

**HARASSMENT POLICY,
SEXUAL & OTHERWISE**
of the



**RAILROAD MUSEUM OF
LONG ISLAND**

ADOPTED 5/14/2019

Harassment Policy, Sexual and Otherwise

I. Policy brief & purpose

The Sexual Harassment Policy of the Railroad Museum of Long Island aims to protect men and women in our Museum from unwanted sexual advances and to furnish them with guidelines to report such incidents. The process of handling claims, the consequences of sexual harassment and available resources designed to facilitate the victim's recovery will be provided to Museum volunteers through training. The Officers and Trustees of the RMLI will not tolerate sexual harassment in our facilities or on our properties in any shape or form. Our culture is based on mutual respect and collaboration. Sexual harassment is a serious violation of those principles.

II. Scope

This policy applies to every individual in our Museum regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. All persons are obliged to comply with this policy. In addition, the Museum will not tolerate sexual harassment from inside or outside of the Museum. Volunteers, contractors, patrons and individuals interacting with our Museum are covered by this policy.

Policy elements

III. What is harassment?

- 3.1** Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person(s). The word 'unwanted' means 'unwelcome' or 'uninvited,' tending to create a hostile or offensive environment. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. Individuals who are the victims of sexual harassment have the right to sue under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C.A. § 2000e et seq.), which prohibits sex discrimination in the workplace.
- 3.2** An individual harasses another when they:
- A.** Make obscene comments, jokes or gestures that humiliate or offend someone.
 - B.** Pursue or flirt with another individual without the other individual's willing participation.
 - C.** Insinuate, propose or demand sexual favors of any kind.
 - D.** Invade another person's personal space (e.g. inappropriate touching.)
 - E.** Stalk, intimidate, coerce or threaten another individual to get them to engage in sexual acts.
 - F.** Send or display sexually explicit objects or messages.
 - G.** Comment on someone's looks, dress, sexuality or gender in a derogatory or objectifying manner or a manner that makes them uncomfortable.

- 3.3** The most extreme form of sexual harassment is sexual assault. This is a serious crime and Museum will encourage and support victims who want to press charges against offenders.

IV. The RMLI's rules on harassment

- 4.1 No one has the right to harass our personnel.** Any individual in our Museum found guilty of serious harassment will be relieved of duty immediately. In addition, if representatives of our contractors or vendors harass our volunteers, the officers will demand that the company take disciplinary action and the Museum will refuse the individual access to facilities and property.
- 4.2 All allegations of harassment will be investigated.** Any form of harassment may create a hostile environment. The Officers will investigate every claim and punish offenders appropriately.
- 4.3 The Museum will not allow further victimization of harassed volunteers.** The Officers will fully support volunteers who were harassed and will not take any adverse action against them. Offenders will have their membership temporarily suspended pending the results of the investigation.
- 4.4 Volunteers who support or overlook sexual harassment are as much at fault as offenders.** Volunteers are obliged to prevent harassment and act when they have suspicions or receive reports. Permitting this behavior to continue or encouraging it will bring about disciplinary action. Any volunteer who witnesses an incident of sexual or other forms of harassment or has obtained any evidence of such must report the circumstances immediately to the President.

V. Methods of reporting sexual or other forms of harassment

- 5.1** If you are being harassed or suspect another person is being harassed, please report the facts to the President. Allegations against the President will be reported to the Vice President. In serious incidents such as sexual assault, please call the police and inform the President. The Officers and Trustees acknowledge the difficulties involved to come forward and report these issues, but we need your help to build a fair and safe place for you and your colleagues.
- 5.2** If you want to report any form of harassment within our organization, there are two options:
- A. Ask for an urgent meeting with the President.** Once in the meeting, explain the situation in as much detail as possible and present any physical evidence (e.g. emails, texts or photos).
 - B. Send your complaint via email.** Please forward your address to the President and attach any evidence or information pertinent to the investigation.
- 5.3** If you report an assault to the police, the Museum will provide any possible support until the matter is resolved. In any case, the Officers and Trustees will ensure you are not victimized and that the police have access to relevant evidence admissible in court (e.g. security video footage or emails)

VI. Inadvertent harassment

Sometimes, individuals who harass others may not realize that their actions are inappropriate. The Officers and the Board of Trustees recognized this fact but that doesn't make the offender any less culpable for his or her actions. If you suspect that someone doesn't realize their behavior is harassment under the definition of this policy, [*Policy Elements, III. paragraph 3.1*], advise the individual and ask them to stop. Do so preferably via electronic communications to obtain proof. If the offender refuses to stop, please notify the President as soon as possible.

VII. Disciplinary Action and Repeat Offenders

- 7.1** The Museum has a Zero Tolerance Policy for persons who are found guilty of sexual assault. If the person is a member, their membership will be revoked immediately. No offender will be allowed on the Museum's property.
- 7.2** The Museum will apply these disciplinary actions uniformly. Persons of any age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation will be penalized the same way for the same offense.

VIII. Responsibilities of the President

- 8.1** First and foremost, the Officers, Trustees and volunteers should try to prevent all forms of harassment by fostering an environment of mutual respect and trust. But, when harassment occurs and a person makes a complaint, the President must act immediately.
- 8.2** The President will explain to members and volunteers the Museum's procedures.

8.3 When the President receives a complaint, the following procedures will be adhered to:

- A.** Interview the person(s) making the allegation. Determine and record the details, facts and information as soon as the allegation is reported. The President will request another Museum Officer or Trustee to attend the meeting.
- B.** Keep copies of the report with dates, times and details of incidents and any possible evidence in a confidential file. The President will update this file with all future actions and conversations regarding this complaint. The president will obtain all pertinent reports filed by law enforcement agencies.
- C.** Launch an internal investigation and notify the Museum's legal counsel.
- D.** Check if past allegations have been filed against the individual accused.
- E.** Inform the complainant of the Museum policies and the option to initiate legal action.
- F.** Take into consideration the wishes of the complainant. Some individuals may desire the matter to be resolved informally and discreetly, while others may seek legal means. The President will consider the circumstances and decide on appropriate actions.
- G.** Contact the accused and request a meeting to explain the nature of the allegation and to obtain their details of the incident. The President will request another Museum Officer, Trustee, or Counsel to attend the meeting.

8.4 The President shall not, under any circumstances, blame the victim, conceal a report or discourage people from reporting sexual harassment.

8.5 The Officers and the Board of Trustees welcome any feedback or complaints about our procedures and investigation of allegations. Sexual harassment may be a traumatic experience for persons who endure it. Speaking up about this issue is often tough for fear of not being heard or upsetting fellow volunteers. Please don't let these fears deter you. Our Museum will do everything possible to stop sexual harassment and any other kind of harassment from happening while supporting the harassed person(s). We need to know about incidents of all forms of harassment in order to prevent it. Notifying the Museum's President, Officers or Board of Trustees will create an environment free from sexual or any kind of harassment.