



OVER THE WALL

a seriousfun camp

Sexual Harassment Policy

Policy Statement

Over the Wall will not tolerate sexual harassment within the workplace or at camp. Our culture is based on mutual respect and collaboration and any sexual harassment is viewed as a serious violation of those principles.

Policy date: July 2019
Author: Kevin Mathieson
Status: Approved by SMT
Adopted: April 2018
Next Review: July 2021

Policy brief & purpose

Our sexual harassment policy aims to protect everyone associated with Over the Wall (staff, volunteers, donors, supporters, trustees and contractors) from unwanted sexual advances and provide guidelines to encourage the reporting of any such incidents. We will also explain how we handle complaints, apply disciplinary measures and support victims of such behaviour.

We will not tolerate sexual harassment in the workplace or at camp in any shape or form. Our culture is based on mutual respect and collaboration and sexual harassment is a serious violation of those principles.

Scope

This policy applies to everyone professionally linked with Over the Wall, whether they are staff, volunteers, donors, supporters, trustees or contractors and regardless of gender, sexual orientation, level, function, seniority or status. Everyone is obliged to comply with this policy.

We also will not tolerate sexual harassment committed by any of the above-mentioned stakeholders outside of our work environment and reserve the right to take action if any such incidents occur.

Policy elements

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment can take many forms. A person sexually harasses someone when they:

- Insinuate, propose or demand sexual favours of any kind,
- Invade another person's personal space (e.g. inappropriate touching),
- Stalk, intimidate, coerce or threaten another person to get them to engage in sexual acts,
- Send or display sexually explicit objects or messages,
- Comment on someone's looks, dress, sexuality or gender in a derogatory or objectifying manner or a manner that makes them uncomfortable,
- Make obscene comments, jokes or gestures that humiliate or offend someone, or
- Pursue or flirt with another person persistently without the other person's willing participation.

Flirting with someone at an inappropriate time (e.g. in a team meeting) is considered sexual harassment, even when these advances would have been welcome in a different setting. This is because such actions can harm a person's professional reputation and expose them to further harassment.

The most extreme form of sexual harassment is sexual assault. This is a serious crime and Over the Wall will fully support employees who want to initiate criminal proceedings against offenders.

Our rules on sexual harassment

- **No one has the right to sexually harass our employees or volunteers.** Any person in our organisation who is found guilty of serious harassment will have their employment terminated, regardless of position. Also, if representatives of our contractors or vendors sexually harass our employees, we will demand that the company they work for takes disciplinary action and/or we will refuse to work with that person/company in the future.
- **Sexual harassment is never too minor to be dealt with.** Any kind of harassment can wear down employees and create a hostile workplace. We will hear every claim and discipline offenders appropriately.
- **Sexual harassment is about how we make others feel.** Many do not consider behaviours like flirting or sexual comments to be sexual harassment, thinking they are too innocent to be labelled that way, but, if something you do makes your colleagues uncomfortable, or makes them feel unsafe, you must stop.
- **We assume every sexual harassment claim is legitimate unless proven otherwise.** We will listen to victims of sexual harassment and always conduct our investigations properly. Occasional false reports do not undermine this principle.
- **We will not allow further victimisation of harassed employees.** We will fully support employees who were sexually harassed and will not take any adverse action against them. For example, we will not move them to positions with worse pay or benefits or allow others to retaliate against them.
- **Those who support or overlook sexual harassment are as much at fault as offenders.** Managers especially are obliged to prevent sexual harassment and act when they have suspicions or receive reports. Letting this behaviour continue or encouraging it will bring about disciplinary action. Anyone who witnesses an incident of sexual harassment or has other kinds of proof should report same to their manager or the CEO.

How to report sexual harassment

If you are being sexually harassed (or suspect another person is being harassed), please report it immediately to your manager or the CEO. In serious cases like sexual assault, please call the police and inform the CEO that you plan to initiate criminal proceedings. We acknowledge it's often hard to come forward about these issues, but we will fully support any individual requiring assistance.

