

RAILBELT RELIABILITY COUNCIL – POLICIES & PROCEDURES		POLICY NO.: P-01
TITLE: DISCRIMINATION & HARASSMENT POLICY		REVISION NO.: 0
EFFECTIVE: 07/11/2022	LAST AMENDED: 07/11/2022	PAGE 1 OF 5

DISCRIMINATION & HARASSMENT POLICY

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1.0 POLICY OVERVIEW

It is the policy of the Railbelt Reliability Council (RRC) that all persons shall have a professional work environment free from all forms of discrimination and harassment. The RRC strives to provide a safe and welcoming work environment that is free from bias and intimidation. Consistent with federal and state law and corporate best practices, the RRC expressly prohibits any form of discrimination or harassment.

2.0 PURPOSE & SCOPE

The purpose of this Discrimination & Harassment Policy is to ensure a safe and welcoming work environment at the RRC and to prevent discrimination and harassment in the workplace.

The Discrimination & Harassment Policy applies to Directors, staff, contractors, members of committees, and members of the public approved to participate under the Public Participant in a Development Rule (ER5) (Approved Participant), (collectively, RRC Representatives), and to RRC volunteers, vendors, and exhibitors. This policy also applies to anyone else who participates on an RRC committee or in an RRC program or activity. RRC-sponsored programs and activities include, but are not limited to, meetings, hearings, publications, correspondence, honors and recognitions, and governance programs, as well as all appointed, elected, and volunteer positions.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Approved Participant	A member of the public approved for participation under the Public Participation in a Development Rule (ER5)
Board	RRC Board of Directors
CEO	RRC chief executive officer
Director	A member of the RRC Board of Directors

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Term	Definition
Discrimination	Any action or inaction that creates or provides any distinction, exclusion, or restriction made on the basis of age, color, disability, familial status, height, marital status, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex/gender (including gender identity and expression), sexual orientation, parenthood, disability, membership in any organization, veteran status, weight, or other protected status as defined and as required by law
Harassment	Generally defined as the use of any offensive behavior, coercion, intimidation, bullying, influence, or the perception of influence to gain unwanted advantage, action, or inaction from another to their detriment that creates a hostile work environment
RRC	Railbelt Reliability Council
RRC Representatives	Directors, staff, contractors, committee members, and Approved Participants under the RRC Public Participation in a Development Rule (ER5)
Sexual Harassment	<p>Defined by U.S. federal guidelines and this policy as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Importantly, the legal definition includes harassment that is sexist rather than sexual: it can include offensive remarks about a person's sex, with this form being illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment</p> <p>Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual assault • Unwanted or unwelcome sexual advances • Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors • Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances • Visual conduct, which can include leering; making sexual gestures; or displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters • Verbal conduct, which can include making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, or jokes • Verbal sexual advances or propositions • Verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body; sexually degrading words used to describe an individual; suggestive or obscene letters, notes, invitations, or any other similar communication electronic or otherwise • Physical conduct, which can include touching, assault, or impeding or blocking movements

4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY PERSONNEL

Title	Responsibilities
CEO	Oversees adherence to this policy, including ensuring compliance with all laws as well as state requirements and staying current with best practices related to preventing discrimination and harassment in the workplace
CO	Compliance officer as designated by the CEO or Governance Committee, as applicable
Complainant	Any person filing a complaint
Governance Committee	Oversees adherence to this policy when reports of discrimination or harassment are made against a Director or the CEO
RRC Representatives	Responsible for providing a harassment- and discrimination-free workplace, as well as reporting violations of this policy

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5.0 REPORTING PROCEDURES

If any person believes that they are being subjected to discrimination or harassment, the person should, but is not required to, directly inform the offender that the conduct is unwelcome and must stop and may make a report through the process described below.

5.1 Initiation of Complaint

Any person who in good faith believes they have been subjected to discrimination or harassment may, and any person who witnesses such action shall, report via any of the avenues listed below:

- If an RRC employee, immediately report the discrimination or harassment to their immediate supervisor
- If a member of a committee or an Approved Participant, immediately report the discrimination or harassment to their committee chair
- If an RRC Director or the chief executive officer (CEO), immediately report the discrimination or harassment to the Governance Committee
- If an RRC contractor, vendor, or exhibitor, immediately report the discrimination or harassment to the RRC contract administrator or the CEO or, if the discrimination or harassment occurs at an RRC event, to the RRC person in charge of the event
- If a member of the public, immediately report the discrimination or harassment to any RRC director or employee, or to the RRC person in charge of the event or activity at which the person believes the discrimination or harassment has occurred
- In the case that the person to report to is also the offender, reports may be made directly to the CEO or Governance Committee.

Complaints may be made verbally, in writing, or electronically. If a complaint provides contact information, the complainant shall receive an acknowledgment of receipt. Any person filing a complaint (Complainant) is entitled to protection under the RRC Whistleblower Policy (P-02). Complaints can be made anonymously.

5.2 Immediate Action Following Complaint

A person in a supervisory capacity to whom a possible violation is reported may, as circumstances allow and with reasonable evidence that the discrimination or harassment occurred, take immediate action to end the discrimination and harassment. This action may include removing a person from an RRC meeting or function.

For possible violations unable to be resolved by immediate supervisors, meeting chairs, event managers, or contract managers, the person to whom the report was made shall immediately forward the report to the CEO. Complaints against the CEO should be directed to the Governance Committee at Governance@akrrc.org.

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All complaints, even if resolved at a lower level, shall be reported to the CEO or Governance Committee by the person receiving the complaint.

6.0 INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

The CEO is responsible for investigating all complaints, unless such complaints are against the CEO or a director, in which case the Governance Committee is responsible for investigation.

1. When the CEO or Governance Committee receives a complaint, they shall determine pursuant to applicable statutes, regulations, and RRC rules whether to investigate, how to investigate, and who should lead the investigation.
2. If the CEO or Governance Committee decides to open an investigation, they will appoint a Compliance Officer (CO) based on expertise necessary to understand and investigate the complaint.
3. The CO shall investigate the complaint and provide a report to the CEO or Governance Committee, as applicable, at the end of that investigation with findings, including whether the violation occurred and, if so, the severity of the infraction and recommendations for corrective action and/or sanctions.
4. The CEO or Governance Committee, as applicable, shall review all complaints, consider findings, and:
 - a. The CEO can take action to sanction violations by any person except a Director or the CEO. The CEO shall report to the Board any actions taken following an investigation.
 - b. The Governance Council will forward to the Board recommendations for sanctioning violations by a Director or the CEO. The Board can take action to sanction violations by any Director or the CEO.

In all cases, the Complainant will be notified of the investigation conclusions to the extent permitted by applicable RRC rules and policies and applicable law.

7.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

At a Complainant's request or at the discretion of the CO, investigations and reports shall be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with applicable law, regulations, and the need to conduct an investigation and take appropriate corrective action.

8.0 APPEALS

Appeals related to enforcement of this policy may be made to the Board.

9.0 SANCTIONS FOR VIOLATIONS

Anyone found to have engaged in improper conduct will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, removal from the Board or from a committee, rescission of

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contractual relationships, revocation, or prohibition of access to RRC resources or meetings, and/or prohibition of participation in RRC meetings and activities.