

EMPLOYEE DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

This procedure has been adopted by the Board in order to provide a method of prompt and equitable resolution of employee complaints of discrimination and harassment as described in policies AC Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action and ACAB Harassment and Sexual Harassment of School Employees.

Definitions

For purposes of this procedure:

- A. "Complaint" is defined as an allegation that an employee has been discriminated against or harassed on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, ancestry, national origin or disability.
- B. "Discrimination or harassment" means discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, ancestry, national origin or disability.

How to Make a Complaint

- A. Any employee who believes he/she has been harassed or discriminated against is encouraged to try to resolve the problem by informing the individual(s) that the behavior is unwelcome or offensive and by requesting that the behavior stop. This shall not prevent the employee, however, from making an immediate formal Complaint.
- B. Any employee who believes he/she has been discriminated against or harassed should report their concern promptly through a written grievance form to the Affirmative Action Coordinator. If the employee is uncomfortable reporting concerns to the Affirmative Action Coordinator, he/she may report the concern to the building principal or supervisor of the department. All documented complaints should be forwarded to the Affirmative Action Coordinator to keep on file.

Employees who are unsure as to whether unlawful discrimination or harassment has occurred are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the Affirmative Action Coordinator. Employees will not be retaliated against for reporting suspected discrimination or harassment.

- C. Any employee who believes he/she has been discriminated against or harassed is encouraged to utilize the school unit's complaint procedure. However, employees are hereby notified that they also have the right to report incidents of discrimination or harassment to the Maine Human Rights Commission, 51 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333 (telephone: 207-624-6050) and/or to the federal Office for Civil Rights, Regional Director, U.S. Department of Education, S.W. McCormack POCH Room 222, Boston, MA 02109-4557 (telephone: 617-223-9662)

51 **Complaint Handling and Investigation**

- 52
- 53 A. The Affirmative Action Coordinator will promptly inform the Superintendent and the
- 54 person who is the subject of the Complaint that a Complaint has been received.
- 55
- 56 B. The Affirmative Action Coordinator may pursue an informal resolution of the Complaint
- 57 with the agreement of the parties involved. The informal resolution is subject to the
- 58 approval of the Superintendent who shall consider whether the resolution is in the best
- 59 interest of the school unit in light of the particular circumstances and applicable policies
- 60 and law.
- 61
- 62 C. The complaint will be investigated by the Affirmative Action Coordinator unless the
- 63 Superintendent chooses to investigate the complaint or designates another person to
- 64 investigate it on his/her behalf. Any complaint about an employee who holds a
- 65 supervisory position shall be investigated by a person who is not subject to that
- 66 supervisor's authority. Any complaint about the Superintendent should be submitted to
- 67 the Chairperson of the Board, who should consult with legal counsel concerning the
- 68 handling and investigation of the complaint.
- 69
- 70 1. The person who is the subject of the complaint will be provided with an
- 71 opportunity to be heard as part of the investigation.
- 72
- 73 2. If the complaint is against an employee of the school unit, any rights conferred
- 74 under an applicable collective bargaining agreement shall be applied.
- 75
- 76 3. Privacy rights of all parties to the complaint shall be maintained in accordance
- 77 with applicable state and federal laws.
- 78
- 79 4. The Affirmative Action Coordinator shall keep a written record of the
- 80 investigation process.
- 81
- 82 5. The Affirmative Action Coordinator may take interim remedial measures
- 83 (consistent with any applicable collective bargaining agreement provisions) to
- 84 reduce the risk of further harassment while the investigation is pending.
- 85
- 86 6. The Affirmative Action Coordinator shall consult with the Superintendent
- 87 concerning the investigation, conclusions, and any remedial and/or disciplinary
- 88 actions.
- 89
- 90 7. The investigation shall be completed within 21 business days of receiving the
- 91 complaint, if practicable.
- 92
- 93 D. If the Affirmative Action Coordinator determines that discrimination or harassment
- 94 occurred, he/she shall, in consultation with the Superintendent:
- 95
- 96 1. Determine what remedial action is required, if any;
- 97
- 98 2. Determine what disciplinary action should be taken against the person(s) who
- 99 engaged in harassment, if any; and
- 100

- 101 3. Inform the employee who made the Complaint in writing of the results of the
102 investigation and its resolution (in accordance with applicable state and federal
103 privacy laws).
104
- 105 E. If the employee who made the Complaint is dissatisfied with the resolution, he/she may
106 appeal to the Superintendent within 14 calendar days after receiving notice of the
107 resolution. The Superintendent shall review the investigation report and may conduct
108 further investigation if deemed appropriate. The Superintendent’s decision shall be final.
109
- 110
- 111 Legal Reference: Americans with Disabilities Act (28 CFR § 35.07)
112 Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act (34 CFR § 35.07)
113 Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 (34 CFR § 106.8(b))
114 Age Discrimination in Employment Act (34 CFR § 110.25)
115 Maine Human Rights Act (5 M.R.S.A. § 4571 et seq., 4681 et seq.)
116
- 117 Cross Reference:
118 AC Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action
119 ACAB Harassment and Sexual Harassment of School Employees