



GUYANA POLICE FORCE ACADEMY

SEXUAL HARRASSMENT POLICY

BACKGROUND

The Guyana Police Force Academy is dedicated to ensuring the well-being of all its members, the Academy is steadfast in its commitment to creating a safe, secure, and protected environment within the academies. This commitment extends to safeguarding individuals against any form of discrimination and sexual harassment, as outlined by both local standards such as the Sexual Offences Act Chapter 08:03 and the Prevention of Discrimination Act Chapter 99:08, as well as both local and international standards for law enforcement officers.

Sexual harassment is a pervasive issue that can have detrimental effects on individuals, organizations, and society at large. Recognizing the need to maintain a safe and respectful working and learning environment, the Guyana Police Force Academy is committed to preventing and addressing instances of sexual harassment within its Academy. This commitment aligns with international standards, national legislation, and the Academy's dedication to fostering a culture of dignity, equality, and professionalism.

The Guyana Police Force Academy's Sexual Harassment Policy is created to uphold national laws and regulations pertaining to discrimination and workplace safety. This policy ensures the Academy meets all legal obligations under relevant legislation. Additionally, this policy aims to promote higher ethical standards and appropriate behavior within the Academy community beyond mere legal compliance. By referencing and aligning with current laws, the policy establishes comprehensive standards that reflect both legal duties and the Academy's values.

OBJECTIVES

The Guyana Police Force Academy strives for a safe and ethical learning environment for all its members. In dealing with sexual harassment, their objective encompasses multiple aspects:

- **PREVENTION:** To create an environment where sexual harassment is not tolerated and where all individuals are aware of their rights and responsibilities.
- **EDUCATION:** To provide comprehensive training and awareness programs that promote understanding, sensitivity, and prevention of sexual harassment.
- **REPORTING MECHANISMS:** To establish clear and accessible procedures for reporting incidents of sexual harassment, ensuring confidentiality, and protecting individuals who come forward.
- **INVESTIGATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY:** To conduct impartial and thorough investigations into reported cases of sexual harassment, holding perpetrators accountable for their actions.
- **SUPPORT AND REMEDIES:** To offer support mechanisms for victims and survivors, including counseling services and appropriate remedies to address the impact of harassment.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Guyana Police Force Academy is unwavering in its commitment to maintaining a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all individuals within its community. As an institution dedicated to excellence, professionalism, and the highest standards of integrity, the Academy places utmost importance on preventing and addressing sexual harassment.

KEY COMMITMENTS:

- **Zero Tolerance:** The Guyana Police Force Academy has a zero-tolerance policy for sexual harassment in any form. Acts of harassment, including unwelcome advances, comments, or behaviors, will not be tolerated, and strict measures will be taken to address and rectify such incidents.
- **Educational Initiatives:** We are committed to raising awareness and understanding of sexual harassment through ongoing educational initiatives. These programs aim to empower individuals with the knowledge to recognize, prevent, and appropriately respond to instances of harassment.
- **Transparent Reporting Mechanisms:** The Academy is dedicated to establishing transparent and accessible reporting mechanisms. Individuals who experience or witness sexual harassment are encouraged to come forward without fear of reprisal. Reports will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and sensitivity.
- **Swift and Thorough Investigations:** Upon receiving a report, the Guyana Police Force Academy is committed to initiating swift and thorough investigations. Our processes are designed to be impartial, fair, and in accordance with legal and ethical standards.
- **Accountability:** Perpetrators of sexual harassment will be held accountable for their actions. Appropriate disciplinary measures, including but not limited to counseling, retraining, suspension, or termination, will be implemented based on the severity of the violation.
- **Support and Remedies:** The Academy provides support to victims and survivors of sexual harassment. This includes access to counseling services, medical assistance, and appropriate remedies to address the impact of harassment on the individual's well-being.

- **Non-Retaliation Assurance:** The Guyana Police Force Academy assures individuals who report incidents of sexual harassment that they will be protected from retaliation. Any form of retaliation against a reporting individual will be treated with the same seriousness as the initial act of harassment.
- **Continuous Improvement:** We are committed to the continuous improvement of our Sexual Harassment Policy. Regular reviews and updates will be conducted to ensure that our policies remain aligned with best practices, legal standards, and the evolving needs of our community.

