

XXV. Standards of Workplace Conduct

A. POLICY

AURA affirms its commitment to ensure an environment of the highest professional and ethical standards of conduct for all employees and one that is fair and humane. AURA is a highly diverse organization composed of people from differing backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences. We are dedicated to fostering a civil and inclusive community characterized by mutual respect for the contributions of all individuals. AURA believes that such an environment is essential to our ability to provide excellent service to the astronomical community. AURA embraces the following related values, among others:

- Civility and respect for others should be demonstrated through behavior, attitude and language and tone of voice.
- Embracing difference and fostering an inclusive environment creates opportunities for participation and innovation and contributes to a productive, high-achieving workforce.
- Each person's contribution is valued and their opinion should be heard and treated with dignity, civility and respect.
- All individuals should demonstrate personal and organizational integrity in all matters.
- Accepting personal responsibility and accountability are the foundation of successful outcomes for individuals, teams and the organization.

All employees, vendors, participants in AURA programs and activities, and visitors to its centers and facilities, also referred to in this policy as "covered individuals" are expected to comply with this policy and to take appropriate measures to ensure that their conduct reflects our values of civility, respect and inclusiveness and that prohibited conduct does not occur. AURA recognizes, however, that there may be occasions when individuals engage in or experience inappropriate and/or unlawful behavior. In the following, AURA outlines some of these behaviors in the areas of bullying and unlawful harassment, sexual or otherwise, and outlines the procedures for the reporting and investigation of claims arising from such behavior. The behaviors described may be intentional or unintentional. However, where an allegation is made, the intention of the alleged harasser/bully will be considered irrelevant. It is the impact of the behavior upon the individual that is important. All employees, including supervisors and managers, will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, for any act of unlawful harassment or other unacceptable inappropriate behavior that they commit. In circumstances wherein, such behaviors are committed by covered individuals who are not employees, AURA will take actions as appropriate and necessary, including but not limited to prohibiting access to AURA facilities and AURA sponsored events, reporting the conduct of these individuals to their employers for disciplinary action, and terminating contractual relationships.

The Center/Site Human Resources Manager is designated as the Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) Program Manager and is responsible for all phases of the AURA EEO/AA program and as such has primary responsibility for investigation of all harassment/bullying reports and ensuring corrective action takes place where appropriate.

B. Sexual Harassment

1. It is illegal (pursuant to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) and against the policies of AURA for any employee to sexually harass another employee. Furthermore, AURA will not tolerate sexual harassment perpetrated by any covered individual against an employee, and vice versa. There are generally two types of sexual harassment:
 - a) ‘Quid pro quo’ harassment where submission or refusal to submit to unwelcome sexual attention, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature are used as the basis for employment decisions. In these instances, employee benefits such as hiring, raises, promotions, better working hours, preferential treatment, etc. are directly linked to compliance or non-compliance with sexual advances.
 - b) “Hostile work environment” where the harassment creates an offensive and unpleasant working environment. Hostile work environment can be created by anyone in the work environment, whether it is managers, co-workers or visitors. Hostile work environment most often includes sexually-oriented conduct that is sufficiently pervasive, persistent or severe to unreasonably interfere with an individual’s job performance or has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. However, hostile work environment can result from one egregious act.
2. No AURA manager, supervisor, or other employee shall threaten, state or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, that another employee’s or applicant’s refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect that person’s employment, work status evaluation, wages, advancements, assigned duties, or any other condition of employment or career development. Similarly, no AURA employee shall promise, imply or grant any preferential treatment in connection with another employee or applicant engaging in sexual conduct or consenting to or covering up harassment.
3. Sexual harassment behaviors which may lead to a hostile work environment can take different forms. The following examples of sexual harassment, although not all inclusive, are intended to be guidelines when determining whether there has been a violation of this policy:
 - a) Verbal sexual harassment includes innuendoes, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, lewd remarks, threats, requests for any type of sexual favor (this may include repeated, unwelcome requests for dates); verbal commentaries about an individual’s body or attire; sexually degrading words used to describe an individual and/or verbal abuse or “kidding” that is sexual in nature and unwelcome.

- b) Non-verbal sexual harassment includes the distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material, including calendars, posters and cartoons, that are sexually suggestive or show hostility toward an individual or group because of sex; suggestive or insulting sounds; leering; staring; whistling; obscene gestures; content in letters and notes, facsimiles, e-mail, photos, text messages, tweets and Internet postings; or other form of communication that is sexual in nature and offensive.
- c) Physical sexual harassment includes unwelcome, unwanted physical contact, including touching, tickling, pinching, patting, brushing up against, hugging, cornering, violating an individual's personal space, kissing and fondling, or physical assault.

C. Other Harassment

This policy also prohibits any form of illegal harassment of any individual by a covered individual because of race, religion, color, gender, age, national origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other protected class. The following behaviors, although not all inclusive, may give rise to a hostile work environment in violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 or applicable state or local law, and are strictly prohibited by AURA:

1. Verbal harassment, including comments that are offensive or unwelcome, including epithets, slurs, teasing and negative stereotyping.
2. Non-verbal harassment including distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material, including posters and cartoons; obscene gestures; content in letters and notes, facsimiles, e-mail, photos, text messages, tweets and Internet postings or other form of communication, that ridicules, denigrates, insults, belittles or shows hostility, aversion or disrespect toward an individual or group.
3. Physical harassment includes unwelcome, unwanted physical contact, including violating an individual's personal space or physical assault.

