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CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT

OFFICE OF PREVENTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Second Quarter 2023 Report

To General Superintendent Rosa Escareño, President Myetie Hamilton and the Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners,

The Office of Prevention and Accountability (OPA) continues to work toward fulfilling its mission of ensuring that the Chicago Park District provides all employees, patrons and visitors with a recreation and work environment that is grounded in respect and safety.

Pursuant to Chapter 4 of the Chicago Park District Code, OPA is required to submit a quarterly report to the General Superintendent and the Board of Commissioners. Attached please find OPA's Second Quarter report, which summarizes the work OPA has made toward its goals and the plans being made to continue these vital efforts.

Sincerely,

Tamara B. Starks

Tamara B. Starks
Director
Office of Prevention and Accountability

cc: Joan Coogan
Katie Ellis

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Mission

The Office of Prevention and Accountability (OPA) was established to ensure that the Chicago Park District actively works to provide all employees, patrons and visitors with a recreation and work environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, workplace violence, abuse and neglect of children and vulnerable adults, and retaliation.

In Second Quarter 2023, OPA continued that mission by focusing on four key areas – Policy, Training, Outreach and Investigation.

In doing so, OPA continues to place an emphasis on the first part of its name – Prevention – as it works to serve as a much-needed resource to Park District staff and work within the organization to improve the workplace culture, with an emphasis on fostering respect and professional development.

While OPA has remained focused on Prevention, that does not negate the importance of the second pillar of this office – Accountability. OPA is tasked with ensuring that the Park District is accountable to its employees, patrons, and partners. This is done by conducting fair, impartial and independent investigations of any complaints that allege violations of the Human Rights Ordinance and all policies related to discrimination, harassment, workplace violence, abuse/neglect of children and retaliation. Based on the outcomes of its investigations, OPA may issue recommendations to hold those involved accountable but also will advocate for any systemic changes needed to further protect those involved going forward.

Modernization of District Policies

Establishing strong policies is key to supporting the Park District's focus on building a culture of respect that protects both its workforce and its patrons. OPA has worked diligently with the Park District's Law Department and Policy Office on a long-term project designed to centralize, review, update and supplement the policies used throughout the Park District. This includes an effort to catalog all written policies, manuals, guidance documents and procedures used by various departments to ensure those documents are consistent and comply with best practices.

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Specifically, OPA took on the initial task of updating four key documents – the Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy, the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, the Violence in the Workplace Policy and the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy. All four policies were reviewed for compliance with federal, state and local law. Additionally, they were revised with an eye toward making the language more direct and accessible so that Park District staff can better understand all expectations related to their employment.

Significantly, the policies also were updated to reflect more streamlined, confidential, and accessible procedures for reporting complaints directly to OPA. Previously, these policies contained a variety of directives related to reporting information to Human Resources and/or Risk Management resulting in inconsistent and often delayed responses. The four updated policies issued June 1, 2023, (see attached) all clearly state the procedures for reporting to OPA by calling the OPA Hotline at 312-742-5OPA (312-742-5672) or by emailing OPA@ChicagoParkDistrict.com.¹

It is important to note that the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy underwent the most extensive update. That policy was redesigned into a two-page document with a goal of providing Park District staff with both a policy and a reference guide that includes step-by-step instructions for when to report abuse or neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), what information to collect before calling DCFS and what to do after DCFS is called. Since this policy went into effect, OPA has received good feedback from staff, who found it helpful in reporting their concerns both to DCFS and to OPA. Numerous employees have reached out to OPA either before or after calling DCFS for additional guidance and support in working to assist children who have exhibited signs of either abuse or neglect. As part of this policy effort, OPA also has worked to develop contacts with DCFS supervisors to assist with any necessary follow-up on abuse reports and related OPA investigations.

After completing the update of these four policies on June 1, OPA worked with Park District HR to ensure that the handbook provided to new staff is updated to be consistent with the new policies. Additionally, OPA created an Acknowledgement Form for employees to sign upon receipt of the new policies to acknowledge they have been given the documents and are required to comply with them. OPA also posted the completed

¹ The Violence in the Workplace Policy does retain the previous direction that employees should continue to report any injuries that result from workplace violence directly to Risk Management.

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policies at the top of its website – www.ChicagoParkDistrict.com/OPA - as an additional resource for employees seeking information there.

