

# USC prohibits:

Discrimination  
Harassment  
Sexual harassment  
Sexual assault  
Retaliation

The university is committed to complying with all laws and governmental regulations which prohibit discrimination or harassment, or that mandate that special consideration be given on the basis of race, religion, national origin, gender, age, veteran status, disability or any other characteristic which may be specified by law. These characteristics are sometimes referred to as “protected categories.” Sexual harassment, sexual assault, and retaliation for reporting any prohibited conduct is also prohibited.

Because all members of the university community including faculty, staff, and students should be able to pursue their work and education in an environment free of prohibited conduct, it is important that you understand your responsibilities in relation to these topics.

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## What is harassment or discrimination?

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### Discrimination

Unfair treatment of a person or group because of that person's or group's protected category status.

### Harassment

Unwelcome or offensive conduct or communication directed toward a person or group because of that person's or group's protected category status.

### Sexual harassment

Unwelcome sexual advances, repeated requests for sexual favors, or any other unwelcome or offensive conduct or communication of a sexual nature, when the conduct or communication has the effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working (or for students, academic) environment. Other examples of sexual harassment:

- Suggestive notes or letters
- Sexual emails
- Intentionally blocking someone's movement

- Sexual jokes, or comments of a sexual nature
- Lewd or sexual discussions in the workplace; even if the two people having the conversation have consented to the conversation, those who can overhear may not be comfortable
- Derogatory comments, slurs, jokes
- Sexist remarks
- Repeated and unwelcome requests for a date
- Asking about someone's sexuality or sex life
- Discussing your own sex life or desires
- Requests for sexual favors
- Sexual gestures
- Whistling at someone in a provocative manner, leering, staring
- Sexual misuse or abuse of power or authority
- Display of sexually explicit objects, drawings, posters, or cartoons

Additional information about sexual harassment is available at the Equity and Diversity website at: [equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu).

### Sexual assault

Any physical sexual act (including but not limited to actual or attempted intercourse, sexual touching, fondling, and groping) perpetrated upon a person without that person's meaningful consent. *If you or anyone you know has been sexually assaulted, the first step is to get to a safe place and contact local law enforcement or, if on campus, DPS.*

### Retaliation

The law, university policy and the Student Conduct Code all prohibit threatened, attempted, or actual retaliation against anyone who in good faith (1) brings a complaint of discrimination or harassment as they are defined by university policy, (2) participates in a discrimination or harassment investigation, or (3) protests the alleged discrimination, harassment or retaliation. If you have filed a complaint of harassment or discrimination or participated in an investigation and have

reason to believe that anyone in the university community is retaliating against you, please contact the Equity and Diversity right away.

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## If you believe a prohibited behavior has taken place

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You must report it to Equity and Diversity, which investigates complaints by faculty, staff, students and applicants (for both employment and student admissions) who believe themselves to be harmed by a prohibited behavior. To file a complaint or inquire about one made against you, contact Equity and Diversity. You are expected to fully cooperate with any investigation concerning prohibited behaviors. While complaints cannot be kept completely confidential, privacy will be protected as much as possible.

Equity and Diversity is reachable by phone or email:

(213) 740-5086 (UPC)  
(323) 442-2020 (HSC)  
[oed@usc.edu](mailto:oed@usc.edu)

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## Resources

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To review USC's policies on discrimination, harassment, and other prohibited behaviors, visit [policy.usc.edu/employment](http://policy.usc.edu/employment).

To review policies for students on harassment and discrimination or sexual assault, visit SCampus at [scampus.usc.edu](http://scampus.usc.edu).

Visit the Harassment Awareness website at [www.usc.edu/harassmentawareness](http://www.usc.edu/harassmentawareness).

Also, please be aware that sexual harassment of a person under age 18 may be considered a form of child abuse. To review USC's Protecting Minors policy, visit [policy.usc.edu/protecting-minors](http://policy.usc.edu/protecting-minors).