

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

By checking the “I will abide by Sexual Harassment policy” box on the Volunteer Signup Form, I agree that I have read, understand, and abide by the following practices.

### 1. *Sexual Harassment Is Forbidden*

Global Visionaries (henceforth to be referred to as “GV”) recognizes the right of all board members, staff, interns, volunteers, and participants to work and participate in an environment free of discriminatory intimidation. Sexual harassment of staff members is illegal sex-based discrimination and will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment is prohibited.

### 2. *Explanation Of What Constitutes Sexual Harassment*

Sexual harassment means any unwelcome sexually oriented practice, comment, look, suggestion, or any unwarranted contact that creates an uncomfortable working environment for the person being harassed. Sexual harassment is behavior of a sexual nature that is deliberate and unsolicited. Sexual harassment is coercive and one-sided and both males and females can be victims of it.

GV forbids any unwelcome sexual advances or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a condition of employment or a basis for any employment decision. GV prohibits such conduct and will not permit it to affect any employment decisions rendered by GV.

### *Overview of the Law*

Claims can be filed by both men and women who are victims of harassment. Below are legal claims that can be made as a victim of harassment:

#### Demands for Sexual Favors

You can sue an employer for sexual harassment if you must submit to sexual conduct in order to keep your job or in exchange for job benefits. If you are retaliated against for refusing sexual advances, this is also considered unlawful discrimination. Courts label this scenario as “quid pro quo” (“this for that”) discrimination, meaning sex is extorted from an employee as a basis for employment decisions.

Two types of employees can be victims of quid pro quo harassment: 1) the worker who is offered favorable treatment in return for sex and 2) the employee who cannot “earn” the favorable treatment because it is given to others in exchange for sex.

#### Hostile Work Environment

You can sue your place of employment if you are forced to work in a discriminatorily “hostile or abusive work environment.” If you are forced to suffer abuse based upon sex, i.e., gender-based name-calling or insults, a hostile environment may exist.

Note that isolated instances of sexual jokes or name-calling will probably not be considered illegal. You must show that the conduct actually created a hostile work environment because the incidents were sufficiently frequent, severe, or threatening to make it more difficult for you to work. The behavior must also be either sexual in nature or designed to intimidate you because of your sex.

### 3. *Procedures For Investigating Sexual Harassment*

GV shall treat all such complaints or allegations with respect and shall, as far as consistent with due process, protect the personal privacy of all concerned parties. Cases of sexual harassment shall be considered to be discrimination and eligible to be processed as a dispute. The initial meeting under the dispute process shall, if possible, take place within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt of the complaint.

In the case of sexual harassment by an employee or supervisor, the employee being harassed has the right to discontinue contact with the harasser without incurring any penalty. Complaints regarding alleged sexual harassment shall be dealt with seriously and in strict confidence. Disciplinary actions will be taken against the accused once the claim is found to be accurate.

Retaliatory action against anyone filing a complaint of any type of discrimination including sexual harassment is strictly prohibited.

### 4. *Prevention of False Claims*

Employees should continue to follow common sense rules to prevent false claims of abuse, including:

1. Never be alone with a single student (of either sex), particularly in isolated locations.
2. If in the home stay in target country, do not enter the room of the participant unless more than one student or adult is also present.
3. Avoid physical contact with student, which could be misunderstood as sexual in nature.
4. Avoid any written communications with students, which could be misconstrued as personal or romantic.
5. Avoid off-the-cuff comments on students' physical appearance or discussing personal topics, which could be construed as sexual.
6. If a student confides in you regarding a personal topic of a sexual nature, either invite another adult to join the conversation or report the conversation in writing to the Executive Director or Program Manager immediately after.

If you or a colleague is accused of sexual harassment, you should take it seriously. Be sure to get competent advice before any questioning by the police. You have the right to representation in any meeting, which could lead to discipline. In serious or potentially criminal cases, GV will refer you to an attorney so your case can be assessed.

What to do if a GV participant propositions you:

1. If you are sexually propositioned by a student, politely tell the student you are not interested.
2. If a polite rejection does not stop the advances, report the situation in writing to GV's Executive Director. This will put the organization on notice that you are being treated inappropriately.

### 5. *Responding to Sexual Harassment*

If you experience sexual harassment, you should observe the following basic principles:

1. Do not deny or ignore the problem. Tell the harasser you object. If you are afraid or embarrassed to talk to the harasser face to face, you might choose to write him/her a letter. Alternatively, you might bring a support person with you if you elect to tell the

harasser face to face. Be very specific when you tell the harasser what conduct you object to (i.e., "It offends me when you massage my shoulders.").

2. Do not blame yourself; it is not your fault.
3. Seek advice on the best and safest way to report sexual harassment, if appropriate.
4. Notify GV's Executive Director.
5. Write down a detailed account of what happened and find witnesses who may have seen or heard the incident(s). Keep this information in a safe location, away from the workplace.
6. Obtain counseling and/or medical treatment from a trained professional, if necessary. See the Resources section on State and National Associations to contact.

#### 6. *Compensation For Harm From Sexual Harassment*

If you are injured by sexual harassment, there are several ways you may seek compensation for your injuries:

1. You can file a charge of discrimination with federal or state civil rights officials to force a government investigation and then sue in court (See Resources for information on State Associations to contact).
2. You can sue immediately in court for assault and other personal injury claims and/or for discrimination under state law.
3. If you are physically or psychologically injured, you can file a workers' compensation claim for injuries caused by sexual harassment. We recommend you consult with an attorney to see if this is advisable.
4. If the conduct involved physical assault, you can report it to the police for possible criminal charges.

#### 7. *Student-Student Harassment*

GV unequivocally forbids sexual harassment between students. If you discover that a student is being harassed, handle the matter professionally as you would any other type of serious student misconduct. If the conduct involved physical assault, call in the police according to existing procedures on criminal behavior by a student. Washington law requires you to report child abuse to police or Child Protective Services (CPS) within 48 hours of the time you learn of the abuse. This requirement applies even if the abuser is a student. Write down what you do and any orders given to you by the administration or police. Such records will be important if you become a witness in a legal proceeding. If you are unsure of what to do, make sure to get clear (and, if possible, written) instructions from the Executive Director.

#### 8. *Resources*

*Human Rights Commission*  
1511 Third Avenue, Suite 921  
Seattle, WA 98101  
206-464-6500

*Office of Federal Contract Compliance*  
1111 Third Avenue, Suite 745  
Seattle, WA 98101-3212  
206-553-7182

*Equal Employment Opportunity Commission*  
909 First Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104  
206-220-6883

*U.S. Department of Education*  
*Office of Civil Rights*  
915 Second Avenue, Room 3310  
Seattle, WA 98174-1099  
206-220-792