




ARLINGTON COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVE MANUAL

<i>Chapter: 5</i> Procedures	<i>Effective Date:</i> March 6, 2026	<i>Initiation Date:</i> March 1, 2005	By Authority of the Chief of Police  Charles A. Penn
Accreditation Standard(s): CALEA 26.1.3			

511.04 Harassment

I. Overview

The Arlington County Police Department (the Department) is committed to promoting respect and dignity for all employees. All complaints will be taken seriously, investigated promptly, and addressed with appropriate action.

II. Policy

All employees have the right to work in an environment free of harassment of any type. Harassment will not be tolerated, and any complaint of such nature will result in an immediate investigation. The appropriate corrective or disciplinary action will be taken against any employee found to have engaged in harassment or against any supervisor or manager who knew or should have known of such conduct and failed to take immediate and appropriate corrective action. ([Arlington County E.E.O. Policy](#) or [Administrative Regulation \(A.R.\) 2.7](#)) [26.1.3]

III. Definitions

- A. Harassment - Unwelcome conduct or speech directed toward any person, either directly or indirectly, which implicitly or explicitly ridicules, mocks, derides or belittles, based on a person's race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and expression), age (40 years or older), disability, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, including lactation, religion, ethnicity, national origin, status as a veteran or genetic information.
- B. Non-Sexual Harassment - Conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.
- C. Retaliation - Any negative or adverse action, including discipline, discrimination, or harassment, for reporting or filing a complaint or participating in an investigation in good faith.
- D. Sexual Harassment - Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
 - 1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; or
 - 2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or
 - 3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment; or
 - 4. Any other conduct defined as sexual harassment by the [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#).

IV. Procedures

A. Employee Responsibilities

1. All employees shall refrain from engaging in any form of behavior that constitutes harassment.
2. An employee who encounters an act of harassment should indicate to the offending employee that their actions are unwelcome.
3. All employees who encounter or witness acts of potential harassment should report the incident to their immediate supervisor, the Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR), the County's Office of Human Rights, or an appropriate outside agency.
 - a. In any situation where a supervisor is believed to be engaged in harassment, the reporting employee may submit their allegation to the next higher level of command of the offending supervisor, OPR, the County's Office of Human Rights or an appropriate outside agency. [26.1.3]
4. Employees involved in the investigation of any act of harassment shall cooperate fully in the investigation.

B. Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Prevention of Harassment
 - a. It is the responsibility of every supervisor to monitor their unit's work environment to prevent or detect any forms of harassment.
 - b. Per [A.R. 2.7 Chapter 11](#), any supervisor who receives a complaint of harassment or retaliation, in any form, shall immediately report the complaint to their Section Commander through their chain of command. The Section Commander shall notify the OPR Commander, who shall notify the County's Office of Human Rights.
 - c. Failure to comply with any of the provisions in [A.R. 2.7](#) or this directive may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
2. Knowledge of Harassing Conduct
 - a. Upon knowledge of any incident of harassment, the supervisor shall take immediate action to end the offensive conduct.
 - b. The supervisor shall immediately address the offending employee on their conduct and order that the harassing conduct cease immediately.
 - c. The affected employee will also be advised of the avenues available for redress of the offending conduct.
 - d. The Chief of Police, or designee, will be informed, via the chain of command, of every known or suspected incident involving harassment.
 - e. The County's Human Resources Director, or designee, will also be informed of any alleged incident.

C. Complaint Process - An employee alleging harassment should file their complaint directly with: [26.1.3]

1. [The County's Office of Human Rights](#); or
2. An appropriate outside agency, for example the [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#), the [Office of Civil Rights](#) or the [Office of the Attorney General of Virginia's Office of Civil Rights](#); or
3. The Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR).

- a. Complaints of harassment may be investigated by OPR or another supervisor at the direction of the Chief of Police, or designee. The alleged offending employee should not have supervisory authority over the individual conducting the investigation. The County's Office of Human Rights will be notified of all harassment complaints. The Office of Human Rights and the Department shall determine if a joint investigation will be conducted.
- 1) All investigations should be conducted in accordance with [A.R. 2.7](#) and should be initiated in a timely manner.
 - 2) At the conclusion of any investigation conducted by the Department, a written report shall be delivered to the Chief of Police who will take corrective action based on the facts presented in the investigation, when appropriate.
 - 3) There shall be no retaliation against any employee who, in good faith, files an accusation of harassment, or assists, or participates in an investigation of such a complaint.
 - 4) The complainant and the accused involved in a harassment complaint shall be informed of the finding.

Employees who need clarification on how to file a complaint or with whom to file a complaint can speak with a county [EEO investigator](#) for guidance.