



SOUTHWEST FIRE ACADEMY

POLICY-600-003
Rev.002

POLICY

SECTION: 600 - Procedures

TITLE: Harassment and Discrimination Policy

Date Approved:
August 7, 2015

Revision Dates:
July 2, 2025

Subject:

Policy Intent and Application

Scope:

This Policy applies to all employee's and students of the Southwest Fire Academy

Purpose:

This policy applies to all complaints of harassment or discrimination involving Southwest Fire Academy (SFA) students or staff that occur on campus or at SFA-sponsored events.

SFA is committed to providing a learning and working environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. This policy defines prohibited behaviours and outlines the procedures for reporting, investigating, and addressing complaints involving harassment or discrimination.

Policy Statement:

SFA strictly prohibits discrimination and harassment against any student, employee, or visitor based on race, colour, national or ethnic origin, age, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, or any other protected characteristic under applicable law.

All members of the SFA community share the responsibility to uphold this commitment and are expected to respond appropriately and promptly to any concerns that arise.

Procedure:

Investigation and Response

When a complaint is made under this policy, SFA will take all reasonable steps to investigate and address the matter, including the following:

1. Providing on-campus investigation procedures to students and staff.

2. Responding promptly to complaints and offering reasonable updates to both the complainant and the respondent.
3. Supporting affected individuals in accessing counselling or medical services if needed.
4. Offering appropriate academic or other accommodations to students or staff who have experienced harassment or discrimination.
5. Informing affected students of their reporting options, including external channels.

Reporting Harassment or Discrimination

All SFA students, faculty, and staff are expected to take reasonable steps to report incidents of harassment or discrimination that they experience, witness, or become aware of. Reports should be made directly to the SFA President.

SFA will maintain confidentiality to the extent possible. However, confidentiality may be limited where there is a risk of harm to the individual or others, or where SFA is required by law to act.

SFA recognizes a complainant's right to determine how their concern will be handled. However, in some situations, SFA may be obligated to initiate an investigation or notify law enforcement, even without the complainant's consent, if the safety of individuals or the broader community is at risk.

Investigation Process

Any student may file a harassment or discrimination complaint in writing. Upon receipt, the SFA President will initiate an investigation, which may include:

1. Assessing whether the matter should be referred immediately to law enforcement.
2. Meeting with the complainant to gather full details of the incident, including date, time, persons involved, witnesses, and a full description of events.
3. Interviewing the complainant, respondent, witnesses, and any others with relevant information.
4. Informing the respondent of the allegations and providing an opportunity to respond.
5. Keeping both parties reasonably informed of the status of the investigation.
6. Determining appropriate disciplinary or corrective action based on the findings.

Disciplinary Action

If the investigation determines that a student or staff member has engaged in harassment or discrimination, SFA may take disciplinary or corrective action, up to and including:

- Expulsion (for students)
- Termination of employment (for instructors or staff)

If criminal charges are pursued, SFA will fully cooperate with police, legal representatives, insurance providers, and the courts. SFA may also conduct its own internal investigation regardless of external legal proceedings.

False Complaints

Knowingly making a false complaint or providing false information during an investigation is a violation of this policy. Such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including expulsion or termination.

Protection from Retaliation

Retaliation against any individual who, in good faith, reports harassment or discrimination, participates in an investigation, or provides information regarding a complaint is strictly prohibited. Any such behaviour will result in disciplinary action.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every three (3) years to ensure its continued effectiveness and compliance with current legislation.

References:

1. Section 21 Guidance Notes
2. Ministry of Colleges and Universities
Ontarians with Disabilities Act