

# PATTERSON LIBRARY SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION POLICY

Adopted Nov. 15, 2018. Amended Sept. 11, 2025

## Purpose and Goals

Patterson Library is committed to maintaining a workplace free from harassment and discrimination. Sexual harassment is a form of workplace discrimination that subjects an employee or covered individual to inferior conditions of employment due to their gender, gender identity, gender expression (perceived or actual), and/or sexual orientation.

While this policy is focused on sexual harassment and gender discrimination, Patterson Library recognizes that harassment and discrimination can intersect with other identities including race, age, disability, and more. The same reporting and investigative processes apply to all protected classes under the New York State Human Rights Law.

All employees, volunteers, contractors, and Board members are expected to work to prevent and report sexual harassment and discrimination. This policy is one component of Patterson Library's commitment to a respectful, safe, and inclusive workplace.

## Who Is Covered by This Policy?

This policy applies to:

- All employees (full-time, part-time, temporary)
- Applicants for employment
- Contractors, subcontractors, vendors, consultants, gig workers, and any other service providers who work on-site or virtually
- Volunteers and trustees

These individuals are collectively referred to as "covered individuals."

## Sexual Harassment Is Prohibited

Sexual harassment is unacceptable at Patterson Library. Any employee or covered individual who engages in such behavior is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination or contract termination. Harassment does not need to be severe or pervasive to be illegal under New York law.

## What Constitutes Sexual Harassment?

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Unwelcome touching, sexual advances, or comments
- Jokes, gestures, or images of a sexual nature
- Requests for sexual favors in exchange for job benefits
- Misgendering or discrimination based on gender identity/expression
- Retaliation for rejecting advances or reporting harassment

## Retaliation Is Prohibited

Any person who reports harassment, supports a complaint, or participates in an investigation is protected from retaliation. Retaliatory actions may lead to disciplinary consequences, including termination.

## Supervisor Responsibilities

The Library Director\* is responsible for any reported harassment complaints.

The Library Director\* shall:

- Report any observed or reported harassment to the Board of Trustees President\*
- Cooperate in investigations
- Avoid retaliation and prevent further harm to complainants
- Take proactive steps to prevent harassment

*\*The Board of Trustees President should act on behalf of the Library Director if they are unavailable or a subject of the complaint.*

## Reporting Harassment

Anyone who experiences or witnesses behavior that may constitute sexual harassment is encouraged to report it to:

- Library Director
- Board of Trustees President (if the Library Director is unavailable or is the subject of a complaint)

Reports may be made in person, via email, by phone, or using the attached complaint form (optional). All reports will be treated seriously and investigated promptly.

## Investigation Procedures

Upon receiving a report, Patterson Library will:

1. Promptly assess and document the complaint.
2. Interview all relevant parties and review applicable documentation.
3. Maintain confidentiality to the extent possible.
4. Complete and document the investigation in writing.
5. Inform all parties of the outcome.
6. Take appropriate corrective or disciplinary action.

## Where Harassment Can Occur

Sexual harassment is not limited to the physical workplace. It may also occur:

- During virtual meetings or messaging
- At work-sponsored events
- During work travel
- Via email, text, or social media, even outside work hours

## Bystander Intervention

All employees are encouraged to intervene safely or report if they witness harassment. Supervisors are required to report what they witness.

## Legal Remedies

Employees and covered individuals can also file complaints externally with:

- NYS Division of Human Rights — <https://dhr.ny.gov/complaint>
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission — <https://www.eeoc.gov>
- Sexual Harassment Hotline: 1-800-HARASS-3
- Local Law Enforcement (if criminal activity is involved)

## Conclusion

Patterson Library is committed to a harassment-free environment. This policy applies to all protected categories under the NYS Human Rights Law. We aim to ensure that all employees and covered individuals understand their rights and responsibilities, feel safe, and are empowered to report misconduct.

## PATTERSON LIBRARY SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT FORM

New York State Labor Law requires all employers to adopt a sexual harassment prevention policy that includes a complaint form to report alleged incidents of sexual harassment.

If you believe that you have been subjected to sexual harassment or gender discrimination, you are encouraged, but not required, to complete this form and submit it to the Director or Board of Trustees President at Patterson Library. Forms may be submitted in person, by email, or by postal mail. No employee will be retaliated against for filing a complaint.

