

# Training offered on Workplace Respect on May 21 & 23

Ever wonder what the definitions of respect, bullying, and harassment are and how to combat their consequences? Professionalism in the workplace equates with being respectful of fellow employees and constituents. It can also lessen the impact of abusive conduct and bullying, as well as reducing the incidences of harassment.



Kent County Levy Court's continuing training program will offer a session covering and addressing the issues of bullying, harassment, and respect. The first will be held on **Tuesday, May 21** at 10:00 a.m. and a second session will be on **Thursday, May 23** at 2:30 p.m. in Room 220 of the Kent County Administrative Complex.

It is strongly encouraged that employees attend as Kent County Levy Court strives to provide excellent customer service and a happy, productive workplace.

Kent County Levy Court has a specific customer service policy in place for employees to follow. Employees are expected to provide courteous service at all times and to continuously strive to exceed customer expectations – including co-workers. Following is the Kent County Customer Service Policy:

## *Kent County Levy Court Policy 3: Conditions of Employment*

### [§ 3-4 Customer service policy.](#)

*[Adopted 12-13-2011 (P11-04)]*

*This Policy establishes expectations for a high quality of service and assistance provided by County employees when interacting with external customers, co-workers, constituents, business owners, governmental officials, and other members of the public. This Policy is intended to list in clear, concise language the goals and objectives of each County employee with respect to customer service.*

[A.](#) *Excellence. County employees shall strive to go beyond the minimum required to provide the highest quality of customer service that regularly exceeds customer expectations. To monitor our progress, the County will actively seek feedback from our customers and will use this feedback as an aid in assessing our strengths and weaknesses, and for seeking continual improvement. Feedback will be solicited in a number of ways, including but not limited to direct contact, customer comment cards, written correspondence, and website customer satisfaction postings.*

**B.** *Accessibility. County employees shall be reasonably accessible for consultation and meetings with customers. Departments with regular public interaction shall have the front counter staffed at all times during normal business hours. Inquiries and requests for meetings with technical staff, division managers and department heads shall be arranged promptly and at the most immediate and mutually convenient time possible. It is expected that division managers and department heads shall make themselves available for consultation as soon as possible and in deference to the customer's preference.*

**C.** *Clarity and responsiveness. It shall be the responsibility of each employee to operate within the limits of his/her County job description and area of responsibility to provide clear, concise, and courteous responses to inquiries for assistance and/or requests for information. When inquiries are received that would best be responded to by another County employee or County department, the employee receiving the inquiry shall bear the responsibility of assuring that every effort has been taken to confirm that a person-to-person relay of the inquiry has been made.*

**(1)** *For inquiries, complaints and other requests that require research, analysis, site visits, inspections, or consultation, the employee handling the request shall be responsible for following up with the inquiring party to provide status reports and/or to communicate how that inquiry is being processed or resolved. There shall be no exception to this provision unless an inquiring party indicates that the party does not want to be contacted.*

**(2)** *In many situations, there may be alternative approaches to resolving an inquiry, problem, or complaint. In such situations it shall be the responsibility of the County employee to consider alternative approaches and to offer options and alternatives to the customer for his/her consideration. The goal of the County employee shall be to achieve and/or maintain compliance with all applicable laws, codes and ordinances while striving for the maximum level of satisfaction for all parties involved in the most expedient manner practicable.*

**D.** *Timeliness. All requests for assistance and/or information shall be processed and responded to promptly, with most routine inquiries being satisfied immediately or within 24 hours. Requests for information pursuant to Delaware Code Title 29, Chapter 100 (Freedom of Information Act), shall be processed in accordance with County Policy P08-05.*

**E.** *Commitment. It is the expressed policy of Kent County Levy Court that every County employee shall engage each customer with respect, service and assistance*

*in a manner equal to or exceeding what the employee would expect if he/she were the customer.*

**F.** *County employees shall strive to maintain compliance with the provisions of this Policy at all times in their official capacities as County employees. Lapses in compliance with this Policy shall be considered deficiencies in performance and may be subject to disciplinary action as prescribed in Chapter 68, § 68-4, of the Kent County Code.*

## **Kent County Levy Court Policy 12: Sexual Harassment & Discrimination**

### **§ 12 Sexual Harassment Policy.**

*[Adopted 10-27-1992 (P-51)]*

#### **§ 12-1 Purpose.**

**A.** Both state and federal law prohibit sexual discrimination in the workplace. The Kent County Levy Court is firmly committed to compliance with these laws. It is essential that all employees be aware of and comply with the law and this Sexual Harassment Policy.

**B.** The Levy Court strongly disapproves of sexual or other harassment of employees, and will appropriately discipline any employee whose conduct violates this policy.

