

## NERC EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

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### Drug Abuse Policy

NERC is committed to supporting a drug-free work environment. It is the policy of NERC to prohibit the use, sale, dispensing, possession or manufacture of illegal drugs and narcotics, or use of alcohol on its premises.

NERC will not knowingly hire alcohol or drug abusers whose current use of such substances interferes with or prevents them from performing their jobs or who would constitute a direct threat to the property or safety of themselves or others.

Employees will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, for bringing illegal, non prescribed drugs and narcotics to work; being under the influence of such substances while working; or dispensing, distributing or illegally manufacturing or selling them on NERC premises and work sites or during work hours.

Any supervisor or employee who notices an employee demonstrating unusual behavior patterns that appear to be drug or narcotic related will report the observed behavior to the appropriate director. Employees judged to be under the influence of drugs or narcotics will be required to leave the premises.

Employees convicted of any criminal drug violation occurring in the work place or during work time, must report such conviction to their supervisor within five days, and the supervisor is then to take the appropriate action.

Employees experiencing problems from drug, narcotics or alcohol abuse or dependency should seek counseling from a qualified health care professional. NERC will keep the information that an employee is seeking or receiving counseling confidential and it will have no influence on performance appraisals.

An employee who is diagnosed as a drug or alcohol abuser may be granted personal or annual leave to undertake rehabilitation treatment if the treatment is provided by a qualified health care professional. After personal or annual leave is exhausted, an employee may request a leave of absence without pay. The employee will not be permitted to return to work until appropriate certification is presented to the supervisor that the employee is capable of performing his/her job. Failure to cooperate with an agreed upon treatment plan may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

## **Equal Opportunity Employer & Provider**

NERC is an Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider and has a sincere commitment to all employees to provide policies and programs that will permit and contribute equal opportunity regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, or veteran's status.

## **Harassment Policy**

NERC is committed to providing a workplace that is free of harassment. Harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

Harassment includes unwelcome words, acts or displays based on sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical condition), race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, family care leave status, or veteran status. Such conduct becomes harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or
- Such conduct creates an offensive, intimidating, or hostile working environment or interferes with work performance.

Harassment may include a range of subtle and not so subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Harassment can take many forms, such as slurs, jokes, statements, gestures, pictures, cartoons, or other explicit words or pictures. Harassment can also include unwelcome sexual statements or acts, such as requests for sexual favors, sexual advances, or sexual references. Additionally, harassment can include physical assaults, or other physical conduct of a sexual nature including unwanted touching.

Harassment is strictly prohibited by NERC, whether committed by managers, supervisors, or co-workers. It is also against the law in each of the various states in which the organization conducts business. The organization also will not tolerate harassment in the workplace of its employees by non-employees, or harassment of its employees by non-employees with whom the organization has a business, service, or professional relationship.

Sexual or any type of harassment by NERC employees is a violation of both NERC policy and federal and state law. Complaints of harassment will be promptly investigated by NERC in a manner designed to determine whether substance to the allegations exists while also, to the maximum extent possible, protecting the privacy of

all persons involved. Where substance to such allegations is found, NERC will take appropriate disciplinary action against the employee or employees involved, up to and including termination.

NERC encourages individuals who believe they are being subjected to such conduct to promptly advise the offender that his or her behavior is unwelcome and request that it be discontinued. Often this action alone will resolve the problem. NERC recognizes, however, that an individual may prefer to pursue the matter through informal or formal complaint procedures.

Employees are expected and encouraged to report all incidents of harassment or retaliation, regardless of the offender's identity or position. Employees shall be free from any form of discrimination, retaliation, or retribution for making a good faith report of perceived harassment. Individuals who believe that they have been the victim of such conduct should promptly discuss their concerns with the supervisor, manager, or director of the employee's choice. Supervisors and managers who receive complaints of harassment, or who observe such harassment, should report the matter promptly to the Executive Director or Executive Committee.

Finally, this policy should not, and may not, be used as a basis for excluding or separating individuals of a particular gender, or any other protected characteristic, from participating in business or work-related social activities or discussions. In other words, no one should engage in discrimination or exclusion in order to avoid allegations of harassment. The law and the policies of NERC prohibit disparate treatment on the basis of sex or any other protected characteristic, with regard to terms, conditions, privileges, and prerequisites of employment.

## **Reasonable Accommodation Policy**

It is NERC's policy to make reasonable accommodations in order to provide its public services. NERC will also make reasonable accommodations for current or future employees and current or future Board members. The Executive Director will be responsible for implementing this policy.

## **Software Code of Ethics**

NERC is committed to the legal and ethical use of software. Staff will be required to sign a statement agreeing to abide by this Code of Ethics; failure to sign the statement will be considered grounds for termination of employment.