USDA

United States Department of Agriculture

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

Stop 3601, Room 2055-S
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250-3601

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GIPSA SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY STATEMENT

As your Administrator, I am committed to creating a work environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. All employees have the right to work in an environment that is free from unsolicited and unwelcomed sexual overtures. All employees, especially managers and supervisors are responsible for establishing and maintaining a workplace free from discrimination, including sexual harassment.

GIPSA defines sexual harassment as: (a) participating in coercive or repeated unsolicited and unwelcome verbal comments, gestures, or physical comments of sexual nature; (b) using implicit or explicit coercive sexual behavior in the process or conducting agency business; (c) using implicit or explicit coercive sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, salary, or job of an employee; or (d) displaying of material in the office or via e-mail on the internet that contains offensive images or textual references that are of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, the use of sexual references that are overheard and found to be offensive by an employee or customer, the displaying of a poster that is found to be offensive by an employee or customer, or the physical cornering or trapping of an employee or customer. Although reports of sexual harassment are often filed by a woman against a man, reports have also been filed by a man against a woman, a man against a man, and a woman against a woman.

Sexual harassment is illegal according to title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964(as amended) and will not be tolerated. All GIPSA employees are responsible for managing their behavior and for immediately reporting any allegations of sexual harassment. A substantiated sexual harassment complaint will receive swift, consistent and fair resolution. Discipline may include letters of reprimand, suspensions, or removal. Reports of sexual harassment may be made to any of the following: (a) the harasser's supervisor; (b) GIPSA's Civil Rights Staff (202-720-0216); (c) the USDA Inspector General (OIG) Hotline (calls may be made anonymously; 1-800-424-9121 or 202-690-1202 TTY); or (d) the Federal Women's' Program (FWP) manager.

The reason that sexual harassment is of particular concern in GIPSA is that its consequences are harmful to individuals and the workplace environment. For the individual, emotions or physical plain may result in costs to managers and to the Agency; may include a poor public image; absenteeism; and high employee turnover rate. Supervisors are particularly charged with establishing and maintaining a safe productive workplace that is free of sexual harassment. Managers and supervisors who tolerate sexual harassment or fail to take appropriate action on reports of such incidents will be subject to disciplinary action.

Prevention is the best tool to eliminate sexual harassment. Managers must clearly communicate to employees that sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Employees may attend training on sexual harassment prevention. Training materials are available from the Civil Rights Office.

I am confident that you will continue to work with me to make GIPSA a workplace free of discrimination and harassment (sexual and non-sexual).

Please post this notice in prominent locations at all GIPSA worksites.

Larry Mitchell
Administrator