

# Sexual Harassment and other Unlawful Harassment Policy

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

Any comrade who believes he or she has been subject to harassment 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 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:

- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances.
- Visual conduct that includes leering, making sexual gestures, or displaying of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons or posters.
- Verbal conduct that includes making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs or jokes.
- 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.
- 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 against a superior, another comrade, 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
2. Judge Advocate
3. Quartermaster
4. Commander

## Sexual Harassment and other Unlawful Harassment (con't)

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The offending incident or conduct in question should be reported immediately.

Comrades may choose the one with whom they are the most comfortable to report.

The VFW 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.

A determination will be made as to the appropriate persons assigned to investigate the complaint.

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, Quartermaster, and/or Commander will determine the corrective action, if any, 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.

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Signature

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Printed Name

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Date