



# Bullying Policy

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## **“Bullying in the Workplace Will Not be Tolerated**

The City of Warner Robins is committed to promoting and maintaining a healthy working environment for its employees where every individual is treated with civility and respect. The City considers workplace bullying unacceptable, and it will not be tolerated. The purpose of this policy is to communicate to all employees, including supervisors, managers, and officials, that the City will not in any way tolerate this behavior. Discrimination or harassment based on race, religion, sex, color, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, veteran status, pregnancy, marital status, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local law is prohibited and not tolerated.

## **Definition of Harassment and Bullying**

The City defines bullying as: persistent and unwelcome mistreatment of employees that harms, intimidates, offends, degrades, or humiliates an employee through words, actions, communications or other demeaning or intimidating behavior.

## **Promotion of a Healthy and Safe Workplace**

The City promotes a healthy workplace culture where all employees are able to work in an environment free of bullying or harassing behavior.

## **Encourage to Report Bullying**

The City encourages all employees to report any instance of bullying behavior. Any reports of this type will be treated seriously and promptly dealt with.

## **Retaliation Protection**

The City will protect any employee who reports bullying from retaliation. This policy prohibits retaliation against any person who reports bullying or assists someone with a report of bullying.

## **Examples of Bullying in the Workplace**

The City considers the following types of behavior to constitute workplace bullying; this is not an exhaustive list and is meant to be illustrative:

- **Verbal Bullying**
  - Slander
  - Ridiculing a person or his/her family
  - Persistent name calling
  - Abusive or offensive remarks
  - Public reprimands'
  - Constant interruptions or ignoring so that the person cannot speak
  - Spreading misinformation or rumors
- **Physical Bullying**
  - Pushing, shoving, kicking, tripping, assault or threat of assault, or damage to a person's work area or property
  - Any unwanted physical contact.
- **Gesture Bullying**
  - Nonverbal gestures that convey threatening messages
- **Exclusion Bullying**
  - Socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work-related activities
- **Other**
  - Refusing reasonable requests for leave in the absence of work-related reasons not to grant leave
  - Being held to a different standard than the rest of an employees work group
  - Stalking
  - Unreasonable interference with an employee's ability to do his or her work
  - Taking credit for others work

## **Reporting**

Employees are encouraged to report conduct believed to constitute bullying to their immediate supervisor and to the Human Resources office.

## **Disposition of Reports of Bullying**

- (a) Any employee who believes he/she has been a victim of bullying (as defined in this ordinance) shall report said incident(s) to the Human Resources office.
- (b) Upon receipt of a report, the Human Resources office shall convene a three (3) member panel to hear the evidence and make recommendation. The panel members shall be selected from outside the department in which the alleged bullying actions occurred.
- (c) The panel shall hear from the party making the complaint and the party alleged to have bullied along with any other witness that it deems necessary; the hearing procedures shall generally be held accordance with the provisions of city code section 18-43, with the H.R. director presiding. At the conclusion of a hearing, the panel shall make a finding on the validity of the complaint; if affirmed, the bullying employee's director shall be notified to take appropriate disciplinary action.
- (d) If an employee is accused of three (3) charges of bullying that are upheld by the panel, a recommendation of termination shall be made to the offending employee's department director."