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DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT INVESTIGATIONS

Definitions

- A. "Employee" includes any full- or part-time Glendale Community College employee, whether permanent, tenured, probationary, short-term, substitute, confidential or Professional Expert.
- B. "Student" means an individual who has been admitted and/or legally registered as either a full-time or part-time student at Glendale Community College.
- C. "Claimant" refers to an employee who has made a discrimination, harassment or retaliation claim under this regulation.
- D. "Complainant" refers to an employee who is eligible to file, and has filed, a written formal discrimination, harassment or retaliation complaint under this regulation.
- E. "Complaint" refers to a written formal allegation filed by a complainant under this regulation.

Filing a Timely Complaint: Since failure to report harassment and discrimination impedes the District's ability to stop the behavior, the District strongly encourages anyone who believes they are being harassed or discriminated against, to file a complaint. The District also strongly encourages the filing of such complaints within 30 days of the alleged incident. While all complaints are taken seriously and will be investigated promptly, delay in filing impedes the District's ability to investigate and remediate.

All supervisors and managers have a mandatory duty to report incidents of harassment and discrimination; the existence of a hostile, offensive or intimidating work environment, and acts of retaliation.

The District will investigate complaints involving acts that occur off campus if they are related to an academic or work activity.

Communicating that the Conduct is Unwelcome: The District further encourages students and staff to let the offending person know immediately and firmly that the conduct or behavior is unwelcome, offensive, in poor taste and/or inappropriate.

Oversight of Complaint Procedure: The Chief Human Resources Officer is the "responsible District officer" charged with receiving complaints of discrimination or harassment, and coordinating their investigation.

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The actual investigation of complaints may be assigned to other staff or to outside persons or organizations under contract with the District. This shall automatically occur whenever the Chief Human Resources Officer is named in the complaint or implicated by the allegations in the complaint.

Who May File a Complaint: Any student, employee, or third party who believes he/she has been discriminated against or harassed by a student, employee, or third party in violation of this regulation and the related policy.

Where to File a Complaint: A student, employee, or third party who believes he/she has been discriminated against or harassed in violation of these policy and regulations may make a complaint, orally or in writing, within one year of the date of the alleged harassment or the date on which the complainant knew or should have known of the facts underlying the complaint.

If a complainant decides to file a formal written unlawful discrimination or harassment complaint against the District, he/she must file the complaint on the complaint form prescribed by the State Chancellor's Office. These approved forms are available on the GCC Human Resources and the State Chancellor's websites.

The completed form must be filed with any of the following:

- the Chief Human Resources Officer;
- the Vice President of Administrative Services, the Vice President of Student Services, the Vice President of Instruction; and/or the Chief of Police; or
- the State Chancellor's Office.

Please note that formal complaints cannot be filed by e-mail or fax. The original form must be signed and dated, and filed with either the district or the Chancellor's Office. Regardless of where a complaint is filed, under title 5, the investigation is done by the college district.

Any College employee who receives a harassment complaint shall notify the Chief Human Resources Officer immediately.

The College will treat a complaint of discrimination provided in another form, such as email or letter, as an informal complaint. The College will address its merits if the content of the complaint warrants, whether filed formally or informally.

District employees may at any time before or after the issuance of the final decision of the District, also file employment-related complaints with the [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission \(EEOC\)](#), and/or the [California Department of Fair Employment and Housing \(DFEH\)](#).

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Students may also file an unlawful discrimination complaint with the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education (OCR) (1-800-421-3481 or 1-415-486-5555).

Intake and Processing of the Complaint: Upon receiving notification of a harassment or discrimination complaint, the Chief Human Resources Officer shall:

- Undertake efforts to informally resolve the charges, including but not limited to mediation, rearrangement of work/academic schedules; obtaining apologies; providing informal counseling and/or training, etc.
- Advise the complainant that he/she need not participate in an informal resolution of the complaint, as described above, and has the right to end the informal resolution process at any time. Mediation is not appropriate for resolving incidents involving sexual violence.
- Advise a student complainant that he/she may file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education and employee complainants may file a complaint with the Department of Fair Employment and Housing. All complainants should be advised that they have a right to file a complaint with local law enforcement. The District must investigate even if the complainant files a complaint with local law enforcement. In addition, the District should ensure that complainants are aware of any available resources, such as counseling, health, and mental health services. The Chief Human Resources Officer shall also notify the State Chancellor's Office of the complaint.
- Take interim steps to protect a complainant from coming into contact with an accused individual, especially if the complainant is a victim of sexual violence. The Chief Human Resources Officer should notify the complainant of his or her options to avoid contact with the accused individual and allow students to change academic situations as appropriate. For instance, the District may prohibit the accused individual from having any contact with the complainant pending the results of the investigation. When taking steps to separate the complainant and accused individual, the District shall minimize the burden on the complainant. For example, it is not appropriate to remove complainants from classes or housing while allowing accused individuals to remain.
- Authorize the investigation of the complaint, and supervise and/or conduct a thorough, prompt and impartial investigation of the complaint, as set forth below. Where complainants opt for informal resolution, the designated officer will determine whether further investigation is necessary to ensure resolution of the matter and utilize the investigation process outlined below as appropriate. In the case of a formal complaint, the investigation will include interviews with the complainant, the accused, and any other persons who may have relevant knowledge concerning the complaint. This may include victims of similar conduct.

