

# Policy Statement on Prevention of Sexual Harassment

## USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service

### Oklahoma

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It has always been the policy of the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) that all of our employees should be able to enjoy a work environment free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct which undermines the integrity of an employment relationship. No employee – neither male nor female – should be subjected to unsolicited or unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical.

Sexual harassment refers to behavior which is not welcome, which is personally offensive, which weakens morale and which, therefore, interferes with an individual's effectiveness and work environment.

Such conduct, whether it is committed by managers, supervisors, coworkers or non-employees (land owners/users, contractors, visitors to the work place, etc.) is specifically prohibited and disciplinary action will be taken if such conduct is found to be improper. This behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Repeated offensive sexual activity;
- Sexually suggestive objects or pictures;
- Graphic or degrading verbal comments about an individual and/or his/her appearance;
- Questions of a sexual nature concerning any employee;
- Profanity or other types of offensive language;
- Verbal harassment or abuse;
- Physical assault;
- Or any other type of offensive or abusive contact which serves to create a hostile work environment.

I will take immediate and appropriate action for acts of harassment of employees by managers, supervisors, other employees and non-employees.

In addition, no one should imply or threaten that an applicant's or employee's "cooperation" of a sexual nature – or refusal thereof – will have an effect on the individual's employment, assignment, compensation, advancement, career development or any other condition of employment.

**HARASSMENT CONSTITUTES ONE OF THE MOST BASIC VIOLATIONS OF AN INDIVIDUAL'S RIGHTS. IT REPRESENTS A COST OF QUALITY AND LOSS OF PRODUCTIVITY THAT NRCS WILL NOT TOLERATE.**

All NRCS employees must be committed to ensuring that such harassment does not occur.

Employees who believe they are being subjected to harassment and/or inappropriate behavior on the job, should seek immediate advice and counsel from your supervisor, Human Resources Officer, Assistant State Conservationist (Field Operations), Assistant State Conservationist (Operations), or the State Conservationist.



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State Conservationist