

Staff Policies & Procedures

Tennessee Domestic Violence Shelter Best Practices Manual / Section III

Sample Non-Discrimination Personnel Policy

[ORGANIZATION] is committed to creating an environment that supports equal employment opportunity and nondiscrimination for all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, perceived or actual sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, marital status, national origin, or disability.

Employees, volunteers and other individuals involved in providing services to survivors shall not discriminate against or harass any survivor in their care or any fellow service provider and shall immediately report any evidence of discrimination, physical or sexual harassment, and verbal harassment of any persons to their supervisor. Individuals who feel they have been subject to discrimination or harassment should report this occurrence to [ASSIGNED PERSON].

- I. Upon receiving a report regarding alleged discrimination, [ASSIGNED PERSON] will conduct an investigation. Upon completion of this investigation, [ORGANIZATION] will inform the employee who made the complaint all results of the investigation.
- II. If the investigation determines a violation of this policy has occurred [ORGANIZATION] will take appropriate disciplinary action against the offending party.
- III. Employees who report, in good faith, violations of this policy will not be subject to retaliation based on the report or investigation.

[ORGANIZATION] will take all reasonable steps within its control to meet the diverse needs of all survivors and staff and provide an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, perceived or actual sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, marital status, national origin, or disability.

- I. Employees who believe they may require an accommodation for their disability or related needs should discuss these needs with the Executive Director.

The Executive Director shall act as the responsible agent in the full implementation of this policy.

Model Policy and Procedure for Staff Grievances

Grievance Procedure

Purpose: To inform staff about the requirements and process to file a grievance.

Additional Authority: Violence Against Women Act, Family Violence Prevention Services Act, Tennessee Family Violence Shelter Standards

Responsible Party: [ORGANIZATION] Executive Director

Signature of Executive Director: _____

Policy

1. It is the policy of [ORGANIZATION] that every staff member has the right to file a grievance if they feel that they have not been treated fairly or suspect they have been discriminated against or harassed. [ORGANIZATION] does not tolerate and will make every effort to stop discriminatory harassment, sexual harassment, and workplace bullying. However, grievances are considered a last resort for resolving an **interpersonal conflict (not including discrimination or harassment)**.
1. In the case of interpersonal conflict not including discrimination or harassment:
 - a. Employees are expected to engage in direct and deliberate communication with all parties involved in the complaint, exhausting communication methods for resolving their complaint including mediation, problem solving meetings, and supervision meetings.
 - b. By the time a complaint reaches the status of grievance, the employee's supervisor and other parties involved must already be familiar with the situation and have worked with the employee to resolve the complaint.

Procedure for Interpersonal Conflict

At the initial contact with any client of [ORGANIZATION] the staff is to inform the client of our grievance procedure and the process for handling complaints.

- a. If the problem cannot be resolved through communication and mediation, employees should then file a written complaint with the Executive Director including all documentation about the complaint and problem solving efforts.
- b. The Executive Director will make a file including all information related to the grievance and will address the complaint within 24 hours.
 - i. The decision of the Executive Director is final.
- c. In the event that the Executive Director is a direct party to the grievance, the staff may present the complaint in writing to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors who will respond to the complaint in writing within 24 hours.
 - i. The decision of the Executive Committee is final.
- a. Decisions as to the resolution of all grievances will be made based on [ORGANIZATION]'s written policies and procedures as well as state and federal law.

Sample Procedure for Harassment or Discrimination

1. While no fixed reporting period has been established, [ORGANIZATION] urges prompt reporting of these complaints so that rapid and constructive action can be taken. [ORGANIZATION] will make every effort to stop discriminatory harassment, sexual harassment, and workplace bullying before it becomes severe or pervasive, but can only do so through cooperation of its employees.
 - a. Any employee who feels they are the target of discriminatory harassment, sexual harassment, or workplace bullying is encouraged to inform the offending person orally or in writing that such conduct is unwelcome and must stop.
 - b. If the employee does not wish to communicate with the offending person directly, or if such communication has been ineffective, the employee has multiple avenues for reporting these behaviors:
 - i. Verbally or in writing to supervisors, management, the Executive Director, or the Executive Board. Staff may also wish to report these issues to [ORGANIZATION'S] Title IV compliance officer [COMPLIANCE OFFICER].
 - c. [ORGANIZATION] will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of discriminatory harassment, sexual harassment, or workplace bullying as discretely and completely as possible.
 - i. If [ORGANIZATION] determines that harassment or bullying has occurred it will take appropriate disciplinary action against the offending party.
 - ii. At the completion of the investigation [ORGANIZATION] will inform the employee who made the complaint all results of the investigation.
 - iii. All documentation related to the complaint and investigation will be kept on file.

