



GRCS Policies on Discrimination and Harassment
(From the GRCS Staff Handbook July 29, 2024)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT

Galapagos Rockford Charter School maintains strong policies designed to keep GRCS free from any form of discrimination. Galapagos Rockford Charter School is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability, veteran status, or any other status or condition protected by applicable federal, state or local law.

Galapagos Rockford Charter School will:

- Recruit, hire, train and promote persons in all job titles without regard to race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability, veteran status, or any other status or condition protected by applicable federal, state or local law, except where a bona fide occupational qualification applies;
- Ensure that all personnel actions, including, but not limited to, compensation, benefits, transfers, promotions, layoffs, returns from lay-offs, company-sponsored training, and social and recreational programs will be administered without regard to race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability, veteran status, or any other status or condition protected by applicable federal, state or local law, except where a bona fide occupational qualification applies.

Furthermore, Galapagos Rockford Charter School expressly prohibits all forms of unlawful harassment.

HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

OVERVIEW

Galapagos Rockford Charter School is firmly committed to maintaining a working environment free from unlawful harassment and/or discrimination, including but not limited to sexual harassment. Galapagos Rockford Charter School expressly prohibits all forms of unlawful harassment or discrimination.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. Galapagos Rockford Charter School is committed to maintaining a working environment free from sexual harassment. GRCS prohibits any form of sexual harassment or any other harassment on any basis.

It shall be a violation of Galapagos Rockford Charter School's policy for any employee, scholar, vendor, or visitor to harass another employee, applicant, vendor, or visitor through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined by this policy. Galapagos Rockford Charter School will act to investigate all complaints of sexual harassment, formal or informal, verbal or written, and to discipline any employee who sexually harasses another employee, vendor, visitor, or scholar.



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Sexual harassment may consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct, the display of derogatory posters, cartoons or drawings, or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature in the workplace.

Sexual harassment exists when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment (including, but not limited to, hiring, compensation, promotion, retention, assignment or opportunities); or
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions;
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Verbal harassment or abuse;
- Subtle pressure for sexual activity, including flirtation, propositions or advances;
- Inappropriate patting, pinching or other close physical contact;
- Intentional brushing against another's body in the workplace;
- Demanding sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt threats;
- Any unwelcome sexually motivated comments, including comments about a person's dress or body.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive; rather, it is merely illustrative of the types of behavior which may be deemed sexually harassing, inappropriate and grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate discharge.

OTHER FORMS OF HARASSMENT

Unlawful harassment includes verbal, physical or visual conduct, including ethnic or racial jokes and remarks, used to criticize, stereotype, ridicule, insult, or show hostility towards another because of his or her race, sex, religion, sexual orientation, color, national origin, age, marital status, disability, veteran status, or other protected category. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Using epithets or slurs, offensive jokes or pranks;
- Mocking, ridiculing or mimicking another's culture, accent, appearance or customs
- Engaging in hostile or offensive acts or threatening to do so or otherwise intimidating others
- Posting or circulating offensive material in any form, including electronic mail or on school property



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The above list is not intended to be exhaustive, but merely illustrative of the types of conduct that the school will deem to constitute unlawful harassment and serve as grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate discharge.

UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION

As discussed more fully above, in connection with the Galapagos Rockford Charter School's policy on Equal Employment Opportunity, GRCS expressly prohibits unlawful discrimination in the workplace, and does not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability, veteran status, or any other status or condition protected by applicable federal, state or local law. Similarly, GRCS does not discriminate against scholars or applicant scholars on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability, veteran status, or any other status or condition protected by applicable federal, state or local law.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING CLAIMS

It is Galapagos Rockford Charter School's express policy to encourage victims or those who have knowledge of unlawful harassment or discrimination to come forward with such claims. In order to facilitate a prompt and effective investigation, any incident of harassment or discrimination should be promptly reported to the CEO. In cases in which the CEO may be involved in harassment or discrimination, the employee should report the actions to the CAO. In cases in which both the CEO and CAO may be involved in harassment or discrimination, the employee should report the actions to the GRCS Board President.

Any employee who is a witness to any incident of harassment or discrimination, has knowledge of harassment or discrimination, or otherwise has reason to believe that harassment or discrimination in or related to the Galapagos Rockford Charter School workplace is taking or has taken place (whether involving a co-worker, supervisor, or non-employee), **is required to report such conduct to the CEO**. If the CEO is involved in harassment or discrimination, the employee should report the actions to the CAO. In cases in which both individuals may be involved in the harassment or discrimination, the employee should report the action to the GRCS Board President or other officer of the Galapagos Rockford Charter School Board.

