

Department of Colorado
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States
and its Auxiliary

Sexual Harassment and other Unlawful Harassment Policy

2023-2024

It is the VFW and the Auxiliary policy to respect all comrades, sisters, and brothers in an environment that is free of harassment and bullying based upon race, gender, color, national origin, disability, or age; take preventive measures regarding harassment / bullying; remedy incidents which occur and ensure that such incidents do not jeopardize the health or welfare of our membership.

Any member who believes he or she has been subject to harassment / bullying must immediately report the matter to the chain of command or post management so that appropriate action can be taken. (See the Complaint Procedure below).

HARASSMENT

The VFW / Auxiliary will not tolerate sexual and other harassment. Unwelcome sexual advances (either verbal or physical), requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when the conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

This definition includes many forms of offensive behavior. While it is impossible to identify every type and nature of harassment prohibited by law, the following is a partial list of sexual and other harassment that are grounds for disciplinary action:

1. Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances.
2. Visual conduct that includes leering, making sexual gestures, or displaying of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters.
3. Verbal conduct that includes making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, or jokes.
4. Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, or suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitations.
5. Physical conduct that includes touching, assaulting, or impeding or blocking movements.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Any person who has a complaint of sexual or other unlawful harassment/bullying against a superior, another comrade, sister or brother of the Auxiliary, a vendor or a person served by the VFW should bring the problem to the attention of the VFW. Complaints may be raised with any of the following persons:

1. Management at the Post (including Auxiliary President)
2. Judge Advocate
3. State Commander / Department President

The offending incident or conduct in question should be reported immediately. Members may choose the one with whom they are the most comfortable to report.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE (continued)

The VFW / Auxiliary prohibits retaliation against anyone for having raised such a complaint in good faith or cooperating with an investigation of a complaint.

Complaints will be promptly investigated and handled as confidentially as possible.

The allegations of the complaint and the identity of the persons involved shall remain confidential, except to the extent disclosure is necessary, in order to conduct a full and impartial investigation, remedy violations, monitor compliance and administer the policy.

The investigation will include, but will not be limited to, discussion with the complainant, those identified in the allegation and witnesses.

A report shall be made with recommendation concerning disciplinary action, if necessary.

The Judge Advocate will recommend to the State Commander on the VFW side and the Investigative team will recommend to the Department President on the Auxiliary side, corrective action, if any, and will notify all parties of their decision and implement that decision.

Incidents that do not technically rise to the level of harassment may still warrant corrective action.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I acknowledge that I have received and read the Veterans of Foreign Wars Sexual Harassment and Other Unlawful Harassment Policy. I understand that I am responsible for adhering to this policy.

Signed: August 20, 2023

SIGN ABOVE YOUR OFFICE/POSITION

State Commander

State Sr. Vice Commander

State Jr. Vice Commander

State Quartermaster

State Adjutant

State Surgeon

State Chaplain

State Judge Advocate

State Inspector

State Chief of Staff

Jr. Past Commander

District #1 Commander

District #2 Commander

District #3 Commander

District #4 Commander

District #5 Commander

District #6 Commander

District #7 Commander

District #8 Commander

District #9 Commander

District #10 Commander

District #11 Commander

District #12 Commander

District #13 Commander