

**PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING
HARASSMENT & DISCRIMINATION RELATED
TO AHA FUNDED RESEARCH**

Office of Research and Grants Administration

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STATEMENT ON HARASSMENT & DISCRIMINATION

The American Heart Association (AHA) does not tolerate harassment or discrimination of any kind, including but not limited to age, race, color, creed, religion, sex, gender, ethnic or national origin, pregnancy leave, leave status, disability, uniformed service, veterans' status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital status or based on political or religious opinions or affiliations, membership or non-membership in employee organizations, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law, whether it is within the AHA organization, at research organizations that receive AHA funding, or anywhere else AHA-funded activities are conducted. The AHA believes that only in safe and respectful environments can individuals achieve their greatest potential and conduct the important work that supports the AHA mission.

To foster a work environment free from harassment or discrimination, the American Heart Association's Science Operations is bolstering procedures, guidelines, requirements, and communications to make expectations clear. The AHA wants to ensure that individuals know their rights, where to report incidents of harassment, and the resources available to them.

SECTION 1: REPORTING A HARASSMENT ALLEGATION

The AHA Takes Harassment and Discrimination Seriously

Please note this procedure specifically addresses harassment and discrimination related to AHA-funded investigators and/or trainees supported by AHA funding. For all other issues of harassment and discrimination, please contact appropriate individuals at your institution or employer.

Incidents of harassment and discrimination should be reported immediately to your institution(s)/employer(s). First, and most important - If you feel like you have experienced harassment and feel like you are not safe or are in a hostile environment - immediately contact onsite security, the local police department, or report the incident to the appropriate local authorities to help secure a safe location.

REPORTING ACTIVITIES:

- **NOTIFY YOUR INSTITUTION/EMPLOYER**
Immediately notify your institution(s)/employer(s) equal opportunity office, human resources offices, or Title IX Coordinator.
- **CONTACT THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES**
AHA encourages individuals to report allegations to the appropriate authorities, which may include:
 - local police department

➤ HELPFUL RESOURCES

- [National Sexual Violence Resource Center](#)
- [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#)
- [Is there NIH funding Involved?](#)
- Officials at other involved agencies, if relevant

If for some reason you are unable to make a report to your institution(s)/ employer(s), you may contact AHA. Phone the AHA ethics hotline at (866) 293-2427 to report your concerns. You may also log on to: www.ethicspoint.com (Please type American Heart Association when indicated in the prompts rather than AHA).

Please note the AHA does not initiate investigations of allegations. AHA cannot provide legal advice or support but if appropriate will follow up on all notifications of concerns related to AHA-funded research and may notify (if appropriate) the institution(s) of the person(s) allegedly involved in the reported incident. All reports will be provided to the institution(s)/employer(s) to investigate.

Please consult with your institution(s)/employer(s) before contacting the AHA. The AHA is not responsible for the outcome or investigation process.

Under the research award agreement, institution(s) represent and assure AHA that they have in place adequate policy(ies) and procedures for reporting, investigating and addressing allegations of unlawful harassment or discrimination brought to their attention.

If the institution(s)/employer(s) does not have policies and procedures as required, it is suggested that you notify the AHA.

SECTION 2: COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The AHA will promptly review all complaints received regarding harassment and discrimination then direct the information to the appropriate institution(s)/employer(s) of the involved parties to determine whether improper conduct has occurred. The affected person(s) / target is encouraged to cooperate fully in providing information about the incident.

Note: The AHA cannot guarantee confidentiality of complaints. AHA cannot take personal or legal action on behalf of non-AHA person(s).

INSTITUTIONAL EXPECTATIONS

As agreed in the AHA Award Agreement, all institutions that accept AHA research funding will have policies and procedures in place for assessing allegations of harassment and discrimination.

The institution or employer will report to the AHA any determinations that any member of the research team has violated its applicable anti-harassment or anti-discrimination policy(ies), to the extent permitted by law and institutional policies. The AHA Professional Standards Committee will review the information provided by the institution and take appropriate action.

SECTION 3: NO RETALIATION

AHA prohibits all forms of unlawful retaliation, including any form of discipline, reprisal, intimidation, or other form of retaliation for participating in any activity protected by law.

Examples of protected activities include:

- Good faith reporting of incidents of unlawful harassment of any kind, pursuing any good faith claim for unlawful harassment or cooperating in related investigations.
- Filing a good faith complaint of unlawful discrimination or harassment
- Whistleblowing

The examples above are illustrative only, and not exhaustive. No form of retaliation for any protected activity will be tolerated.