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- Review the factual information gathered through the investigation to determine whether the alleged conduct constitutes harassment, or other unlawful discriminatory conduct, giving consideration to all factual information and the totality of the circumstances, including the nature of the verbal, physical, visual or sexual conduct, and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred.
- Set forth the results of the investigation in a written report. The written report shall include a description of the circumstances giving rise to the complaint, a summary of the testimony of each witness, an analysis of any relevant data or other evidence collected during the investigation, a specific finding as to whether there is probable cause to believe that discrimination did or did not occur with respect to each allegation in the complaint, a description of actions the District will take to prevent similar conduct, the proposed resolution of the complaint, the complainant's right to appeal to the District's governing board, and if the complaint does not involve employment discrimination, the right to appeal to the State Chancellor. If the complaint involves employment discrimination, the report shall include the right to file an administrative complaint with the Department of Fair Employment and Housing. The report may contain any other appropriate information.
- Provide the complainant and accused with a copy or summary of the investigative report within ninety days from the date the District received the complaint. The complainant and accused shall also be provided with a written notice setting forth the determination of the Chief Human Resources Officer or designee as to whether harassment or other discriminatory conduct did or did not occur with respect to each allegation in the complaint; a description of action taken, if any, to prevent similar problems from occurring in the future; the proposed resolution of the complaint; and notice of the parties' rights to appeal to the District's Board of Trustees and the State Chancellor's Office. If the complaint involves allegations of employment discrimination, the complainant will be notified of his/her right to file a complaint with the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing or the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The results of the investigation and the determination as to whether harassment or other discriminatory conduct occurred shall also be reported to the accused, and the appropriate academic or administrative official(s). Reports to the complainant shall be prepared so as not to violate any applicable privacy rights of the accused.

Investigation of the Complaint: The District shall promptly investigate every complaint of harassment or discrimination. No claim of workplace or academic harassment or discrimination shall remain unexamined. This includes complaints involving activities that occur off campus and in connection with all the academic,

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educational, extracurricular, athletic, and other programs of the District, whether those programs take place in the District's facilities, on a District bus, or at a class or training program sponsored by the District at another location.

Where the complainant opts for an informal resolution, the Chief Human Resources Officer may limit the scope of the investigation, as appropriate. The District will keep the investigation confidential to the extent possible, but cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality because release of some information on a "need-to-know-basis" is essential to a thorough investigation. When determining whether to maintain confidentiality, the District may weigh the request for confidentiality against the following factors: the seriousness of the alleged harassment; the complainant's age; whether there have been other harassment complaints about the same individual; and the accused individual's rights to receive information about the allegations if the information is maintained by the District as an "education record" under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S. Code Section 1232g; 34 Code Federal Regulations Part 99.15. The District will inform the complainant if it cannot maintain confidentiality.

Investigation Steps: The District will fairly and objectively investigate harassment and discrimination complaints. Employees designated to serve as investigators under this policy shall have adequate training on what constitutes sexual harassment, including sexual violence, and that they understand how the District's grievance procedures operate. The investigator may not have any real or perceived conflicts of interest and must be able to investigate the allegations impartially.

Investigators will use the following steps: interviewing the complainant(s); interviewing the accused individual(s); identifying and interviewing witnesses and evidence identified by each party; identifying and interviewing any other witnesses, if needed; reminding all individuals interviewed of the District's no-retaliation policy; considering whether any involved person should be removed from the campus pending completion of the investigation; reviewing personnel/academic files of all involved parties; reach a conclusion as to the allegations and any appropriate disciplinary and remedial action; and see that all recommended action is carried out in a timely fashion. When the District evaluates the complaint, it shall do so using a preponderance of the evidence standard. Thus, after considering all the evidence it has gathered, the District will decide whether it is more likely than not that discrimination or harassment has occurred.

Timeline for Completion: The District will undertake its investigation promptly and swiftly as possible. To that end, the investigator shall complete the above steps, and prepare a written report within 90 days of the District receiving the complaint.

