

# Affirmation's Harassment and Sexual Harassment Statement

Affirmation: LGBTQ Mormons, Families, and Friends (hereafter noted as Affirmation) has adopted a zero-tolerance policy towards discrimination and all forms of unlawful harassment, including but not limited to sexual harassment.

This zero tolerance policy means that no form of unlawful discrimination or harassing conduct by or towards any member of Affirmation, executive committee, board of directors, volunteer leadership, employee, vendor, or other person in our workplace, conferences, retreats, meetings, and online spaces will be tolerated.

The Executive Committee and Board of Directors understands our responsibility to take proactive measures to prevent harassment from occurring and to stop any harassment before it becomes severe or pervasive. Affirmation is committed to enforcing this policy at all levels within the organization.

Affirmation is a charitable 501c3 organization that employs professional staff to help run the day to day tasks that assist the board of directors in carrying out the vision and values of Affirmation.

Affirmation serves LGBTQ Mormons, families, and friends world-wide. Affirmation depends on a very capable member volunteer leadership to serve the needs of each member by facilitating conferences, retreats, firesides, online gatherings, and other events carrying the official Affirmation name.

In light of who we serve and who we employ, our harassment and sexual harassment policy has two parts: one part specifically for those employed in the workplace of Affirmation, and the second part for every volunteer leader and member of Affirmation.

We encourage you to become familiar with both sections so you can understand the protections and safeguards we have employed to create a safe, supportive, and healing culture within Affirmation.

## **Section I. Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy in the Workplace of Affirmation**

Both employees and members of the Board (including the Executive Committee who serves as *ex officio* board members) are held to workplace standards and any employee or board member who engages in prohibited discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment, will be subject to discipline, up to and including immediate discharge from employment or removal from leadership and removal from the organization (including events and online spaces) for a first offense.

### **Definition of Workplace Harassment:**

Employees of Affirmation can expect a non-hostile workplace.

Harassment under this policy is any unwelcome, hostile, or offensive conduct taken on the basis of race, color, age, national origin, sex, transgender status, gender identity, gender

expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, religion, disability, genetic information, marital status, relationship status, political affiliation, status as a parent, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law that:

- Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment
- Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or
- Otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment.

Harassing conduct includes, but is not necessarily limited to

- epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping
- threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts
- written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group posted on walls, online, or circulated in the workplace.

It is not considered harassment for a board member or supervisor to require an employee or volunteer leader to meet performance or conduct standards.

It is not considered harassment for a board member or employee to confront and correct inappropriate, hostile, or illegal behavior of any volunteer leader or member of Affirmation.

### **Definition of Sexual Harassment**

Because confusion often arises concerning the meaning of sexual harassment, it deserves special mention.

Sexual harassment is defined as:

- Coerced sexual intercourse or assault
- Making unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature a condition of an employee's employment.
- Making the submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for employment decisions affecting the employee, or
- Creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment by such conduct.

Sexual harassment may take different forms. Examples of several types of forms include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive and unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, including sexually graphic verbal comments or jokes; offensive comments transmitted by email or other messaging systems; offensive or suggestive images whether physically present in the workplace or accessed over the internet; the possession or use of sexually suggestive objects in the workplace.

- Offensive and unwelcome physical contact (touching of another’s body, the touching or display of one’s own body, or similar contact) of a sexual nature.
- Employees or members of the board who use their position with employees or the membership of Affirmation to solicit unwanted sexual encounters; make offensive and unwelcome sexual requests or threats; or groom an individual for any form of sexual abuse.
- Inappropriate behavior which includes, but is not limited to the following examples:
  - Continuing to ask someone out on a date, or pursuing them after they declined a date
  - Purposefully continue use incorrect pronouns, dead names, or pre-transition pictures despite correction
  - Making unwelcome sexually suggestive comments about a person’s appearance

### **Procedures in cases of harassment in the workplace**

Any employee who believes that they have been subjected to unlawful harassment of any kind has the responsibility to report the harassment immediately to their supervisor, who will immediately inform the Human Resources committee comprised by members of the board of Directors and chaired by a member of the Executive committee. If the employee is uncomfortable reporting the harassment to their supervisor for any reason, the employee must report the harassment directly to Affirmation’s Human Resources committee.

