



DELAWARE 4-H SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

It is important for volunteers to recognize that they can be seen as representatives of Delaware Cooperative Extension and the University. Therefore, they can incur personal legal liability, as well as liability for the University by their actions and behaviors. The sexual harassment definition and information in this document refers to all University sponsored 4-H programs, activities and events.

What is Sexual Harassment?

Unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submitting to such behavior is a condition for participating in 4-H activities and events
- Submitting to or rejecting the behavior is used as a basis for decisions affecting an individual
- The behavior has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work, performance or participation in activities and events, or the behavior creates an offensive, hostile or intimidating working, learning or volunteer environment.

Examples of Sexual Harassment:

- Pressure for sexual activity
- Requests for sexual favors
- Unwelcome patting, hugging or touching of a persons body, hair or clothing
- Sexual innuendoes, jokes or comments
- Disparaging remarks to a person about his or her gender or body
- Sexual graffiti or visuals
- Asking about a person sexual fantasies, sexual preferences or sexual activities
- Repeatedly asking for a date after the person has expressed disinterest
- Making sexual gestures with hands or through body movements
- Whistling at someone or cat calls
- Turning general discussions into sexual topics
- Making kissing sounds, howling and smacking lips

- Unwanted letters, gifts and/or materials of a sexual nature
- Pictures/drawings/etc. of nude, semi-nude individuals or groups of individuals
- Unwelcome massaging of a persons neck, shoulders, etc.

These examples are not all-inclusive of the types of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment. Each situation must be considered in light of the specific facts and circumstances to determine if sexual harassment has occurred.

Who Are the Victims of Sexual Harassment?

Both females and males regardless of their sexual orientation may be sexually harassed. Most reported cases involve women harassed by men who are in a position of power over them. Sexual harassment may also occur between peers or between individuals of the same sex. Anyone can be a victim of sexual harassment.

A Word About Sexual Harassment:

Sexual harassment is not only against University policy—**it's illegal**. A person who sexually harasses another can be held liable for his or her actions.

Differences are recognizable between behavior that is friendly or complimentary and behavior that is sexual harassing. People must consider how others view their behavior. Many accused harassers are surprised to learn how those who feel victimized perceive their behavior. Consider the following:

- Review your attitudes and actions towards others. Is your behavior sex neutral and bias free?
- Would you want another person to behave as you are behaving toward someone you are close to, such as your spouse/partner, daughter/son or sister/brother?
- Would you want any of these behaviors, attitudes or actions to be the subject of a column in the newspaper?
- Do not assume that peers, employees or volunteers enjoy sexually oriented comments, jokes or inappropriate comments about their appearance or even minor physical contact.
- Do not assume that others are comfortable telling you that they are offended or harassed by what you say or do.
- Consider the impact your position of power may have on others' feelings, behaviors and responses.

What Can You Do If You Are Sexually Harassed?

DON'T IGNORE IT, TAKE ACTION. Tell the harasser how the behavior is not welcome and you want it stopped immediately.

WRITE A LETTER TO THE HARASSER. In paragraph one, state exactly what happened. In paragraph two, state the impact of what happened and how you felt. In paragraph three, state what you want to happen—you want the behavior to stop. Keep a copy of the letter.

KEEP A WRITTEN, DATED RECORD. ASK FOR HELP. Record exactly what was said or done by whom, where it happened, when it happened and the names of any witnesses.

Who Can Help?

Sexual harassment is not only against University policy—**it's illegal**. A person who sexually harasses another can be held liable for his or her actions. University of Delaware Cooperative Extension has a policy prohibiting sexual harassment. Many problems can be resolved through an informal resolution process. Complaints of sexual harassment should be brought to the attention of Mark J. Manno, (302-831-2501) the Affirmative Action Coordinator for the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension. Mr. Manno will answer questions, listen to your complaint, advise you on procedures, see that appropriate action is taken and assure that you are protected from retaliation. All situations are handled in the most confidential manner possible.