

Free Methodist Church – USA Anti-Harassment, Bullying, and Complaint Policy

The Free Methodist Church – USA (“FMC-USA”) is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a Christian and professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits unlawful discriminatory practices, including harassment and bullying. Therefore, FMC-USA expects that all relationships among persons in the office will be business-like and free of bias, prejudice and harassment. It is sin and in every way unacceptable for any employee, whether a manager, supervisor, or co-worker, to sexually harass another employee.

It is the policy of FMC-USA to ensure equal employment opportunity without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty or status as a covered veteran. FMC-USA prohibits any such discrimination or harassment.

FMC-USA encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination or harassment. It is the policy of FMC-USA that all such reports be promptly and thoroughly investigated. FMC-USA prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or who participates in an investigation of such reports. Any sexual harassment should immediately be reported to a supervisor, or member of the board, or human resources director. Any report of sexual harassment shall be addressed pursuant to the policies and procedures of Chapter 7 of the Free Methodist Church-USA Book of Discipline and in conformity with local, state and federal law. Any abuse or criminal offense must be reported immediately to local and/or state authorities pursuant to respective laws.

Definitions of Harassment

Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state and local laws. For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is defined, as in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines, as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not-so-subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors; sexual jokes and innuendo; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; leering, whistling or touching; insulting or obscene comments or gestures; display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; and other physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

Harassment on the basis of any other protected characteristic is also strictly prohibited. Under this policy, harassment is verbal, written or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, gender, national origin, age, disability, citizenship, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law or that of his/her relatives, friends or associates, and that a) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment; b) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or c) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Harassing conduct includes epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; and written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group and that is placed on walls or elsewhere on the employer's premises or circulated in the workplace, on Company time or using Company equipment via e-mail, phone (including voice messages), text messages, tweets, blogs, social networking sites or other means.

Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as during business trips, business meetings and business-related social events.

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