#### **§ 12-2 Definition.**

Sexual harassment is defined as deliberate or repeated unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature in situations when:

**A.** The employee reasonably feels that submission or putting up with such conduct is an expressed or implied term or condition of employment;

**B.** The employee reasonably feels that submission to or rejection of such conduct becomes the basis for employment decisions affecting that individual; or

**C.** The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

### § 12-3 **Sexual harassment prohibited; reporting harassment.**

The Kent County Levy Court prohibits its employees from any actions or words which constitute sexual harassment. Violation of this Policy will not be tolerated by Kent County and may result in discipline up to and including immediate termination. If employees have witnessed or feel they have been subject to any harassment of this nature, they must immediately report the harassment to their immediate supervisor or, if the complaint involves the employee's immediate supervisor, to the Personnel Director or department manager.

### § 12-4 **Investigation of complaints; confidentiality of complaints.**

The Personnel Director or designee with assistance from the department manager or immediate supervisor will immediately investigate complaints and take the appropriate action that may be necessary. Employees who register complaints or make reports of harassment may request that their complaints or reports be made in confidence.

### § 12-5 **Internal complaint procedure.**

**A.** The employee should directly report the behavior (preferably in writing) to the Personnel Director, department manager or immediate supervisor within three working days of the offense. If not directly reported to the Personnel Director, he/she must be immediately advised a complaint has been received.

**B.** Upon request, the person making the report shall give all pertinent relative facts of names, places, times, words or actions that were found offensive.

**C.** Within three working days of the complaint, the person against whom the complaint is made will be counseled privately to determine his or her perspective.

**D.** Based upon the report, the investigator shall, within a reasonable time, determine whether the conduct of the person against whom the complaint has been made constitutes sexual harassment. This determination will be made by examining the entire record and totality of circumstances on a case-by-case basis. If the investigator determines that the complaint is founded, he or she will take immediate and appropriate disciplinary action or make recommendation to the supervisor that has the

authority to take immediate and appropriate disciplinary action. The discipline and appeal process according to the Kent County Code will be followed.

**E.** Disciplinary action will include remedies up to and including termination.

**F.** The Personnel Director or designee with assistance from the department manager or immediate supervisor will conduct follow-up interviews with the complainant and the accused to inform them of the results of the investigation and the corrective action to be taken.

**G.** All information regarding each case shall be held in the strictest confidence. Violation of this confidence will be subject to separate disciplinary action.

### **§ 12 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy.**

*[Adopted 06-25-2013 (P-13.03)]*

#### **§ 12-6 Discrimination prohibited.**

This Policy affirms the County's commitment to follow state and federal laws that prohibit discrimination based on disability, to include people with disabilities in all aspects of employment, and to assure that disabled persons can fully participate in all programs, services, and activities offered by Kent County.

**A.** People with disabilities who otherwise qualify shall not be discriminated against in any areas of employment, including, but not limited to, job application and compensation procedures, fringe benefits available by virtue of employment, and, to the extent possible, activities sponsored by the County.

**B.** Persons with disabilities shall not be limited, segregated, or classified in a way that adversely affects their employment opportunities or status.

**C.** The County shall not knowingly participate in a contractual or other arrangement or relationship that would subject qualified applicants or employees with disabilities to discrimination prohibited by the ADA.

**D.** The County will make reasonable accommodations to the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified applicant or employee with a disability, unless the accommodation would impose an undue burden on the County. After a qualified individual requests

reasonable accommodation, the County will make every reasonable effort to determine and provide the appropriate accommodation.

**E.** The County will not coerce, intimidate, threaten, harass, or interfere with any individual exercising or enjoying his or her right under Title I of the ADA or because an individual aided or encouraged any other individual in the exercise of rights granted or protected by Title I of the ADA.

**F.** Any person with a disability who believes he or she has been discriminated against by an employee and/or a program sponsored by Kent County should contact the Personnel Director, who serves as the County's ADA Coordinator. Employees can file a complaint with the Personnel Director, the State Human Relations Commission, the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), or file suit in federal court. Disabled persons or potential employees may report the complaint to the ADA Coordinator, the State Human Relations Commission, or the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Current employees are encouraged to seek resolution of all perceived actions of discrimination by contacting the Personnel Director, or, in his/her absence or implication, the County Administrator. All such complaints will be promptly investigated.

**G.** All County employees are directed to comply with this policy regarding the ADA, and failure to do so can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

If you have questions about the County's customer service policy or sexual harassment & discrimination prevention policies please contact your supervisor or the Personnel Office. If you have an idea for an employee training topic, please call the Personnel Office at (302) 744-2310.

*(Posted 05/17/19)*