Inquiries and/or complaints will be investigated immediately by the administration (or other appropriate impartial officer of Galapagos Rockford Charter School). Any such investigation will be conducted in as confidential a manner as is compatible with a thorough investigation of the complaint.

If any employee has a suggestion, problem or complaint regarding equal employment issues, he or she should contact the CEO. If the CEO is an inappropriate person for an employee to address, or is otherwise unavailable, employees with such issues should contact the CAO. In cases in which both individuals may be involved in harassment or discrimination, the employee should report the actions to the GRCS Board President or a GRCS Board officer.



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CORRECTIVE ACTION

Any school employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in sexual harassment or discrimination in violation of this policy, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

A non-employee who subjects a Galapagos Rockford Charter School employee to harassment or discrimination will be informed of the Galapagos Rockford Charter School's *Harassment and Discrimination* policy by the employee's supervisor; other action may be taken under the circumstances as appropriate. Any vendor or visitor who is determined to have engaged in sexual harassment or discrimination in violation of this policy may be subject to restriction from participation in activities on Galapagos Rockford Charter School's property and grounds and at GRCS sponsored events or activities. Any scholar of GRCS who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in sexual harassment or discrimination will be subject to corrective action, which may include discipline, suspension, or expulsion when appropriate.

Referral to the Department of Children and Family services and/or appropriate law enforcement agencies will be made in appropriate cases.

If the investigation results in a finding that an individual falsely accused another of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation in a knowing or malicious manner, or otherwise knowingly or maliciously provided false information during the course of the investigation, that individual will also be subject to the appropriate sanctions, up to and including discharge.

RETALIATION IS PROHIBITED

Retaliation against any individual, who makes a good faith complaint or provides any information regarding harassment or discrimination, including those who participate in any investigation of such complaints, will not be tolerated. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment. Any individual who engages in retaliation is in violation of this policy and will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Complaints and information of retaliation are subject to the same reporting, investigation and remedial procedures as harassment or discrimination claims.

OTHER REMEDIES TO DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT- [105 ILCS 5/22-95](#)

If appropriate, staff may also have a remedy through the Illinois Department of Human Rights. An employee may find the forms to file a complaint at the following address: hrc.illinois.gov .



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The IDHR defines three general categories of discrimination.

- **Disparate treatment:** This discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favorably than others because of their membership in a protected class.
- **Disparate impact:** This discrimination occurs when a policy or practice that is neutral on its face operates in a way that adversely impacts members of a protected class.
- **Harassment:** This discrimination involves a pattern of unwelcome conduct based on membership in a protected class. Harassment must be more than petty slights, annoyances, and isolated incidents. To be unlawful under the Act, the conduct must be severe or pervasive

enough that a reasonable person would perceive it to be both subjectively and objectively offensive.

Any person who reports or is the victim of an incident of alleged discrimination, harassment, or retaliation is permitted to be accompanied, when making a report, by a support individual of the person's choice who complies with the school policies and rules.

An individual may report anonymously except that this report may not be construed to permit formal disciplinary action solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

GRCS shall offer remedial interventions or take such disciplinary action as may be appropriate on a case-by-case basis. This may include but not require or unduly influence, a person who reports or is the victim of an incident of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation the the option to resolve allegations directly with the offender.

This policy does not impair or otherwise diminish the rights of unionized employees under federal law, State law, or a collective bargaining agreement to request an exclusive bargaining representative to be present during investigator interviews, nor does the policy diminish any rights available under the applicable negotiated collective bargaining agreement, including, but not limited to, the grievance procedure.

It is unlawful to retaliate against someone for opposing a violation of the Act, participating in the Commission process, or asserting their rights under the Act. Individuals may also have remedies through federal agencies.

Reporting may not result in a person who reports or is the victim of an incident of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation to suffer adverse consequences as a result of a report of, an investigation of, or a response to the incident.

However, this protection does not allow victims to engage in retaliation against the offender. It also does not prohibit or limit the charter school from applying disciplinary measures in response to other acts or conduct, by the reporting individual, not related to the process of reporting, investigating, or responding to a report of an incident of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.