

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
MOUNT HOLLY FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1

POLICY NUMBER _____

POLICY AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT

I. Purpose

The Fire District is committed to maintaining an environment that is free from harassment of any kind, including but not limited to sexual harassment. This commitment extends to all Fire District employees, volunteers, and members, as well as its vendors, community members and other stakeholders who conduct business with or otherwise interact with the Fire District.

II. Prohibition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment of any Fire District employee, volunteer, or member by another employee, volunteer, or member, or by any vendor, service provider, community member, stakeholder, business invitee or other third party on Fire District premises, is strictly prohibited. Sexual harassment of third parties by any Fire District employee, volunteer, or member is also prohibited.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, physical, or electronic conduct of a sexual nature. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Offering employment opportunities, benefits, or favorable treatment in exchange for sexual favors;
- Visual conduct, such as leering, making sexual gestures, or displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons, or posters;
- Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions, or requests;
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature;
- Graphic verbal comments about an individual's body;
- Sexually degrading words or comments used to describe an individual;
- Suggestive or obscene letters, notes, messages, emails, texts, or invitations;

- Physical conduct, including unwanted touching, assault, or intentionally impeding or blocking a person's movement;
- Teasing, jokes, or offhand comments of a sexual nature or based on a person's sex; and
- Other similar conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment does not have to be sexual in nature. Conduct, comments or other behavior based on a person's sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, perceived sex, or other sex-based characteristics may also qualify as sexual harassment and violate this Policy.

Sexual harassment can involve individuals of the opposite sex as well as individuals of the same sex. Victims of sexual harassment do not need to be of the opposite sex from the offenders.

Victims of sexual harassment are not limited to individuals who were the direct target or subject of the harassing conduct or comments. Individuals who witness, overhear, or are otherwise affected by harassing conduct or comments may be victims of sexual harassment as well.

Any employee, volunteer or member who engages in conduct prohibited by this Policy, whether on-duty or off-duty, may be subject to discipline up to and including termination from employment and/or termination of volunteer status and/or termination of membership.

III. Duty to Report & Cooperate in Investigations

All Fire District employees, volunteers, and members are required to immediately report instances of known, suspected or observed incidents sexual harassment to their supervisor, the Director of Fire Services, or Chief of the Fire District. Any failure or refusal to report suspected sexual harassment may result in discipline up to and including termination from employment and/or termination of volunteer status and/or termination of membership status.

All allegations of sexual harassment shall be immediately forwarded to the Director of Fire Services. If the Director of Fire Services is the subject of the allegations or otherwise has a conflict of interest, then the allegations shall be immediately forwarded to the Chair of the Board of Fire Commissioners. The Director of Fire Services or the Chair, as applicable, shall take all necessary and appropriate steps to ensure that a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation is conducted into the allegations. If the allegations, or any part thereof, are substantiated, then

appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment and/or volunteer status and/or membership status, shall be administered.

Every Fire District employee, volunteer, and member is required to fully cooperate with Fire District investigations. Cooperation includes, but is not limited to, making themselves reasonably available for interviews or meetings, truthfully and completely answering all questions asked of them, responding in a timely manner, and voluntarily disclosing all relevant information, records, or other evidence (including electronic evidence) in their possession, custody or control, or of which they are otherwise aware. Failure or refusal to cooperate with an investigation, including providing false, incomplete or misleading information, shall be considered insubordination and may subject the individual to discipline up to and including termination from employment and/or volunteer status and/or membership status.

IV. Protection from Retaliation

Any person who is the victim of or who reports known, suspected or observed sexual harassment, and any individual who cooperates in an investigation into allegations of sexual harassment, shall be protected from retaliation. Any person who believes that they have been retaliated against shall immediately report the alleged retaliation. The Director of Fire Services or the Chair of the Board of Fire Commissioners, as applicable, shall take all necessary and appropriate steps to ensure that reports of alleged retaliation are promptly, thoroughly, and impartially investigated. Perpetrators of retaliation shall be subject to discipline up to and including termination from employment and/or volunteer status and/or membership status, regardless of whether the underlying allegations are substantiated.

V. Training

Upon commencement of employment, volunteer service, or membership with the Fire District, each Fire District employee, volunteer, and member shall be provided with a copy of this Policy and shall be required to sign a written acknowledgment confirming that they received, reviewed, and agree to comply with this Policy. The Director of Fire Services shall keep and maintain copies of all signed acknowledgements.

In addition, the Director of Fire Services shall ensure that all Fire District employees, volunteers, and members receive periodic training regarding this Policy, their obligations under this Policy, and on preventing, recognizing, and reporting sexual harassment. Such training shall be required no less frequently than once every other year, but may be more frequent as deemed necessary by the Fire District. Further, the Director of Fire Services shall maintain accurate records of all

training provided, including the dates, the identities of the individual participants, copies of the training materials, and the content presented.

Approved by the Board: October 13, 2026