If you want to report sexual harassment occurring within the staff environment at Over the Wall, there are two options:

Report to your manager or the CEO.

Do this via any means and a meeting will be urgently convened. Once in the meeting, explain the situation in as much detail as possible. If you have any hard evidence (e.g. emails), forward it or bring it with you to the meeting.

Report to a Trustee.

Anne Stevens is an OTW volunteer and Board Trustee, as well as having had a successful career in international corporate HR. You can email Anne at annestevens1@msn.com

If you are a volunteer or contractor and want to report sexual harassment occurring within the camp environment at Over the Wall, there are three options:

Anonymous reporting:

We have contracted an independent organisation to provide the above reporting route for those wishing to anonymously report any matter. No identifier is recorded by them and the message left is forwarded to the Chief Executive only for action. The contact telephone number is **0330 159 0108**

Report to the CEO:

For those who are happy to identify themselves, you can contact the CEO at kevin.mathieson@otw.org.uk.

Report to a Trustee:

Alternatively, as outlined above, you can contact **Anne Stevens** at annestevens1@msn.com

If you report any physical assault to the police, Over the Wall will provide any possible support until the matter is resolved and will ensure you are not victimised in any way.

Inadvertent harassment

Sometimes, people who harass others do not realise that their behaviour is wrong. We understand this is possible, but that doesn't make the perpetrator any less responsible for their actions.

If you suspect that someone doesn't realise their behaviour is sexual harassment under the definition of this policy, let them know and ask them to stop and record the action/discussion. Please do not use this approach when:

- Your manager, a senior manager, trustee or donor is the perpetrator, and/or
- Sexual harassment goes beyond the boundaries of off-hand comments, flirting or jokes.

In the above cases, report to your manager or the CEO, or a Trustee, as appropriate, as soon as possible.

Disciplinary action and repeat offenders

Employees who are found guilty of any form of sexual assault will have their employment terminated.

Employees who are found guilty of sexual harassment (but not assault) the first time will be exposed to the full range of disciplinary outcomes which can include dismissal but also other less serious outcomes.

We may also transfer employees who are found guilty of sexual harassment to protect their victims.

We will terminate the employment of any repeat offenders after a second positive investigation against them.

We will apply these disciplinary actions uniformly.

Management responsibilities.

First and foremost, managers should try to prevent sexual harassment by building a culture of respect and trust. However, when sexual harassment occurs and an employee makes a complaint, managers must act immediately and treat any complaint initially as a matter falling within our Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

There are options within the Disciplinary Policy to deal with matters informally and the requirements and expectations of the victim should be considered and taken into account before determining further action. The CEO will be party to determining the correct course of investigatory action to be taken.

Managers must not, under any circumstances, blame the victim, conceal a report or discourage employees from reporting sexual harassment.

If a manager behaves that way, the CEO must be notified.

Helping harassment victims.

Apart from investigating claims and punishing perpetrators, we want to support the victims of sexual harassment. If you experience trauma, stress or other symptoms because of harassment, we will consider supportive options such as additional leave, counselling and any other suitable options.

Your job and benefits will not be jeopardised or altered if you choose any of those options or other means to recovery.

Speak up, we will listen!

Sexual harassment can exhaust those who endure it. Speaking up about this issue is often tough for fear of not being heard, upsetting managers and challenging corporate culture.

Please don't let these fears deter you. Over the Wall will do everything possible to stop sexual harassment and any other kind of harassment from happening, while supporting harassed employees. We need to know what's going on so we can act on it, and by raising your voice on this issue, you help create a positive workplace and enable the charity to thrive.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed biennially for currency and accuracy by the CEO or individual delegated by him/her. This does not prevent any changes taking place to this policy at any other time due to changes in practice or legislation.

Kevin Mathieson
Chief Executive
April 2018
(reviewed July 2019)