If you are more comfortable reporting verbally or in another manner, your employer should complete this form, provide you with a copy, and follow its sexual harassment prevention policy by investigating the claims as outlined at the end of this form.

For additional resources, visit: [ny.gov/programs/combating-sexual-harassment-workplace](https://ny.gov/programs/combating-sexual-harassment-workplace)

### COMPLAINANT INFORMATION

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Job Title:

Select Preferred Communication Method:  Email  Phone  In person

### COMPLAINT INFORMATION

1. Your complaint of sexual harassment involves:

Name:

Job Title:

Relationship to you:

2. Please describe what happened and include as many details as possible. You may use additional sheets of paper if necessary. If you have any relevant documents, please include them.

3. Date(s) sexual harassment occurred:

Is the sexual harassment continuing?  Yes  No

4. If possible, please list the name and contact information of any witnesses or individuals who may have information related to your complaint:

5. Have you previously provided information (verbal or written) about related incidents? If yes, when and to whom did you provide information?

This is not required, but if you have retained legal counsel and would like us to work with them, please provide their contact information:

Signature:

Date:

### *Instructions for Employers*

*If you receive a complaint about alleged sexual harassment, follow your sexual harassment prevention policy.*

*An investigation involves:*

- Speaking with the employee*
- Speaking with the alleged harasser*
- Interviewing witnesses*
- Collecting and reviewing any related documents*

*While the process may vary from case to case, all allegations should be investigated promptly and resolved as quickly as possible. The investigation should be kept confidential to the extent possible.*

*Sexual harassment occurs on a spectrum and employers are encouraged to view all potential allegations with an open mind. Disciplinary action should meet the severity of the alleged actions.*

*Employers should document the findings of the investigation and basis for your decision along with any corrective actions taken. Notify the employee and the individual(s) against whom the report was made of the investigation's outcome and corrective actions taken. This may be done via email.*

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT TRAINING FEEDBACK SURVEY AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

Patterson Library

**Training Participant's Name (Printed):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Feedback Survey

**Indicate below, by selecting Yes or No, if after completing training you understand the following:**

I understand that harassment is unlawful and unacceptable workplace behavior.

Yes  No

I understand what constitutes unlawful sexual harassment and can recognize prohibited behavior.  Yes  No

I understand that harassment or discrimination based on any protected characteristic is prohibited.  Yes  No

I understand how and why harassment is considered a form of employment discrimination.  Yes  No

I understand that all harassment or discrimination should be reported.  Yes  No

I understand that supervisors and managers have a special duty to report any harassment they witness or learn about.  Yes  No

I understand that harassment may occur in-person or through virtual communications including email, messaging apps, and video conferencing platforms.  Yes  No

Do you have follow-up training questions? If so, the Library Director or Board of Trustees will provide written responses in a timely manner. *(If yes, please fill out this last section.)*

Yes  No

Preferred Method of Contact (check one):  Email  Phone  Mail

Contact Information:

*Flip page to complete form*

Follow-up Training Question/s:

*Note: A copy of any written response(s) will be filed with this form.*

### Acknowledgment

By signing below, I acknowledge that I participated in sexual harassment prevention training provided by Patterson Library. The training included the viewing of New York State sexual harassment training video(s) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9gudpiQ40M>, review of case studies with discussion, review of Patterson Library's Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy and Complaint Form, completion of this feedback survey, and the opportunity to ask follow-up questions.

I received a copy of Patterson Library's Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy and Complaint Form.

I understand the complaint and reporting procedure and will conduct myself in a manner consistent with Patterson Library's Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy.

Participant's Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*The Library Director or person responsible for records retention should file this completed form in a file labeled "Sexual Harassment Training" for library records.*

## Sexual Harassment Training Attestation Form

Patterson Library

**By signing this form, I attest that I received sexual harassment training within the past year with an organization that either:**

- Used the New York State model training developed by the State Department of Labor and State Division of Human Rights, OR
- Provided training that met or exceeded the minimum standards established pursuant to Section 201-g of the New York State Labor Law.

I acknowledge that I received and reviewed Patterson Library's Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy and Complaint Form.

I understand and will conduct myself in a manner consistent with the library's policy and I understand the library's complaint and reporting procedure.

Location/Provider of Training: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Training: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*The Library Director or person responsible for records retention should file this completed form in a file labeled "Sexual Harassment Training" for permanent record.*