



Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination that is prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Illinois Human Rights Act, and the State of Illinois Code of Personal Conduct. Democratic political campaigns should be committed to maintaining an environment that encourages and fosters appropriate conduct and respect for individual values among its campaign staff, consultants, volunteers, interns, and candidates that is free from sexual harassment in any form.

The following shall establish guidelines to ensure that this mandate is met.

General

- Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or any conduct of a sexual nature when such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of any requested action, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.
- A hostile working environment is created when an individual witnesses or is subjected to verbal or nonverbal behavior that they find offensive or threatening. Examples may include sexual innuendos, suggestive comments, insults, rumors and jokes about sex, anatomy, or gender-specific traits, personal questions, unwelcomed touching, leering, insulting or suggestive sounds. This list is not intended to be exhaustive.
- It is the responsibility of every campaign staffer, consultant, volunteer, intern, and candidate to refrain from sexual harassment.
- It is the right of each campaign staffer, consultant, volunteer, intern, and candidate to thrive in an environment free from sexual harassment.
- It is the perception of the behavior that determines whether harassment has occurred, regardless of the intent.
- It is the responsibility of the candidate and / or the campaign manager to inform any campaign staffers (paid or unpaid), consultants, volunteers, or interns that sexual harassment is inappropriate and will not be tolerated.
- The offended party does not have to be the direct target of the harassment; an individual who witnesses the harassing behavior or is offended or otherwise affected by the behavior may also be a victim.
- All complaints of sexual harassment will be properly investigated with confidentiality maintained throughout the investigation.
- Anyone found to have committed actions of a sexual harassing nature shall have appropriate disciplinary action applied.

Reporting Sexual Harassment

- An individual who believes they are a victim of sexual harassment must not assume that any other campaign staffers, consultants, volunteers, interns, or the candidate is aware of the situation.
- An individual who believes they are the object of sexual harassment or observes someone being sexually harassed by a campaign staffer, consultant, volunteer, intern, or the candidate has the right to, but not required to, clearly communicate to the offending individual that the behavior is offensive, and they want it to stop.
- An individual who believes they are the object of sexual harassment or observes someone being sexually harassed by a campaign staffer, consultant, volunteer, intern, or the candidate should notify the candidate and / or the campaign manager even if the harassing behavior has stopped.
- An individual who believes they are the object of sexual harassment or observes someone being sexually harassed by the candidate or the campaign manager should notify the candidate, the campaign manager, the immediate supervisor, or whomever was not sexually harassing the individual.
- An individual who believes they are the object of sexual harassment or observes someone being sexually harassed also has the option of reporting the offense to the Illinois Department of Human Rights at 312-814-4894 or the Illinois Attorney General's office at 877-581-3692.
- Documentation as to who, what, when, where, and the action taken to communicate to the offending individual that the behavior was offensive should be provided by the candidate or the campaign manager to the complainant.
- All complaints will be accepted by the candidate, the campaign manager or the immediate supervisor and investigated by outside legal counsel.
- The Democratic campaign will take reports of sexual harassment very seriously. False and frivolous complaints, those where the accuser is using a sexual harassment complaint to accomplish some end other than stopping sexual harassment, will be taken just as seriously and appropriate action taken.

Investigation and Resolution

- The candidate and/or the campaign manager will acknowledge receipt of all complaints of sexual harassment by written or electronic mail.
- All complaints shall be logged, acknowledgement of receipt sent to complainant, and forwarded to outside legal counsel for review and investigation.
- Upon receipt of complaint, the campaign shall take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the complainant. Written communication should also be provided to the offender instructing the individual to cease all inappropriate actions towards the complainant and other individuals.

- The scope of the investigation shall be restricted to the specific allegation cited in the complaint.
- The outside legal counsel must develop an impartial and appropriate factual record upon which to make findings on the claims raised by the complaint. An appropriate factual record is defined in federal regulations as one that allows a reasonable fact finder to draw conclusions as to whether discrimination occurred. 29 C.F.R. Section 1614.108(b).
- The outside legal counsel shall report findings along with recommendations for corrective action to the candidate and/or campaign manager who will make the final determination on the appropriate course of action to be taken.
- The investigation must be completed as timely as possible but not to exceed 180 days from the filing of the complaint. The campaign or outside counsel must provide written justification to the complainant for any investigation that exceeds 180 days. A copy of the investigation file must be provided to the complaint within 30 days of the completion of the investigation.
- The campaign should prohibit retaliation against anyone who reports behavior that violates this policy against discrimination or workplace harassment or participates in an investigation of discrimination or workplace harassment, regardless of whether the claim of harassment is found to be true or not. Anyone who experiences or witnesses retaliation should report it immediately to the person or persons conducting the investigation into a claim of harassment.

Candidate / Campaign Pledge

- All Democratic candidates and campaigns will be encouraged to sign a pledge that will publicly state their campaign will be sexual harassment free.
- All Democratic candidates and campaigns will be encouraged to post in their campaign offices a copy of the signed pledge and make all campaign staff, consultants, volunteers, and interns aware.