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Rural Development

Office of the  
Under Secretary

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**RURAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**PROHIBITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY STATEMENT**

Rural Development continues in its commitment to prevent and eradicate sexual harassment in the workplace. Sexual Harassment is a form of sex discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Right's Act of 1964.

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment can occur in a number of different forms, including but not limited to the following:

- The victim as well as the harasser may be a woman or a man. The victim does not have to be of the opposite sex.
- The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, an agent of the employer, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or a non-employee (contractor).
- The victim does not have to be the person harassed but could be anyone affected by the offensive conduct.
- Sexual harassment may occur without economic injury to or discharge of the victim.
- The harasser's conduct must be unwelcome.

Sexual harassment is a serious conduct offense that will not be tolerated in the workforce. When sexual harassment is alleged or proven, management officials have the responsibility to take immediate and appropriate action and ensure the victim is protected from any form of reprisal.

Questions regarding this policy should be directed the RD Office of Civil Rights at 1-800-787-8821 or by email at [rd-crs@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:rd-crs@wdc.usda.gov).

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Under Secretary