


# SCOTTS VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT



<b>STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES</b>	<b>ARTICLE: I</b>	<b>SOP: 1113</b>
	<b>SECTION: 1100 PERSONNEL</b>	
	<b>SUBJECT: SEXUAL HARASSMENT</b>	
	<b>DATE APPROVED: 11/18/2020</b>	
<b>APPROVED:</b>		

**Purpose:** The Scotts Valley Fire Protection District (SVFPD) is committed to providing a safe environment for all its employees free from discrimination including sexual harassment. This is to provide a definition of harassment and a mechanism for personnel who are harassed, or witness harassment, to report the incident. It shall also outline required sexual harassment training for all SVFPD employees.

**Scope:** Harassment based on race, religion, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, medical condition, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, or age will not be tolerated. The SVFPD will require state mandated training to all SVFPD employees to educate personnel on what constitutes as sexual harassment.

## Definitions:

**Sexual Harassment:** For purposes of this Standard Operating Procedures, harassment is any verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct designed to threaten, humiliate, or offend. It includes situations where a person is asked to engage in sexual activity as a condition of employment, or career advancement.


- **Physical Harassment:** Unwelcome physical contact including patting, pinching, stroking, kissing, hugging, or inappropriate touching.
- **Verbal Harassment:** Comments on an employee's appearance, age, or private life. This includes sexual advances, sexual comments, unwanted invitations of dates, insults based on gender, job related threats/rewards to solicit sexual favors.
- **Non-Verbal Harassment:** Displays of sexually explicit or suggestive materials, sexually-suggestive gestures, whistling, or leering.

## Prevention of Sexual Harassment:

**Training:** As concurrent with existing legislature SB-1343 all SVFPD employees, including temporary or seasonal employees, shall complete sexual harassment training within six-month of new hire or promotion to supervising position. All employees must complete training every year thereafter.

**Prevention:** Further prevention guidelines for SVFPD employees.

- Be familiar with SVFPD policy on sexual harassment.
- Conduct yourself in a business-like manner at all times.
- Immediately stop any behavior you believe might be interpreted as sexual harassment.

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**Procedure:**

1. An employee who feels they have been the victim of harassment should contact their supervisor at the earliest opportunity following the incident. If the supervisor is the party in question, or fails to take action on the report, the employee should contact the supervisor in the next level of the chain of command.
2. The SVFPD shall handle all allegations of sexual harassment in a lawful manner to ensure that any such conduct does not continue. As a matter of routine, the SVFPD will investigate all complaints of sexual harassment. All investigations shall be conducted discreetly and as confidentially as circumstances allow.
3. The SVFPD shall not permit any person to be adversely effected in employment with the SVFPD as a result of their bringing forth a complaint of sexual harassment so long as such complaint was in good faith.
4. The supervisor shall conduct an investigation into the facts of the case and document them accordingly. A report on the incident shall be forwarded to the Fire Chief through the chain of command.
5. The Fire Chief will make findings based on the facts of the case as presented or may request additional investigation be performed. Further action will be based on the factual findings of the investigation.
6. In the event that the accused is the Fire Chief, a report will be present to the Board of Directors to determine action on the factual findings of the investigation.


**Harassment Complaints:**

***Receiving a Complaint:*** Protocol to follow when receiving a complaint.

1. Complaint is to be received without bias or judgement.
2. If supervisor does not feel properly equipped or unfit to receive the complaint, it is to be forward to the supervisor next in the chain of command.
3. All aspects of complaint will be documented in as much detail as possible to include any supporting evidence present.
4. All information is to be put in writing.

***Supervisor Responsibilities:*** Supervisors receiving sexual harassment complaints have the duty to comply with the following requirements:

1. Document each step of the process.
2. If you require assistance, go to your supervising officer.
3. Complete fact-finding/counseling with the alleged harasser first, then with witnesses or others if necessary.
4. Follow-up with the complainant.
5. Monitor the work environment to ensure that the harassment has stopped and that no reprisal action is taken against the complainant.
6. Let the complainant know of what additional resources are available.

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7. Try to maintain confidentiality at all times, however, explain that you cannot guarantee their name will not be discussed.

**Sexual Harassment Considerations:**

- Anyone can be a victim of sexual harassment, regardless of their sex and of the sex of the harasser. The SVFPD recognizes that sexual harassment may also occur between people of the same sex. What matters is that the sexual conduct is unwanted and unwelcome by the person against whom the conduct is directed.
- The SVFPD recognizes that sexual harassment is a manifestation of power relationships and often occurs within unequal relationships in the workplace, for example between supervisor and employee.