Within 150 days of receiving a formal complaint, the District shall forward to the State

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Chancellor's Office the original complaint, the investigative report, a copy of the written notice to the complainant setting forth the results of the investigation, a copy of the final administrative decision rendered by the Board or indicating the date upon which the decision became final, and a copy of the notification to the complainant of his/her appeal rights. If, due to circumstances beyond its control, the District is unable to comply with the 150-day deadline for submission of materials, it may file a written request for an extension of time no later than ten days prior to the expiration of the deadline.

Cooperation Encouraged: All employees are expected to cooperate with a District investigation into allegations of harassment or discrimination. Lack of cooperation impedes the ability of the District to investigate thoroughly and respond effectively. However, lack of cooperation by a complainant or witnesses does not relieve the District of its obligation to investigate. The District will conduct an investigation if it is discovered that harassment is, or may be occurring, with or without the cooperation of the alleged victim(s) and regardless of whether a complaint is filed.

Discipline and Corrective Action

If harassment, discrimination and/or retaliation occurred in violation of the policy or regulation, the District shall take disciplinary action against the accused and any other remedial action it determines to be appropriate. The action will be prompt, effective, and commensurate with the severity of the offense. Remedies for the complainant might include, but are not limited to:

- providing an escort to ensure that the complainant can move safely between classes and activities;
- ensuring that the complainant and alleged perpetrator do not attend the same classes or work in the same work area;
- preventing offending third parties from entering campus;
- providing counseling services;
- providing medical services;
- providing academic support services, such as tutoring;
- arranging for a student-complainant to re-take a course or withdraw from a class without penalty, including ensuring that any changes do not adversely affect the complainant's academic record; and

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- reviewing any disciplinary actions taken against the complainant to see if there is a causal connection between the harassment and the misconduct that may have resulted in the complainant being disciplined.

If discipline is imposed, the nature of the discipline will not be communicated to the complainant. However, the District may disclose information about the sanction imposed on an individual who was found to have engaged in harassment when the sanction directly relates to the complainant; for example, the District may inform the complainant that the harasser must stay away from the complainant.

Disciplinary actions against faculty, staff, and students will conform to all relevant statutes, regulations, personnel policies and regulations, including the provisions of any applicable collective bargaining agreement.

The District shall also take reasonable steps to protect the complainant from further harassment, and/or discrimination, and to protect the complainant and witnesses from retaliation as a result of communicating the complaint and/or assisting in the investigation. The District will ensure that complainants and witnesses know how to report any subsequent problems, and should follow-up with complainants to determine whether any retaliation or new incidents of harassment have occurred. The District shall take reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the investigation and to protect the privacy of all parties to the extent possible without impeding the District's ability to investigate and respond effectively to the complaint.

If the District cannot take disciplinary action against the accused individual because the complainant refuses to participate in the investigation, it should pursue other steps to limit the effects of the alleged harassment and prevent its recurrence.

Appeals

If the District imposes discipline against a student or employee as a result of the findings in its investigation, the student or employee may appeal the decision using the regulation for appealing a disciplinary decision.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the results of the administrative determination, he/she may, within fifteen days, submit a written appeal to the Board of Trustees. The Board shall review the original complaint, the investigative report, the administrative decision, and the appeal. The Board shall issue a final District decision in the matter within 45 days after receiving the appeal. A copy of the decision rendered by the Board shall be forwarded to the complainant and to the State Chancellor's Office. The complainant shall also be notified of his/her right to appeal this decision.

If the Board does not act within 45 days the administrative determination shall be

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deemed approved and shall become the final decision of the District in the matter.

The complainant shall have the right to file a written appeal with the State Chancellor's Office within thirty days after the Board issued the final District decision or permitted the administrative decision to become final. Such appeals shall be processed pursuant to the provision of Title 5 Section 59350.

Training

The District shall provide at least two hours of classroom or other effective interactive training and education regarding sexual harassment to all supervisory employees who are employed as of July 1, 2005. All new supervisory employees must be provided with the training and education within six months of their assumption of a supervisory position. The District shall provide sexual harassment training and education to each supervisory employee once every two years.

The training and education required by this regulation shall include information and practical guidance regarding the federal and state statutory provisions concerning the prohibition against and the prevention and correction of sexual harassment and the remedies available to victims of sexual harassment in employment. The training and education shall also include practical examples aimed at instructing supervisors in the prevention of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation, and shall be presented by trainers or educators with knowledge and expertise in the prevention of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation.

References:

- Education Code Section 66281.5;
- Government Code Section 12950.1;
- Title 5 Sections 59320, 59324, 59326, 59328, and 59300 et seq.;
- 34 Code of Federal Regulations Section 106.8(b)
- Accreditation Standard III.A.3

Board Policy

None

Adopted 8/12/14