

RMFR Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy

Objective

RMFR is committed to a work environment where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits unlawful discriminatory practices, including harassment.

RMFR has developed this policy to ensure its employees can work in an environment free from unlawful harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. RMFR will make every reasonable effort to ensure all employees are familiar with these policies and aware that complaints regarding policy violations will be investigated and resolved appropriately. Any employee who has questions or concerns about these policies should talk with the Shelter Manager or a member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

These policies should not, and may not, be used as a basis for excluding or separating individuals of a particular gender, or any other protected characteristic, from participating in business or work-related social activities or discussions. In other words, no one should make the mistake of engaging in discrimination or exclusion to avoid allegations of harassment. The law and RMFR policies prohibit disparate treatment on the basis of any protected characteristic with regard to terms, conditions, privileges, and perquisites of employment. The prohibitions against harassment, discrimination, and retaliation are intended to complement and further those policies, not form a basis of an exception to them.

Equal Employment Opportunity

It is RMFR's policy to ensure equal employment opportunity without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race (including hairstyle/texture), color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, national origin, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law. RMFR prohibits any such discrimination or harassment.

Retaliation

RMFR encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination or harassment. It is RMFR's policy to promptly and thoroughly investigate such reports. RMFR prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or participates in an investigation of such reports.

Sexual 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.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 recognizes two types of sexual harassment: a) quid pro quo and b) hostile work 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

Harassment on the basis of any other protected characteristic is also strictly prohibited. Harassment is defined as verbal, written, or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law, or that individual's 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 that is placed on walls or elsewhere on the employer's premises or circulated in the workplace, on company time or using company equipment by email, phone (including voice messages), text messages, social networking sites, or other means.

Individuals and Conduct Covered

These policies apply to all applicants and employees, whether related to conduct engaged in by coworkers or by someone not directly connected to RMFR (e.g., an outside vendor, consultant, or customer). In addition, these policies apply to RMFR volunteers and individuals inquiring about, or in the process of, adopting a feline. 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.

Reporting an Incident of Harassment, Discrimination, or Retaliation

RMFR encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination, harassment or retaliation, regardless of the offender's identity or position. Individuals who believe they have been the victim of such conduct should discuss their concerns with their immediate manager, the Shelter Manager, or a member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

In addition, RMFR encourages individuals who believe they are being subjected to such conduct to promptly advise the offender that their behavior is unwelcome and request it be discontinued. Often this action alone will resolve the problem. RMFR recognizes; however, that an individual may prefer to pursue the matter through a formal complaint procedure.

Complaint Procedure

Individuals who believe they have been the victims of conduct prohibited by this policy or believe they have witnessed such conduct should discuss their concerns with their immediate manager, the Shelter Manager, or a member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

RMFR encourages the prompt reporting of complaints or concerns so rapid and constructive action can be taken before relationships become irreparably strained. Therefore, while no fixed reporting period has been established, early reporting and intervention have proven to be the most effective method of resolving actual or perceived incidents of harassment.

Any reported allegations of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation will be investigated promptly. The investigation may include individual interviews with the parties involved and, where necessary, with individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge. RMFR will maintain confidentiality throughout the investigatory process to the extent consistent with adequate investigation procedures and appropriate corrective action.

Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or discrimination or for participating in an investigation of a claim of harassment or discrimination is a serious violation of this policy and, like harassment or discrimination itself, will be subject to disciplinary action. Acts of retaliation should be reported immediately and will be promptly investigated and addressed.

Misconduct constituting harassment, discrimination, or retaliation will be dealt with appropriately. Responsive action may include, for example, training, referral to counseling, or disciplinary action such as a warning, reprimand, withholding of a promotion or pay increase, reassignment, temporary suspension without pay, or termination, as RMFR believes appropriate under the circumstances.

False and malicious complaints of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation (as opposed to complaints that, even if erroneous, are made in good faith) may be the subject of appropriate disciplinary action.