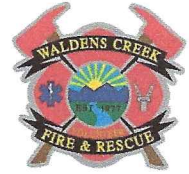


WALDENS CREEK VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES



SUBJECT: WCFD Discrimination, Harassment, and Equal Opportunity Employment Policy	NUMBER: WCVFD 1.4.15
APPROVED BY: FIRE CHIEF TIM BAKER AND THE FIRE DEPARTMENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS	Effective: <u>03/15/2023</u> New: <u>X</u> Revised: _____

1.4.15 Authority

1.4.15.1 Teamwork and success are built on a foundation of diversity and equality. For these reasons and in compliance with the law, The Waldens Creek Volunteer Fire Department, hereafter referred as WCFD, strives to provide equal employment opportunity for all members, paid or non-paid. We are committed to providing a work environment free of unlawful discrimination. This policy is derived from and enforced by U.S. Federal Law and the Laws of the State of Tennessee

TITLE VI (Civil Rights Act of 1964) Federal Law

“No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, religion, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal Financial Assistance ("FFA").”

Tennessee Code Annotated/T.C.A. 4-21-904

State Law *“ensures your right to receive equal treatment and service opportunities regardless of your race, color, national origin, or limited English proficiency. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act specifically prohibits discrimination in programs that are federally funded, and T.C.A. 4-21-904 specifically prohibits discrimination in programs that are State funded.”*

1.4.15.2 RESPONSIBILITY

1.4.15.2.1 This policy applies to every member and all workplace participants — those persons such as [e.g., board of directors, supervisors, applicants, volunteers, interns, associates, contractors, vendors, benefactors] who interact with the workplace or who participate in WCFD activities, no matter his or her authority, position, or classification. Conduct prohibited by this policy is not only unacceptable in any setting, but also applies to WCFD related settings such as business trips, business meetings, and business-related social events.

1.4.15.3 POLICY – DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED

1.4.15.3.1 Preventing discrimination begins with respect for, and adherence to, the law. Therefore, discrimination is strictly prohibited against individuals on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, pregnancy, disability, marital status, military status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, or any other status or condition protected by applicable federal, state or local laws, except where a bona fide occupational qualification applies. Discrimination can take many forms, including harassment, which is addressed in detail in 1.4.15.4 (below).

1.4.15.3.2 As an equal opportunity employer, WCFD will strive to conduct all personnel practices and procedures including recruitment, selection, employment, compensation, benefits, evaluations, promotions, demotions, assignments, transfers, layoffs, terminations, training, education, recreational and social activities, and safety and health programs, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, pregnancy, disability, marital status, military status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender expression, identity, or any other status or condition protected by applicable federal, state or local laws, except where a bona fide occupational qualification applies.

1.4.15.4 Harassment, a form of discrimination, is prohibited.

Verbal, physical, sexual, written, digital, electronically delivered, or any other form of harassment that belittles or demeans any individual on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, pregnancy, disability, marital status, military status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender expression, identity or any other status or condition protected by applicable federal, state or local laws is also strictly prohibited.

Prohibited harassment includes conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a person's work performance or experience or creating an environment that is hostile, intimidating, or offensive.

Sexual advances; requests or demands for sexual favors; physical conduct of a sexual or harassing nature; jokes based on a person's race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, pregnancy, disability, marital status, military status, genetic information, sexual

orientation, gender expression, identity or any other status or condition protected by applicable federal, state or local laws; sexual, racial, ethnic, national origin, disability or religious slurs; bullying; and other abusive or harassing language or conduct that is meant to intimidate or that negatively impacts an employee's work environment is strictly prohibited.

1.4.15.5 Reporting Discrimination or Harassment

If you believe you have been subjected to any form of discrimination, including harassment, or if you know of, or suspect, discrimination or harassment against another employee, member, or workplace participant, or member of the public you must report it immediately to the Chief Officer, regardless of the accused's identity or position.

If you do not feel comfortable reporting to the Fire Chief, or if you did report and are not satisfied with the response, then you should direct your report or dissatisfaction to the WCFD Executive Administrator, any member of the Board of Directors, the State of Tennessee Civil Rights Division (1-615-741-3681), or the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (1-800-669-4000).

Please note that you are not required to confront the person or persons that have given you reason to report. However, if you experience discrimination or harassment, you must make a reasonable effort to make the discrimination known as soon as you experience or discover it. Discussing or reporting acts of discrimination to any person not listed above does not constitute a report.

1.4.15.6 Retaliation prohibited.

Retaliation can include, but is not limited to, discrimination, harassment, or any other unfair treatment or abuse of power. WCFD prohibits retaliation of any kind against those who, in good faith, report discrimination or who assist in the investigation of a report of discrimination.

Any WCFD member or participant who retaliates for making a good faith report of a violation of this policy or for assisting in an investigation of a report of a violation of this policy, is subject to discipline or termination.

If you believe you are being subjected to retaliation, or if you know of, or suspect, retaliation against another for reporting a violation of this policy or for participating in an investigation of a violation of this policy, you should report the retaliation immediately in the manner provided above, regardless of the accused's identity or position. Please note that you do not have to confront the person who is the source of the retaliation before reporting it, but you must report it as soon as you experience or discover it. Discussing or reporting acts of retaliation to any person not listed above does not constitute a report.

1.4.14.7 Workplace Investigations

A report of retaliation for reporting discrimination or harassment, or a report of

discrimination or harassment, that is made to those listed above will result in an appropriate investigation of the allegations. WCFD may use third parties to investigate allegations. All WCFD members and participants have a responsibility to cooperate fully with any investigation. The interviews, allegations, statements, and identities will be kept confidential, on a need-to-know basis, consistent with the law and the investigation process and goals. Unreasonable refusal to participate in an investigation may lead to discipline, including termination.

Those found to have discriminated, harassed, or retaliated against another in violation of this policy are subject to discipline including, but not limited to, termination, consistent with the law, the results of the investigation, the severity of the conduct, and the policy violator's employment history, including any similar reports of prior unlawful discrimination, harassment and/or retaliation.

1.4.15.8 Knowingly False Reporting Prohibited

Any employee, member, or workplace participant, who makes a knowingly false report of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, will be subject to discipline, including termination.

1.4.15.9 Questions about this policy

If you have questions, suggestions or concerns about this policy, you should direct them to a supervising officer.

If you feel uncomfortable discussing your questions, suggestions or concerns about this policy with those listed above, you can direct them to the Executive Administrator or the President of the Board of Directors.