



## **OHIO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY WHEELING, WV**

### **HARASSMENT POLICY**

It is the policy of the Ohio County Public Library that all employees have the right to work in an environment free of all forms of harassment. The library does not condone, and will not tolerate, any form of harassment. Therefore all professional supervising personnel shall take direct and immediate action to prevent such behavior, and to remedy all founded instances of harassment, sexual or otherwise.

#### ***Prohibited Activities:***

No employee or member of the public shall either explicitly or implicitly ridicule, mock, deride or belittle any other person, nor use profane language.

Neither the public nor employees shall make offensive or derogatory comments either directly or indirectly to another person based upon the following classes in so far as and to the extent that these classes are defined and protected by federal, state, and local laws, regulations and ordinances. These classes include: race, color, sex, religion, sexual orientation, physical or mental handicaps or disabilities, age, and/or national origin. Such harassment is a prohibited form of discrimination under state and federal law and is also considered misconduct subject to disciplinary action for employees, or removal from the library for members of the public.

It is illegal for any person to...

harass another person by making unwelcome sexual advances or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature or by creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment by such conduct.

physically assault another person or to attempt to commit an assault.

intentionally initiate physical conduct that is sexual in nature, including but not limited to, touching, pinching, patting, or brushing up against another person's body.

make unwanted sexual advances, propositions, or sexual comments, including making sexual gestures, jokes, or comments made in the presence of any person who has indicated that such conduct in his or her presence is unwelcome.

post or display pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, or other materials that are sexual in nature or pornographic.

The professional staff on duty will be responsible for preventing acts of harassment. This responsibility includes...

monitoring the library work environment for signs that harassment may be occurring.

advising all employees on the types of behavior prohibited, and the procedures for reporting and resolving complaints for harassment.

stopping any observed acts that may be considered harassment, and taking appropriate steps to intervene.

taking immediate action to limit the contact between two persons where there has been a complaint of harassment, pending investigation.

The professional staff of the library has the responsibility to assist any employee of the library who comes to that staff member with a complaint of harassment, in documenting and filing such a complaint. In addition to the immediate supervisory action of limiting contact between the two persons when a complaint of harassment has been made, the Library Director will immediately begin an inquiry into the complaint. When a determination has been of the validity of the complaint, the Library Director will inform all staff persons involved in writing of that determination. If the complaint is identified as valid, the proper disciplinary action will be taken immediately in accordance with the Library's Disciplinary Action Policy (Part II, Section 4 of the Library's Personnel Policies).

Each employee of the library is responsible for assisting in the prevention of harassment through...

refraining from participation in, or encouragement of, actions that could be perceived as harassment.

reporting acts of harassment to the professional staff of the library.

encouraging any employee who confides that he or she is being harassed to report these acts to the professional staff.

Employees who feel victimized by harassment, sexual or otherwise, should report the harassment to the professional staff immediately. If a member of the professional staff is the source of the alleged harassment, the employee should report the problem to the Library Director. If the Library Director is the source of the alleged harassment, the employee should report the problem to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

No employee will be subject to any form of retaliation or discipline for pursuing a harassment complaint.

*– Adopted by the Ohio County Public Library Board of Trustees: September 9, 2003*