



P. O. Box 1110  
Amarillo, TX 79175

Policy: Code of Conduct

**Purpose:**

To establish the Northwest Texas Healthcare System Medical Staff Code of Conduct which prohibits harassment, including, but not limited to, sexual harassment, and disruptive behavior in the work place and to provide a means of reporting such offensive conduct.

**Policy:**

It is the policy of the Northwest Texas Healthcare System Medical Staff that it will not tolerate verbal or physical conduct by any medical staff member who harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another's work performance or which creates an intimidating, offensive or hostile work environment.

- A. While all forms of harassment are prohibited, it is the Northwest Texas Healthcare System Medical Staff's policy to emphasize that sexual harassment is specifically prohibited. Each physician has a responsibility to maintain the work place free of any form of sexual harassment. No physician is to threaten or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, that an employee's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect the employee's employment, evaluation, wages, advancement, assigned duties, shifts, or any other condition of employment or career development. Furthermore, all employees are prohibited from offering, promising or granting preferential treatment to any physician as a result of that individual engaging in or agreeing to engage in sexual conduct.
- B. Other sexually harassing conduct in the work place is also prohibited. Such conduct includes but is not limited to:
  1. Sexual flirtations, touching, advances, propositions, interference with an individual's normal work movement, and/or assault
  2. Making verbal innuendoes, epithets, derogatory slurs, off-color jokes, graphic commentaries, or insulting or suggestive sounds
  3. Leering and/or obscene gestures or graphic or suggestive comments about an individual's dress or body
  4. Degrading words to describe an individual; the inappropriate use of sexually explicit or offensive language in discussions with or to describe an individual
  5. The display in the work place of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, including nude photographs

- C. Harassment or discrimination based on disability, age, race, sex, national origin, religion or any other basis protected by State or Federal law is also expressly prohibited.

**Procedure:**

Any Northwest Texas Healthcare System employee or member of the Northwest Texas Healthcare System Medical Staff, who believes that the actions or words of a physician constitute unwelcome harassment, has a responsibility to report or complain as soon as possible to their appropriate supervisor, the Chief Medical Officer, or to another member of Senior Management.

All complaints of harassment must be investigated promptly in an impartial and, to the extent possible, confidential manner. To the fullest extent possible, physicians should be advised of the findings and conclusions following the investigation. If a Northwest Texas Healthcare System employee or Medical Staff member is not satisfied following the investigation (e.g., with the handling of the complaint, the action(s) taken following an investigation, some other new issue emerges, etc.) then they should bring the complaint to the Northwest Texas Healthcare's Board of Governors.

Any physician who is found, after appropriate investigation, to have engaged in harassment of an employee or another physician will be subject to appropriate corrective action, depending on the circumstances, up to and including summary suspension from the medical staff. Furthermore, retaliation in any form against an employee or other physician who exercises his or her right to make a complaint under this policy is strictly prohibited and will itself be cause for appropriate action.

*Note: Disruptive, intimidating, or inappropriate behavior is prohibited and is handled through the Physician and Independent Practitioner Disruptive Behavior Medical Staff Policy.*