Model Plan for Staff Development

Staff development can be viewed as the activities and programs (formal or informal and on or off site) that help staff members learn about responsibilities, develop required skills and competencies necessary to accomplish institutional and divisional goals and purposes, and grow personally and professionally to prepare themselves for advancement.

Because job descriptions, individual goals, and even the mission of the organization or department may change, staff development plans will be reviewed on a regular basis. Changes to the staff development plan shall be made as needed. Both the supervisor and the staff member must agree upon changes.

Staff development policy should be directed toward the following objectives:

- Clarify expectations for the continued professional education of each staff member
- Specify the options available for staff improvement
- Make clear the connection between continuous professional development and institutional rewards
- Ensure adequate funding for staff development activities
- Purposefully determine staff development activities based upon a careful assessment of staff member needs
- Employ accepted methods of teaching and learning in staff development activities

Sample Policy for Staff Development

All staff members will participate in an ongoing process of staff development. Because the particular duties and needs of each individual are different, supervisors will develop a plan for staff development that encompasses the missions of [ORGANIZATION] as well as the staff member's unique needs.

All staff members should have an individual staff development plan. Staff development plans should be developed collaboratively between the staff member and supervisor and reviewed on a regular basis.

At minimum, new staff members should receive 40 hours of training during their first year of employment, including one of the following trainings offered by the Tennessee Coalition- ABC's of Advocacy, Senator Tommy Burk's Victim Assistance Academy, Regional Shelter Institute. After the first year, each staff member should strive for a minimum of 20 hours of personal development.

Each staff member must receive Title VI training annually.

Each staff member must document their training, including hours and topics, to be kept in their personnel file. This should include certificates of attendance or other written confirmation of attendance.

Professional Development Action Plan Template

Based upon your personal assessment of your current knowledge, skills and abilities, as well as feedback you have received from your supervisor, ask yourself the following questions:

- How can I improve or strengthen my work performance?
- What are the key areas I want or need to develop to remain proficient in my profession?
- What are new skills and knowledge I will need in the future?

After determining the key learning areas in which you want to focus, develop specific and measurable goals in which to pursue. Use this template to facilitate your goal-setting process, to document your results, and to track your accomplishments.

Use the SMART model to ensure your goals and action steps are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**ealistic and within a specific **T**imeframe.

Goal: _____

Relevance – how will this goal help me: _____

What are the steps or strategies I will take?	What is the realistic timeframe to accomplish the step or strategy?	How will I evaluate each step or strategy?	How will I know the step or strategy has been accomplished?

Model Plan for Staff Self-Care

Self-Care Statement

“Because self-care and other aspects of organizational wellness have reciprocal effects, we can use self-care to mitigate organizational dysfunction. A change in one part of the system affects other parts of the system. With integrated and activated self-care, we can change the way we respond and interact with the organization and other stressors. We can modulate negative impacts and maximize positive strategies.” (*Grise-Owens, 2015*)

[ORGANIZATION] recognizes that the environments in which we work can have a significant influence on our well-being and on our level of self-care. Individuals who work in a supportive and caring environment may generally have a better outlook on life and feel better about coming to work every day, even if the work is challenging at times. An individual staff member’s engagement in self-care doesn’t excuse organizational responsibility; [ORGANIZATION] understands that pursuing organizational wellness is crucial.

[ORGANIZATION] is committed to the following steps to promote a healthy environment:

- **Offering genuine respect and trust:** [ORGANIZATION] will give staff the time, support, and tools they need; trust and respect cannot be coerced but must be developed over time.
- **Working with a vision:** Program leaders are tasked with moving the program forward; they will include staff in creating the vision and provide them with leadership roles that help implement the mission.
- **Sharing the decision-making process:** Staff members should have an understanding about which decisions will be made by leadership alone, and which decisions will include staff members’ consensus.
- **Rejecting a scarcity mentality:** The program director will be optimistic and forward-thinking when brought new ideas.
- **Tending to the physical environment:** Leadership will pay attention to the environment, such as appropriate adult work spaces, comfortable staff lounges, a place to store one’s personal belongings, etc.
- **Walking our talk:** Leadership will follow through on promises made to staff, model self-care, practice confidentiality, and work toward reaching program goals.
- **Providing Resources:** Leadership will work with their staff during supervision to create self-care plans and make sure self-care opportunities are included in staff goal planning.

A sample self-care plan can be found at

https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/07_NCSSLLE%20SafePlace_Handout_Staff%20SelfCare%20Plan.pdf