SCOPE

The following provides a foundation for creating a comprehensive and effective approach to addressing sexual harassment within the Guyana Police Force Academy.

- **POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATION**
 - Develop a clear and comprehensive Sexual Harassment Policy that outlines definitions, prohibited conduct, reporting procedures, and disciplinary actions.
 - Communicate the policy to all members of the Academy and relevant stakeholders, ensuring awareness of the Academy's commitment to preventing and addressing sexual harassment.
- **REPORTING MECHANISMS**
 - Establish multiple, accessible, and confidential reporting mechanisms for individuals to report incidents of sexual harassment, such as designated reporting officers, a hotline, or an online reporting system.
 - Ensure that the reporting process is simple, clear, and designed to protect the privacy of the complainant.

- **TRAINING AND EDUCATION**

- Conduct regular training sessions for all members of the Academy to raise awareness about what constitutes sexual harassment, the Academy's policies, and the consequences for engaging in such behavior.
- Include information about bystander intervention and the importance of creating a supportive culture.

- **INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES**

- Develop and communicate clear procedures for investigating reports of sexual harassment.
- Ensure that investigations are conducted promptly, impartially, and by individuals trained in handling such cases.
- Respect the confidentiality of all parties involved in the investigation process.

- **SUPPORT FOR COMPLAINANTS**

- Provide support services for complainants, including access to counseling, medical assistance, and other resources to address the emotional and physical impact of harassment.
- Inform complainants of their rights and options throughout the reporting and investigation process.

- **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

- Clearly outline the disciplinary actions that may be taken against individuals found responsible for sexual harassment.
- Ensure that disciplinary measures are proportionate to the severity of the offense and are consistently applied.

- **NON-RETALIATION MEASURES**
 - Explicitly prohibit retaliation against individuals who report incidents of sexual harassment or participate in investigations.
 - Establish mechanisms to monitor and address any potential acts of retaliation.

- **PREVENTION PROGRAMS**
 - Implement ongoing awareness campaigns to prevent sexual harassment, promote respectful behavior, and reinforce the Academy's commitment to maintaining a harassment-free environment.
 - Engage in initiatives that address the root causes of harassment and contribute to a culture of respect.

- **REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**
 - Regularly review and update the Sexual Harassment Policy to align with changing laws, regulations, and best practices.
 - Seek feedback from the Academy community to identify areas for improvement and ensure the policy's effectiveness.

- **COLLABORATION WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES**

- Collaborate with external organizations, such as local law enforcement or human rights agencies, to ensure that the Academy's response to sexual harassment aligns with broader legal frameworks and community standards.
- **LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT**
 - Demonstrate leadership commitment to preventing and addressing sexual harassment by fostering a culture of accountability and modeling respectful behavior.

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

The Guyana Police Force Academies are overseen by the Force Training Officer, Commandant, and Training Inspectors/Supervisors. Instructors are responsible for maintaining the correct instructor-to-student ratio in their classes and exercises. The Police Commissioner and senior administrators are responsible for ensuring the Force adheres to training standards, which may involve allocating resources for staffing and facilities.

REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION

The Academy Commandant is responsible for communicating training regulations, including instructor-to-student ratios, to all personnel and stakeholders. Training Coordinators ensure proper student enrollment and report non-compliance. Instructors inform students about the appropriate ratio for their program and report any concerns. Training Inspectors/Supervisors verify compliance during training sessions and communicate discrepancies. The force Training Officer will communicate policy updates or clarifications regarding training regulations through official channels.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy came into effect as of September 19, 2023.

REVIEW PERIOD

A review of this policy will be conducted annually. The review will be conducted by the Training Board. The results of the review will be shared with the relevant stakeholders and necessary changes to the policy will be implemented based on the review.

REVISION DATE

Revised in January 2024.

APPROVAL OF POLICY

This Policy was approved by the Guyana Police Force Executive Leadership Team and the Guyana Police Force Academy Training Board.