

MAINE ASSOCIATION FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE

Anti-Harassment Policy

I. Overview and Application

- A. The Maine Association for Search and Rescue (MASAR) is committed to providing an operating environment free from harassment. Harassment based upon an individual's sex, race, ethnicity, national origin, age, religion, or any other legally protected characteristics, will not be tolerated. All of those present at MASAR events, whether member unit representatives, member unit personnel, agency members or representatives, or visitors, are expected and required to abide by this policy. Offensive or harassing behavior will not be tolerated against any member or visitor because of his or her protected status, or the protected status of his or her relatives, friends, or associates.
- B. No person will be adversely affected in regard to their membership or employment during MASAR events as a result of bringing complaints of unlawful harassment.
- C. MASAR recommends that all Maine volunteer SAR units adopt their own anti-harassment policies.

II. Definitions

- A. MASAR Event – Any meeting, training exercise, or conference organized or sponsored by the Maine Association for Search and Rescue (MASAR). For the purposes of this policy, SAR missions to which MASAR member units are dispatched shall be considered MASAR Events.
- B. Employment – For the purposes of this document, appointment to positions or tasks within the organization, selection by the organization for deployment to a SAR mission, and tasking by the organization during a SAR mission, shall be considered employment.

III. Oversight Responsibility

- A. All MASAR officers and directors are responsible for taking proper action to end harassment during events involving MASAR members.
- B. Any officer or director who has knowledge of such behavior, yet takes no action to end it, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the organization.

IV. Harassment Defined

- A. MASAR strictly prohibits any harassing behavior such as:
 - 1. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and all other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
 - 2. Making or threatening reprisals for refusing sexual favors.

3. Repeated requests for dates or questions about one's sex life or experiences.
4. Unwelcome physical contact such as pinching, kissing, inappropriate touching, or impeding another person's normal movement.
5. Slurs, jokes, posters, cartoons, pictures, offensive gestures, derogatory remarks, negative stereotyping, or offensive sounds that are based upon any protected status or directed toward an employee because of his or her protected status.
6. Acts of physical violence, threats of physical violence, or other physically intimidating behavior directed toward a person because of his or her protected status.
7. Continuous discriminatory activities, engaged in because of a person's protected status, that are not explicitly sexual, racial, ageist, etc. (e.g. unequal distribution of work, lack of assistance when such assistance is provided to those outside the protected status, hiding tools or equipment, etc.). Any such offensive conduct will be considered a prohibited form of harassment when either of the following is true:
 - i. There is a promise or implied promise of preferential treatment or negative consequence regarding employment decisions or status.
 - ii. Such conduct has, or could have, the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment, or it unreasonably interferes with a person's performance.

V. Reporting

- A. Anyone who believes that he or she has either witnessed, or been subjected to, harassment shall immediately report it to a MASAR officer or director. If the officer or director is unavailable, or is the offending party, or the witness or victim is uncomfortable with reporting the harassment to the officer or director, or the witness or victim feels that the officer or director has not handled the matter to his or her satisfaction, the witness or victim shall report the harassing conduct to another MASAR officer or director.
- B. The procedure for reporting incidents of harassing behavior is not intended to impair, replace, or limit the right of any person to seek a remedy under available state or federal law by immediately reporting the matter to the appropriate state or federal agency.

VI. Investigation of Reports

- A. Once the matter has been reported it will be promptly investigated and any necessary corrective action will be taken where appropriate.
- B. All complaints of unlawful harassment will be handled in as discreet and confidential a manner as is possible under the circumstances.
- C. MASAR will notify all persons involved in the investigation that it is confidential and that unauthorized disclosures of information concerning the investigation could result in disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the organization.

VII. False Claims

- A. MASAR prohibits any type of retaliatory action for filing a harassment complaint. However, if it is determined after investigation that the complaint was made up of false charges, or that a member has provided false information, disciplinary action will be taken against the member who filed the complaint or provided the false information.

VIII. Disciplinary Measures

- A. A. If a person who is a member of a MASAR member organization is found to be engaging in harassing behavior, that organization will be informed. Disciplinary action will be the responsibility of that organization. However, if this behavior occurs again, the MASAR member organization will be subject to disciplinary action, including removal from MASAR.
- B. Any agency member or representative, or any person not a member of MASAR, found to be engaging in harassing behavior shall be reported to the appropriate supervisor or other authority.