

# Middle District Harassment Policy

Middle District Baptist Association is committed to providing a workplace that honors all people and respects them as individuals made in the image of God. For this reason, the Association does not tolerate harassment of personnel by co-workers or non-employees in the workplace or in the performance of their service and ministry in the churches.

The Association is committed to preventing, investigating, and, when appropriate, taking disciplinary and other necessary action in response to complaints and/or incidents of harassment.

## Definition of Harassment

Harassment is unwelcome verbal, visual, or physical conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile working environment or that interferes with work performance.

Such conduct constitutes harassment when:

- Submission to the conduct is made either an explicit or implicit condition of employment;
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for an employment decision; or
- The conduct unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Harassing conduct can take many forms and includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, statements, gestures, touching, pictures, or cartoons regarding an employee's age, ancestry, color, marital status, pregnancy, medical condition, mental disability, physical disability, national origin, race, or sex.

Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior that is not welcome, and that is personally offensive, and that debilitates morale, and that, therefore, interferes with work effectiveness. Sexual harassment conduct in particular includes all of these prohibited actions as well as requests for sexual favors, conversation containing sexual comments or innuendoes, and unwelcome sexual advances.

## Reporting, Investigation, and Discipline

Any employee, volunteer, or other individual who believes that he or she has been, or may have been, subjected to harassment is urged to contact immediately the chair of the Leadership Committee, whose name is on the Association's website, so that investigative, preventative and corrective actions can be taken promptly. Every complaint of harassment will be investigated thoroughly and promptly, and kept as confidential as possible. As part of the investigation, two representatives of the Leadership Committee will talk with the person making the harassment allegation to obtain information needed to investigate the concerns. The investigation will include obtaining information from the person making the accusation and anyone who may have been a witness to the harassment.

The results of the investigation will be shared with the employee and the person making the accusation. The results of the investigation will also be shared confidentially with the Leadership Committee. If the Committee feels the allegations have standing, the Committee will be responsible for taking corrective and disciplinary action to ensure that such conduct is not repeated. Corrective action should model the desire to behave in a redemptive way and may include options such as counseling. However, such disciplinary actions may include leave of absence without pay for a period of time, or dismissal. If allegations made against the Executive Director are found to have merit, then the Leadership Committee, by a vote of 75 percent, may agree that such conduct warrants dismissal. If so, the Leadership Committee will recommend to the Association a motion for dismissal according to the Middle District Association ByLaws, Section 4.04.

The Association will not tolerate retaliation against any employee who reports harassing conduct. However, if it is determined that a Middle District employee makes a false complaint to the Leadership Committee or provide false information to an investigator, that employee may be subject to disciplinary action, up to, and including termination of service.