

BOSTON CITY COUNCIL



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BOSTON CITY COUNCIL POLICY ON WORKPLACE BULLYING

Introduction

The Boston City Council ("the Council") is committed to providing a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment for all Councilors, staff, volunteers, interns and visitors. The policies set forth below are meant to create an equitable, safe, and healthy work environment, where individuals are treated with dignity and respect. Councilors, staff, volunteers, and interns shall maintain and promote the integrity of the City Council as a body and uphold the standards of decorum expected of a legislative institution.

Policy Statement

The City Council will not tolerate bullying behavior, or retaliation in response to such under this policy. Councilors, staff, volunteers, and interns found in violation of this policy may be disciplined, pursuant to applicable law, regulation, and policy.

Councilors, staff, volunteers, and interns are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner when interacting with colleagues and members of the public.

This policy applies to all Councilors staff, volunteers and interns working for the City Council.

Definition of Bullying Behavior

Boston City Council defines bullying as intentional, persistent, malicious, unwelcome, severe, or pervasive conduct that harms, intimidates, offends, degrades, or humiliates an individual, whether verbal (including written or electronic) or physical, at the place of work or in the course of employment.

Examples

The following are some examples of conduct that may constitute bullying:

- **Verbal and Written Bullying.** Slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person; name-calling; use of derogatory remarks, insults and epithets; using a person as the butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.
- **Physical Bullying.** Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, or threat of physical assault; damage to a

person's work area or property.

- **Gesture Bullying.** Nonverbal gestures that can convey threatening messages.
- **Exclusion.** Socially or physically excluding a person in work-related activities.

Bullying is prohibited whether it takes place in or outside of Boston City Hall, including at social events, off-site meetings, or through email, social media and other electronic means.

In addition, the following examples may constitute or contribute to evidence of bullying in the workplace, but are not limited to:

- Persistent singling out of one person.
- Shouting or raising one's voice at an individual in public or in private.
- Using obscene or intimidating gestures.
- Not allowing the person to speak or express himself or herself (i.e., ignoring or interrupting).
- Personal insults and use of offensive nicknames.
- Public humiliation in any form.
- Constant criticism on matters unrelated or minimally related to the person's job performance or description.
- Public reprimands.
- Encouraging others to disregard a supervisor's instructions.
- Refusing reasonable requests for leave in the absence of work-related reasons not to grant leave.
- Deliberately excluding an individual or isolating him or her from work-related activities, such as meetings.
- Making threats about job security.
- Unwanted physical contact or threats of abuse to an individual or an individual's property (defacing or marking up property).

Bullying conduct *does not* include:

- Having differences of opinion on work-related concerns or differences of opinion on policy.
- A single incident of unreasonable behavior.
- Disciplinary action taken in accordance with applicable law, regulation or policy.
- Routine coaching and counseling, including feedback about and correction of work performance or conduct.
- Exercising management's prerogative to appoint, promote, transfer, or reassign staff, volunteers, and interns, to direct or assign work, and to determine and redetermine the methods and means by which an agency's functions will be carried out.
- Individual differences in styles of personal expression which may lead to conflict, provided that the expression is not meant to intimidate.

Further clarifications regarding conduct during City Council deliberations on the Council floor may be addressed in the Council Rules.

Outside Complaint Mechanisms

A person who has been subject to certain conduct can also make a complaint outside of the City of Boston. At any time, Councilors, staff, volunteers, and interns may file a complaint through State or Federal agencies or courts empowered to enforce relevant causes of action.

STATE

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)
One Ashburton Place
Boston, MA 02108
617-994-6000

FEDERAL

United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
JFK Federal Building, Room 601
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
617-565-3200

Third Party Resources

Councilors, staff, volunteers, and interns in need of mental health resources should be aware that support is always available. The City of Boston Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can be reached at 617-635-2200 or at EAP@boston.gov. Additional third party resources are also available (please see the Staff Director for a list).

Implementation

It is the responsibility of the Staff Director and each City Councilor to ensure that all Councilors, and staff, volunteers, and interns who report to them are aware of this policy.

The Staff Director and each Council office will ensure that a copy of this policy is provided to all Councilors, staff, volunteers, and interns on or before their start date of hire, and will retain a signed record of acknowledgment that all staff members have read and understand the policy. The Staff Director will ensure the same for all Central Staff staff, volunteers, and interns. The annual distribution of office conduct policies shall include this anti-bullying policy moving forward.

New Staff information sessions hosted by Central Staff shall include information on this policy.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

I acknowledge receiving a copy of the Boston City Council's **Policy on Workplace Bullying**.

Name (please print)

Signature

Date

***To be placed in the individual's personnel file.*