OPA continues to work with HR and other Park District departments to provide staff with training on these new policies and to act as a resource to staff who have questions about the OPA reporting requirements. In the future, OPA plans to work with HR and Workforce Development to create a recorded training on the policies that can be used at new employee orientations and can be available to any employees who require a refresher on the Park District's expectations.

Districtwide Training Success

One of the main tasks OPA took on in the Second Quarter was working to ensure the successful rollout of the Sexual Harassment Prevention and Bystander training that is required annually by the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago. Specifically, all Park District employees are required to complete one hour of Sexual Harassment Prevention training and one hour of Bystander training. Any employees who have managerial or supervisory duties also are required to complete an additional hour of Sexual Harassment Prevention training – for a total of two hours.

Plans for these essential trainings began during the First Quarter as OPA worked to identify and contract with a vendor to create the online training modules. In evaluating the vendors, OPA specifically looked for a partner who could provide a training that was legally compliant while also engaging the staff and provided the flexibility required for a successful training program. The vendor selected fit those requirements by providing online training modules that are interactive and allow staff to break up their training sessions into smaller modules – which is key for a busy population whose core duties do not often allow them to devote solid blocks of time away from their daily tasks. These trainings could be broken up into five-, 10- or 15-minute tasks rather than requiring all staff to spend hours at a time. The interactive nature of the trainings also will provide the Park District with feedback that can be analyzed to identify the need for additional training or policy concerns.

While the online training, which launched on June 30, was a significant accomplishment, perhaps more important were the in-person trainings OPA conducted during this time.

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Starting at the end of the First Quarter and continuing throughout the Second Quarter, OPA held 11 in-person training sessions for seasonal workers. The sessions were mostly for the Aquatics division (lifeguards and instructors), but also included trainings with seasonal workers in the Department of Cultural and Natural Resources (DCNR) and Special Recreation. (A 12th in-person training session, for DCNR staff, was held on July 6, 2023, after the close of the Second Quarter.)

The trainings for the Aquatics employees were especially important to establish an awareness of OPA as a resource to all employees. While the main goal of any training is education, the sessions also included question-and-answer sessions for staff, many of whom expressed concerns about past situations and how to respond appropriately in the future. Significantly, many also had suggestions and provided input on improvements needed at the Park District. Hearing that feedback was invaluable and will inform steps OPA takes moving forward. The sessions also served to ensure that Aquatics staff and managers are familiar with the OPA team members so that they can continue to feel comfortable reaching out for assistance or guidance, as needed.

In addition to the mandatory trainings, OPA began planning in the Second Quarter for several supplementary trainings that will be rolled out later this year particularly for those employees working directly with children. Notably, those include a collaboration with the Chicago Children's Advocacy Center (CCAC) on the Keeping Children Safe training, which has been done at the Park District in the past. The Keeping Children Safe training modules are being updated to reflect the OPA reporting requirements and important new information to educate staff on identifying grooming behaviors. While not legally mandatory, the Keeping Children Safe training will provide important guidance on how to better identify signs of abuse and neglect of children – which is vital to providing a safe space to patrons and an important resource to Park District staff. OPA expects to make this training available to employees in October.

Outreach and Awareness Efforts

Outreach efforts are designed to build trust and awareness across the Park District and foster a greater understanding of OPA's mission and goals. In addition to formal trainings, OPA has been deliberately focused on building relationships throughout the District. As discussed in its First Quarter Report, OPA began its work by launching an awareness campaign that included an updated website and informational posters in all

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work sites. As a new office, it is important for staff across the District to understand OPA's purpose and their relationship and responsibilities to the office. This effort has produced success in the Second Quarter as OPA has seen an increase in the number of inquiries and outreach to our office from employees who are seeking information and from managers/supervisors requesting that OPA attend their staff meetings and workshops.

OPA continued its awareness campaign in the Second Quarter by attending numerous in-person trainings and meetings, including Information Sessions held with staff in each Region (North, South and Central) to discuss the new policies with Area Managers, Park Supervisors, Physical Instructors and other regional staff. The meetings enabled OPA to introduce additional Park District employees to the work done by the office and the resources OPA provides. The meetings enabled OPA to train attendees on the four updated Park District policies and discuss how to file related complaints. An additional goal, however, was to be accessible to staff for any questions and to foster relationships with employees so they feel comfortable reaching out to OPA for guidance and input.