Affirmation is committed to taking all the reasonable steps to prevent workplace harassment and will make every reasonable effort to completely address and correct any harassment that may occur. However, Affirmation cannot take prompt and effective remedial action unless each employee assumes the responsibility of reporting any incident of harassment immediately to their supervisor or HR committee.

### **What happens after a report is made?**

First and foremost, if the board of directors learns of a crime, we will call law enforcement. We also encourage any employee and member of Affirmation who believes they have been raped, been a victim of any unlawful harassment or sexual assault, violence, or a hate crime to immediately contact law enforcement.

Every report of harassment will be investigated promptly and impartially with every effort to maintain confidentiality. The complainant and the accused will be informed of the results of the investigation. If Affirmation finds that its policy has been violated, it will take appropriate corrective and remedial action, up to and including discharge of offending officers or employees and/or similarly appropriate action towards offending vendors, contractors, or members.

### **Reporting Without Fear of Retaliation**

No employee, board member, or member of Affirmation will be retaliated against for reporting harassment. This no-retaliation policy applies whether a good faith complaint of harassment is well founded or ultimately determined to be unfounded.

No member of the board or supervisor is authorized or permitted to retaliate or take any adverse employment action whatsoever against anyone for reporting unlawful harassment or for opposing any other discriminatory practice in the workplace

## **Section II. Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy in the Volunteer Leadership Team and General Membership of Affirmation**

As individual members of Affirmation we have a personal responsibility to create and nurture an affirming and safe space for each other by practicing respect, self-control, civility, and empathy. Volunteer leaders have the responsibility to understand Affirmation's principles and values and maintain a non-hostile environment within the gathering spaces of Affirmation by moderating Affirmation spaces and taking immediate corrective measures if harassment occurs.

Any volunteer leader or member of Affirmation who engages in prohibited discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment, will be subject to discipline, up to and including immediate removal from leadership or removal from the organization (including events and online spaces) for a first offense.

### **Definition of Harassment:**

Every member of Affirmation can expect a non-hostile, affirming environment.

Harassment under this policy is any unwelcome, hostile, or offensive conduct taken on the basis of race, color, age, national origin, sex, transgender status, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, religion, disability, genetic information, marital status, relationship status, political affiliation, status as a parent, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or unsafe culture within Affirmation.

Harassing conduct includes, but is not necessarily limited to

- epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping
- threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts in real life or online
- written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group posted in any official Affirmation physical gathering place or online space.

### **What is not considered harassment:**

Disagreements and conflict can occur when differing points of view are presented within Affirmation spaces. Free speech conversations and the expression of personally held opinions may be triggering and uncomfortable, but they do not necessarily constitute harassment.

However, hate speech and personal attacks are considered harassment and are subject to immediate discipline up to and including removal from online spaces or removal from the organization. Any member who feels the target of hate speech or personal attacks, or any other form of harassment, including sexual harassment, has the responsibility to follow the procedures outlined below in reporting cases of harassment.

Additionally, certain classes of individuals may not specifically be protected by law from harassment or discrimination, but the Board of Affirmation and volunteer leaders reserve the right to protect any and all members from indignity and discrimination.

It is not considered harassment for a board member or Affirmation employee to require a volunteer leader to meet performance or conduct standards.

It is not considered harassment for a board member, Affirmation employee, or volunteer leader to confront and correct inappropriate, hostile, or illegal behavior of any volunteer leader or member of Affirmation.

#### **Definition of Sexual Harassment:**

Because confusion often arises concerning the meaning of sexual harassment, it deserves special mention.

