depends upon a highly motivated and skilled body of City employees to deliver essential municipal services.

The City Council acknowledges and understands that in order to implement a non-discrimination/non-harassment policy, it is essential that all persons who witness or experience discrimination or harassment report that discrimination or harassment immediately in order to facilitate early, effective, efficient, and impartial investigation and intervention by the City. Accordingly, any retaliation against a person for filing a discrimination or harassment complaint, reporting discrimination or harassment which he or she has witnessed, or assisting in a discrimination or harassment investigation is strictly prohibited. Employees found to have participated in retaliatory action in

contravention of this policy shall, therefore, be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

In implementing the policy, the rights of free speech and association shall be accommodated in a manner consistent with applicable Federal and State law and in a manner consistent with the intent of the policy.

DISSEMINATION OF POLICY AND TRAINING

All employees, supervisors, and managers shall receive a copy of this APO and City Council Policy 25.2 and shall also attend sexual harassment and cultural diversity training according to the following schedule:

- 1) All new employees – Harassment and Cultural Diversity courses within the first year of hire.
- 2) Supervisors – Harassment training within six months of gaining supervisory responsibilities and a refresher no less frequently than every two years.

Posters explaining local, State, and Federal non-discrimination laws will be prominently displayed in the Human Resources Office. The City's EEO Policy will also be posted on the Human Resources Office bulletin board and the City's internal and external websites.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION FOR DISABILITY (as required by the *Americans with Disabilities Act*)

Disability is defined as: a) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; b) having a documented record of such an impairment; or c) being regarded as having such an impairment.

Accommodation is any change in the work environment or in the way things are customarily done that enables an individual with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunities. It means modifications or adjustments to: a) a job application process to enable an individual with a disability to be considered for the position; b) the work environment in which a position is performed so that a person with a disability can perform the essential functions of the position; and c) enable individuals with disabilities to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as employees without disabilities enjoy.

1. Inclusions

Accommodation includes making existing facilities and equipment used by employees readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. Accommodation applies to: a) all employment decisions and to the job application process; b) all services and programs provided in connection with employment;

c) non-work facilities provided in connection with employment; and d) known disabilities only.

2. **Exclusions**

Accommodation is not required if: a) it eliminates essential functions of a position from the person's job; or b) adjustments or modifications requested are primarily for the benefit of the person with a disability. The law does not require an accommodation that imposes an "undue hardship" on the operation of the City. Undue hardship means significant difficulty or expense incurred in the provision of accommodation relative to the operation of the City's program and includes, but is not limited to, financial difficulty. Undue hardship refers to any accommodation that would be unduly costly, extensive, substantial, disruptive, or that would fundamentally alter the nature or operation of the City. Whether a particular accommodation will impose an undue hardship is determined on a case-by-case basis. The following factors will be considered in determining whether an accommodation would create undue hardship: a) the nature and cost of the accommodation; b) the financial resources of the City; c) the number of employees; and d) the type of operations of the City, including the composition and functions of its workforce.

3. **Determining the Appropriate Accommodation**

Where a particular accommodation would result in an undue hardship, the City must determine if another accommodation is available that would not result in an undue hardship. If a qualified individual with a disability requests the provision of a reasonable accommodation, the City shall engage in an informal, interactive process with the person with a disability which identifies the precise limitations resulting from the disability and potential accommodations that could overcome those limitations. The accommodation process shall generally involve five (5) steps.

- First, the City shall analyze the particular job at issue and determine its purpose and essential functions.
- Second, the City shall consult with the individual with a disability to ascertain the precise job-related limitations imposed by the individual's disability.
- Third, the City shall consult with the individual with a disability and, if desired by the agency, the appropriate rehabilitation or ergonomics consultant to identify potential accommodations and the necessary modifications.
- Fourth, the City shall assess the effectiveness of each potential accommodation with regard to enabling the individual to perform the essential functions of the position.
- Finally, the City shall consider the preference of the individual to be accommodated and select and implement the accommodation that is most appropriate for both the employee and the agency.

DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

This complaint procedure is available to City of Santa Cruz employees and individuals who believe that they have been subjected to discrimination and/or harassment in relation to employment with the City of Santa Cruz.

Complainants, and employees alleged to have engaged in discrimination or harassment, may choose to be represented at any or all steps in the complaint process.

I. Filing a Complaint

Complaints may be submitted to an employee's immediate supervisor, any supervisor or manager within or outside the department, the department head or the Administrative Services Director within one (1) year of the date the alleged action occurred. Any City of Santa Cruz supervisor, manager, or department head who receives a discrimination or harassment complaint shall notify the Administrative Services Director immediately upon receipt of the complaint. Complaints may be presented orally or in writing.

Written complaints should include the following information:

- The name, address, and telephone number of the complainant.
- The basis for the alleged discrimination or harassment (protected category and/or retaliation).
- The specific discriminatory practice(s) or incident(s) that have occurred.
- The names of any persons thought to be responsible for the discrimination/harassment.
- The remedy the complainant is seeking as a result of the complaint.
- The name, address, and telephone number of the complainant's representative, if any.

If complainants wish to file the complaint in person and receive assistance, they may contact the Human Resources Division of the Administrative Services Department to schedule an appointment with a staff investigator.

II. Investigation and Resolution

After reviewing the discrimination or harassment complaint, the Administrative Services Director shall determine if an investigation is necessary to resolve the issues of the complaint and, if so, authorize and supervise the investigation of the complaint. The complainant will be contacted by the investigator upon the investigator's receipt of the complaint and will be kept apprised of the status of the investigation. Every

effort will be made to conclude the investigation within one hundred and twenty (120) calendar days of receipt of the complaint.

The Administrative Services Director will not proceed with the investigation of a complaint if the complaint contains no assertion that the alleged acts occurred based on one or more of the protected categories or if a nexus cannot be established between the alleged act(s) and discrimination based on any of the protected categories. When the investigation is completed, the Administrative Services Director will determine if there is sufficient evidence to substantiate a violation of the City's Discrimination and Harassment Policy and if remedial action is necessary to resolve the issues of the complaint. The complainant, alleged perpetrator/harasser, and department head will be notified of the director's determination. If discipline is imposed, the discipline will not be communicated to the complainant.

If it would present a conflict (or the appearance of such) for the review and investigation of a complaint to be conducted by the Human Resources Division, the City Manager will be responsible for this process.

III. City Manager Review

Complainants who are not satisfied with the Administrative Services Director's determination may request a review by the City Manager (or his/her representative), in writing, within ten (10) workdays following receipt of the Administrative Services Director's determination. The City Manager (or his/her representative) shall review the complainant's written appeal and the investigative findings and shall render a written decision within thirty (30) workdays following the review.

IV. Additional Remedies

Current City employees covered by a memorandum of understanding that includes arbitration as the final step in the grievance process may request that the matter be taken to arbitration in accordance with the specific procedures contained in the applicable memorandum of understanding.

In addition, all complainants may file complaints of discrimination or harassment with the State of California Department of Fair Employment and Housing and the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, whether or not complainants choose to use the City of Santa Cruz' complaint procedure. Time limits for filing complaints with State and Federal compliance agencies vary and those agencies should be contacted directly for specific information. The addresses and telephone numbers (as of the revision date of this procedure) are:

Department of Fair Employment and Housing
2570 North First Street, Suite 480
San Jose, CA 95131
Phone: (408) 325-0344 or (800) 884-1684
Videophone for the DEAF (916) 226-5285
E-mail: contact.center@dfeh.ca.gov

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
San Jose Office
96 North Third Street, Suite 250
San Jose, CA 95112
Phone: (800) 669-4000
Fax: (408) 291-4539
TTY: (800) 669-6820