Attending such meetings is vital, but equally important are OPA's daily interactions with staff. As OPA's operations have become more widely known, individuals have frequently reached out to the office for guidance. This type of interaction is essential as OPA works to improve the work environment District-wide with a goal toward preventing serious issues before they occur. This outreach has taken many forms - from employees asking for guidance dealing with a rude co-worker, to supervisors trying to work through how to assist an employee who experienced assault in the past, to employees asking if the conduct they have witnessed was enough to constitute discrimination. This type of input goes to the core of OPA's mission - prevention. By becoming involved early in these situations, OPA has worked to provide guidance to enable management to address difficult situations and prevent them from growing into more serious concerns.

OPA has also continued its outreach and engagement with partners, sister agencies and stakeholders, which is critical to building a stronger operation and learning from existing best practices. This includes OPA's working to develop connections with DCFS, as well as collaborations with the Chicago Children's Advocacy Center and Chicago Public Schools, among others.

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Q2 Investigations

As indicated above, efforts to ensure that Park District staff and patrons are aware of policies, reporting requirements and OPA's mission have begun to show signs of success. In the Second Quarter, OPA received 41 complaints/inquiries, compared to 17 received in the First Quarter. In the Second Quarter, OPA opened 18 cases and closed two cases. Additionally, OPA provided guidance to staff on two DCFS reports that were made regarding non-OPA matters involving youth program participants (suspected abuse by family members).

Additionally, the remaining 21 complaints OPA received in the Second Quarter were determined not to fall under OPA's jurisdiction – including inquiries about park maintenance, potential misuse of Park District vehicles, inquiries about assignments/transfers, and a question about gifts in the workplace. OPA worked to ensure that those issues were properly addressed and referred the complainants to Human Resources, Risk Management, the Office of the Inspector General, the Ethics Advisor or other appropriate managers. In many instances, OPA conducted intake interviews with the complainants to determine if their concerns should be addressed by OPA or should more properly be referred elsewhere.

Below is a summary of the two cases closed by OPA in the Second Quarter:

Hiring of Seasonal Applicant Not Recommended

An applicant for seasonal employment with the Park District filed a complaint with the City of Chicago's Office of the Inspector General disputing allegations against him of suspected child abuse when he worked at Chicago Public Schools (CPS). The matter was forwarded to the Park District's Office of Inspector General (OIG) because the individual identified himself as a seasonal employee with the Park District, and the OIG referred it to OPA.

An OPA investigation found that the individual was the subject of an investigation while employed by CPS that found credible evidence to support an allegation of sexual harassment involving a student. OPA confirmed that the individual remains ineligible for rehire at CPS due to his conduct.

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Based on that information, OPA recommended that the individual not be hired as a Seasonal Inclusion Aide for the Park District for Summer 2023.

In response to OPA's recommendation, Human Resources did not hire the individual.

No Evidence Found to Substantiate Allegations Against Gymnastics Coach

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) informed the Park District that an anonymous complainant alleged that from 2013 to 2018 a Gymnastics Instructor kicked and yelled at program participants, discussed dating or sexual attraction during practice, slapped kids on their buttocks and made inappropriate comments about participants' physical appearance. After learning of the allegations, a Park District Gymnastics Manager filed a report with USA Gymnastics and the U.S. Center for SafeSport.

On March 1, 2023, OPA opened an investigation. Due to the nature of the allegations, OPA recommended that the Gymnastics Coach be immediately placed on emergency suspension and directed not to have contact with other District employees and patrons.

On March 4, 2023, DCFS interviewed nine gymnastics program participants and their guardians. Following the interviews, a DCFS supervisor informed OPA that no disclosure of sexual misconduct or otherwise inappropriate behavior was reported during the interviews. The DCFS case was determined to be unfounded.

OPA conducted additional interviews and reviewed a summary report prepared by an investigator for the Park District's Office of the Inspector General, which had investigated substantially similar allegations in 2015. No evidence was found to indicate that the Gymnastics Coach engaged in any misconduct.

Based on OPA's investigation, the OIG's summary report and the DCFS determination, OPA closed the case as unsubstantiated. The Gymnastics Coach was then reinstated.

