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POLICY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Any form of sexual harassment is contrary to the Gospel Message and detracts from the respect due those “created in the image and likeness of God.” Such behavior undermines Catholic values and contravenes the religious principles that guide us. It is also against the laws of the United States and of the State of New Jersey. It is unacceptable and it will not be condoned or tolerated.

This policy is not designed to be some type of general civility code. However, it is intended to make clear that unwelcome sexual overtures and conduct, either physical or verbal, and regardless of the gender of the person or persons involved, are viewed as a form of misconduct and will be dealt with accordingly.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or any other visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to the conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a condition of the individual’s employment;
2. Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for an employment decision affecting the harassed employee;
3. The harassment has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the employee’s work performance or creating an environment that is intimidating, hostile or offensive to the employee.

Forms of harassment include:

1. Verbal: repeated sexual innuendoes, racial or sexual epithets, derogatory slurs, off-color jokes, propositions, threats or suggestive or insulting sounds;
2. Visual/Non-Visual: derogatory posters, cartoons or drawings; suggestive objects or pictures; graphic commentaries, leering or obscene gestures;

3. Physical: unwanted physical contact, including touching, interference with an individual's normal work movement, or assault;

4. Other: making or threatening reprisals as a result of a negative response to harassment.

Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional complaints relating to conduct of a generally socially accepted nature. Nor does it refer to simple or occasional teasing or ordinary socializing in the workplace.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE AND INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS

Employees who believe in good faith that they have been subject to, or have witnessed, sexual harassment shall immediately report, in writing, the activity to:

The Chancellor of the Diocese of Camden
Camden Diocesan Center
631 Market Street
Camden, N.J. 08102

The written report must include (1) the date(s) of occurrence, (2) the name(s) of the person(s) involved, (3) the location(s) of the harassment, (4) a description of the specific act(s) of harassment and (5) the names of any witnesses.

The person designated to investigate the complaint shall forthwith interview the complainant and shall promptly conduct a confidential investigation of the allegation. This person shall have the authority to interview the employee against whom the complaint has been made as well as witnesses and any other persons who may have relevant information, including members of the staff.

Upon completion of the investigation, the investigating person shall submit a report setting forth his/her findings of fact and conclusions. Both the complainant and the employee against whom the complaint was made shall receive a copy of the report.

Any employee who is determined to have engaged in conduct in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Any employee who deliberately files a complaint knowing that it is false shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

CONFIDENTIALITY

To the fullest extent permitted, strict confidentiality shall be maintained in regard to any complaint of sexual harassment. The purpose of this is to protect the privacy of the employee who brings the complaint, to encourage the full and free reporting of conduct constituting sexual harassment, and to protect the reputation of an employee who may have been wrongly charged with sexual harassment.

NO RETALIATION

No retaliation shall be permitted against any employee who makes a complaint pursuant to the terms of this policy.