D. Bullying

1. Bullying is strictly prohibited. Bullying is generally defined as unwelcome or unreasonable behavior that demeans, intimidates, humiliates, or sabotages the work of people, either as individuals or as a group. Bullying behavior is most often pervasive, persistent and part of a pattern, but it can also occur as a single egregious incident. It is usually carried out by an individual, but can also be an aspect of group behavior. Generally, exercising appropriate authority or directing the work of others pursuant to position responsibilities is not considered bullying behavior. Although not all inclusive, AURA considers the following types of behaviors as examples of bullying:
 - a) Verbal Bullying: slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person; persistent name-calling which is hurtful, insulting, intimidating or humiliating; using a person as a target of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.

- b) Physical Bullying: pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault or threat of assault or damage to a person's work area or property.
- c) Gesture Bullying: non-verbal threatening gestures; facial expressions or body postures which can convey threatening messages.
- d) Exclusion: socially, physically or professionally excluding, or disregarding a person in work-related activities.
- e) Sabotaging an individual's work.

E. Consensual Relationships

AURA discourages romantic or sexual relationships between a management or other supervisory employee and their staff because such relationships tend to create compromising conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts. In addition, such a relationship may give rise to the perception by others that there is favoritism or bias in employment decisions affecting the employee. Relationships of this nature can give rise later to allegations of sexual harassment. The atmosphere created by such appearances of bias, etc., undermines the trust and mutual respect that is essential to a healthy work environment. Individuals who are involved in consensual relationships and/or are married to other AURA employees are expected to disclose that relationship to the Center Conflict of Interest Officer or Human Resources representative and will not be permitted to be in work reporting lines where one individual is supervised by his or her partner.

F. Complaint and Investigation Procedures

1. Any individual covered under this policy who feels that they are a victim of harassment, bullying or any other prohibited behavior, including but not limited to any of the conduct listed above, by any supervisor, management official, other employee, customer, vendor, visitor or any other person in connection with employment at the site is encouraged to bring the behavior to the attention of the individual perpetrating said behavior in a timely manner, if possible.
2. If the situation is unresolved, or if the individual is uncomfortable addressing the issue directly with the other individual, they should bring the matter to the immediate attention of their site Human Resources representative.
3. If contacting the Human Resources representative would prove uncomfortable, the individual may report to their supervisor, if the individual is an employee, or any member of upper management, to report the alleged harassment/bullying, including all the facts and circumstances. The manager must immediately inform the site Human Resources representative of the complaint.
4. Additionally, any employee who witnesses such behavior should report the behavior to the Human Resources representative or a supervisor.

5. If doing so would prove uncomfortable, the witness should contact any member of upper management, to report the alleged harassment/bullying, including all the facts and circumstances. The manager must immediately inform the site Human Resources representative of the complaint.
6. The site Human Resources representative will undertake a thorough investigation of all reports. Every effort will be made to promptly investigate all allegations of harassment/bullying in as confidential a manner as possible and take appropriate corrective action, if warranted.
7. If the individual feels uncomfortable notifying any of the above-referenced individuals, they may report the harassment/bullying utilizing AURA's IntegrityLine. Procedures for accessing IntegrityLine are available on the AURA website.
8. No employee will be subject to any form of retaliation or discipline for legitimately pursuing a complaint. An investigation of all complaints will be undertaken immediately.
9. The Center/Site Director or a designee will make complaint and investigation procedures available to covered individuals.
10. AURA encourages employees to discuss questions regarding discrimination, harassment and/or bullying with the site Human Resources representative.

G. Confidentiality

During the complaint process, while the confidentiality of the information received, the privacy of the individuals involved, and the wishes of the complaining person regarding action by the office cannot be guaranteed in every instance, they will be protected to as great a degree as is legally possible. The expressed wishes of the complaining person for confidentiality will be considered in the context of the company's legal obligation to act upon the charge and the right of the charged party to obtain information. In most cases, however, confidentiality will be strictly maintained by the organization and those involved in the investigation. In addition, any notes or documents written by or received by the person(s) conducting the investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible and according to any existing state or federal laws.

H. Discipline

Any supervisor, contractor, visitor, or other employee who has been found by AURA, after an appropriate investigation, to have engaged in harassment, sexual or otherwise, and/or bullying behavior towards another employee will be subject to corrective and/or other disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

I. Retaliation

AURA expressly prohibits retaliation against an employee or individual who has made a good-faith complaint of harassment, bullying or any other prohibited behavior, cooperated with the investigation of a complaint, or acted as a witness during the investigation of a complaint. AURA management will take sufficient steps to protect the complainant from retaliation during and following the complaint and investigation. Any employee who retaliates against another employee or individual in violation of this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

J. Reporting

The AURA Chief of Staff is responsible for ensuring compliance with applicable laws, regulations, agreement terms and conditions that require external reporting of actions taken under this policy.