

## Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Nondiscrimination/Anti-Harassment Complaint Procedure

### RVC Administrative Procedure (3:10.010)

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EEO and Nondiscrimination/Anti-Harassment Complaint Procedure

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#### A. Purpose

Rock Valley College (RVC) 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 professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits unlawful discriminatory practices, including harassment. Therefore, RVC expects that all relationships among persons in the office will be business-like and free of explicit bias, prejudice, and harassment.

Any employee who has questions or concerns about these policies should talk with a member of the RVC HR Department.

The policies of RVC prohibit disparate treatment on the basis of all protected characteristic, as consistent with the Illinois Human Rights Act, 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 to form the basis of an exception to them.

#### B. Department and Primary Point of Contact Involved

Department: Human Resources

Point of Contact: Director of Employee Relations  
Human Resources Business Partners

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## C. Definitions

**Equal Employment Opportunity:** refers to the principle that all individuals should have equal access to employment opportunities based on merit, without discrimination.

RVC Board Policy 3:10.010 ensures 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. RVC prohibits any such discrimination or harassment.

**Retaliation:** refers to any adverse action taken by an employer against an employee for engaging in a legally protected activity.

RVC prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or participates in an investigation of such reports.

**Harassment:** refers to unwelcome verbal or physical behavior based on race, color, religion, sex (including sexual orientation, gender identity, or pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability, or genetic information

Harassment on the basis of any protected characteristic is 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 or her 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 of his or 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 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 e-mail, phone (including voice messages), text messages, social networking sites or other means.

## D. Procedures

### Individuals and Conduct Covered

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This procedure and RVC Board Policy 3:10.010 apply to all employees, independent contractors, volunteers, and advisory committees of RVC, whether related to conduct engaged in by fellow employees or by someone not directly connected to RVC (e.g., an outside vendor, consultant or customer).

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**

RVC encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination, harassment or retaliation, regardless of the offender's identity or position. Individuals who believe that they have been the victim of such conduct should discuss their concerns with their immediate supervisor, or RVC Human Resources. If an incident has occurred off campus during a business-related event, individuals should contact the appropriate local law enforcement and inform their immediate supervisor as well as RVC Police Department of the situation. See the complaint procedure described below.

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

All affected RVC students must report to the Dean of Students for Support. All effected general public must report to RVC Police Department for support.

## **Complaint Procedure**

Individuals who believe they have been the victims of conduct prohibited by RVC Board Policy 3:10.010, this procedure or believe they have witnessed such conduct should discuss their concerns with their immediate supervisor, or RVC Human Resources.

RVC encourages the prompt reporting of complaints or concerns so that rapid and constructive action may be taken. 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 with individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have relevant knowledge.

RVC will maintain confidentiality throughout the investigatory process to the extent consistent with adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action.

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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, temporary suspension with or without pay, or termination, as the College believes appropriate under the circumstances.

If a party to a complaint does not agree with its resolution, that party may submit a written appeal to the Director of Employee Relations or Vice President of Human Resources.

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.

**Reference/Implemented:** Board Report #6977 (February 27, 2013)

**Revised:** April 8, 2014; November 14, 2025