

**Presbytery of Tres Rios
Anti-Harassment Policy
Adopted by the Presbytery on October 25, 2024**

It is the Presbytery of Tres Rios's belief that God has created all people in God's own image and thus has made us equal in Christ (Genesis 1:26). The Church, through the power of the Holy Spirit, is given shape and life and is meant to reflect our relationship to one another and to God. We firmly believe that God intends all human life to have worth and dignity in all relationships. Through these relationships we are bound to serve and to respect the dignity of every human being. This respect and dignity afforded to all of God's creation is through the creation and maintenance of a safe environment within our community, free of harassment.

The Presbytery of Tres Rios, in conjunction with our existing policies and procedures and in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local anti-discrimination and harassment laws and regulations, enforces this Policy in accordance with the following definitions and guidelines.

- **Verbal Harassment:** Verbal harassment is that harassment established by a pattern of conduct of unwelcome or unwanted verbal comments. Those comments can include, insults, jokes, slurs, and threats. This could also include and is not limited to stereotyping based on a person's nationality, origin, race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, body, medical conditions, disability, and appearance.
- **Nonverbal Harassment:** Nonverbal Harassment includes, without limitations, distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material that ridicules, denigrates, insults, or belittles. This may also include and is not limited to a show of hostility, aversion or disrespect toward an individual or group because of nationality, origin, race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, body, medical conditions, disability, and appearance.
- **Both Verbal and Nonverbal Harassment** include, without limitation, persistent unwanted contact (verbal or nonverbal), bullying, intimidation, and interference in the ministry of the church or organization.
- **Sexual Harassment:** Sexual Harassment is the behavior characterized by the making of unwelcome and/or inappropriate sexual remarks, physical advances, request for sexual favors, and/or other verbal and/or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment may take many different forms including but not limited to verbal, nonverbal, and physical sexual harassment.
- **Electronic Harassment:** Online electronic forms used by bullies to harass targeted victims include but are not limited to e-mail, blogs, social networking websites, online games, forums, instant messaging, zoom and other virtual conferencing modalities, text messaging, and mobile phone pictures and videos. Bullying perpetrated through these online media have come to be known as "cyber bullying."
- **Retaliation:** Retaliation is any hardship, loss, benefit or penalty imposed on any person in response to filing or responding to a bona fide complaint or discrimination or harassment.

In our efforts to create a church where all persons are treated with respect, and dignity the Presbytery of Tres Rios commits to:

- Provide anti-harassment training for our leaders and congregations to encourage education, understanding, and growth;
- Acknowledge and thoroughly investigate all allegations of harassment.
- Strive to create a Presbytery where harassment of all kinds is not tolerated or accepted, where all people of God are welcome and safe.

The *Book of Order G-3.0106* requires “All councils shall adopt and implement the following policies; a sexual misconduct policy, a harassment policy, a child and youth protections policy, and an antiracism policy. Each council’s policy shall include requirements for boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training for its members at least every thirty-six months”

Resources

The Book of Order 2023-2025: The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) Part II

https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/boo_2023-2023_publishedversion_cover_and_boo_complete.pdf

The US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission – Harassment

[https://www.eeoc.gov/youth/harassment#:~:text=The%20laws%20enforced%20by%20EEOC,older\)%2C%20or%20genetic%20information.](https://www.eeoc.gov/youth/harassment#:~:text=The%20laws%20enforced%20by%20EEOC,older)%2C%20or%20genetic%20information.)