Sexual Harassment is defined as:

- Coerced sexual intercourse or assault
- Making unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature a condition of an individual's membership or participation in any group or leadership position in Affirmation.
- Making the submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for deciding volunteer leadership positions.
- Creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment within Affirmation by such conduct.

Sexual harassment may take different forms. Examples of several types of forms include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive and unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, including sexually graphic spoken comments or jokes; offensive comments transmitted by email or other messaging systems; offensive or suggestive images whether physically present at Affirmation gatherings or posted in online spaces; the possession or use of sexually suggestive objects in Affirmation gathering spaces.

- Offensive and unwelcome physical contact (touching of another’s body, the touching or display of one’s own body, or similar contact) of a sexual nature.
- Volunteer leaders who use their position with the membership of Affirmation to solicit unwanted sexual encounters, make offensive and unwelcome sexual requests or threats; or groom an individual for any form of sexual abuse.
- Inappropriate behavior which includes, but is not limited to the following examples:
  - Continuing to ask someone out on a date, or pursuing them after they declined a date
  - Purposefully continue use incorrect pronouns, dead names, or pre-transition pictures despite correction
  - Making unwelcome sexually suggestive comments about a person’s appearance

### **Procedures in cases of harassment**

Affirmation recognizes there are both cases of inappropriate behavior and cases of illegal behavior.

Most cases of inappropriate behavior can be immediately addressed by the volunteer leadership of your group or chapter. For example, inappropriate pictures or stories posted in online spaces can be flagged and removed immediately. If someone will not leave you alone after you tell them you are not interested in dating them, volunteer leaders will intervene to stop the harassment. Individuals who resort to personal attacks can be confronted by your volunteer leadership and censured or removed from the group. In some countries, hate speech is a crime and Affirmation will follow all applicable laws for reporting hate speech to law enforcement.

These examples are not inclusive of every example of harassment or hostility that can occur through inappropriate behavior which can be handled by the volunteer leadership network.

Any member of Affirmation who is bothered by the behavior of any individual they encounter at Affirmation functions or in online spaces has a responsibility to report the matter. The board or volunteer leaders cannot take prompt and effective remedial action unless every individual member assumes the responsibility of reporting any incident immediately.

If you do not feel comfortable speaking with a volunteer leader about what is happening, or you do not feel volunteer leaders have adequately addressed your report, you have the right to contact any member of the board who will address your report.

Affirmation takes inappropriate behavior very seriously.

We also take illegal harassment, including sexual harassment very seriously.

Any member of Affirmation who believes that they have been subjected to unlawful harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment, has the responsibility to report the harassment immediately to their affinity group leader, chapter leadership, country

presidents, or directly to a member of the board of directors who will immediately inform the Human Resources committee.

The Human Resources committee is comprised of members of the board of directors and chaired by a member of the executive committee.

Affirmation is committed to taking all the reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment and will make every reasonable effort to completely address and correct any harassment that may occur. However, Affirmation cannot take prompt and effective remedial action unless each member assumes the responsibility of reporting any incident of harassment immediately to their volunteer leadership or board member.

### **What happens after a report is made?**

First and foremost, if the board of directors learns of a crime we will call law enforcement. We also encourage any member of Affirmation who believes they have been raped, been a victim of any unlawful harassment or sexual assault, violence, or a hate crime to immediately contact law enforcement.

Every report of harassment will be investigated promptly and impartially with every effort to maintain confidentiality. The complainant and the accused will be informed of the results of the investigation. If Affirmation finds that its policy has been violated, it will take appropriate corrective and remedial action, up to and including discharge of offending officers or employees and/or similarly appropriate action towards offending vendors, contractors, or members.

### **Reporting Without Fear of Retaliation**

No member of Affirmation will be retaliated against for reporting harassment. This no-retaliation policy applies whether a good faith complaint of harassment is well founded or ultimately determined to be unfounded.

No member of the board, employee or volunteer leader is authorized or permitted to retaliate or take any adverse action whatsoever against anyone for reporting unlawful harassment or for opposing any other discriminatory practice in Affirmation.