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SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION POLICY

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A.** The Chicago Park District (“Park District”) is committed to providing a safe and positive workplace, where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual employed by the Park District (“Employee”) has the right to work in an environment free of sexual harassment. No person should be required to endure sexual harassment by supervisors, coworkers, or other individuals in the workplace or work in a hostile environment as a condition of employment. Furthermore, this Park District Policy on Sexual Harassment Prevention (“Policy”) applies to all phases of employment, including recruitment, testing, hiring, upgrading, promotion or demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, and selection for training. The Park District also strictly prohibits sexual harassment of Park District patrons, volunteers, vendors, partners, contractors or visitors by Park District employees.
- B.** The Park District prohibits sexual harassment in the workplace. Sexual harassment is illegal pursuant to several laws, including the laws of the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago, and a violation of those laws will not be tolerated. Employees found to be in violation of this Policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.
- C.** This Policy is intended to create guidelines and procedures for responding to complaints of sexual harassment and for disciplining those employees found to have violated this Policy. Nothing in this Policy is intended to nor shall be construed to create a private right of action against the Park District or any of its employees. No part of this Policy shall be construed to create contractual or other rights or expectations. Nothing herein is intended to affect the right of any person to make a charge of discrimination at any state or federal agency with jurisdiction over such claims, raise a grievance under a collective bargaining agreement, or consult a private attorney.
- D.** The purposes and goals of this policy are to: 1) Provide notice to all Employees that sexual harassment will not be tolerated and that violators will be held accountable; 2) Create and enforce policies and procedures to assist Employees who are impacted by sexual harassment, including providing training on this policy for Employees and management; 3) Support a thorough workplace education and training program to prevent sexual harassment and promote a safe workplace for all Employees; and 4) Provide immediate assistance and support to victims of sexual harassment – such as reporting information and referrals to community resources.
- E.** A determination that sexual harassment or retaliation has occurred in violation of this Policy is not a determination of sexual harassment or retaliation under federal, state, or local law. Conduct that may not constitute unlawful sexual harassment under federal, state, or local law may nevertheless violate this Policy and result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination

II. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

A. As used in this Policy, sexual harassment means any:

1. unwelcome sexual advances or unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature;
2. requests for sexual favors or conduct of a sexual nature when:
 - a. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual's employment or receipt of Park District services; or
 - b. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis of any employment or service decision affecting the individual; or
 - c. such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. **An employee's work environment is not limited to the physical location where the employee performs their duties.**
3. sexual misconduct, which means any behavior of a sexual nature which also involves coercion, abuse of authority, or misuse of an individual's employment position.

B. Examples of prohibited conduct under Section II.A. include but are not limited to the following:

- sexually suggestive or offensive remarks, jokes, or rumors;
- suggestive behavior such as "elevator eyes" (looking a person up and down), leering, staring, sexual gestures, whistling, catcalls, winking, throwing kisses, making kissing sounds, howling, groaning, or smacking/licking lips;
- sexual comments or innuendoes about clothing, anatomy, appearance, or sexual jokes or stories, or playing or singing sexually suggestive songs;
- discussions or inquiries about sexual fantasy, preferences, history, or sex life about self or others;
- sexually suggestive pictures or graffiti;
- verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature;
- display of or reference to sexual objects;
- subtle or direct requests for sexual favors;
- repeated invitations and/or pressuring/coercion for dates or sexual favors;
- harassing phone calls, emails, texts, social media posts, or other communication;
- stalking, following, or blocking an individual's path;
- giving personal gifts that imply an intimate relationship;
- sexual assault;
- touching, patting, or pinching;
- touching an individual by massaging their back, neck or shoulders, hugging, kissing, fondling, or touching/pulling an individual's clothing or hair;
- physical gestures that imply a sexual act or sexual anatomy, touching oneself in a sexual manner;
- intentionally brushing up against another person, standing too close, or lingering;
- sending sexually suggestive e-mail or text messages; and
- accessing or sharing sexually suggestive sites, pictures, or reading materials on the

internet, including sexual material on personal devices including smart phones or tablets, or company-owned computers or devices shared in the workplace.

- C. Such conduct is a violation of this policy, even in instances where the offending Employee believed they were acting jokingly. Such communications, comments, actions of a sexual nature, or unwelcome advances are prohibited by the Park District whether or not other employees were offended.
- D. Anyone can be a victim of sexual harassment regardless of their gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, age, or other factors. Sexual harassment can occur between members of the same sex or gender.
- E. Sexual harassment can occur inside or outside the workplace, between supervisors and their staff, coworkers, patrons, volunteers, vendors, contractors and others.

II. COVERED PERSONS:

- A. Any Employees, including seasonal, part-time, full-time and former Employees, along with volunteers and interns are covered by this Policy. As noted above, this Policy covers individuals participating in all phases of employment with the Park District, including recruitment, testing, hiring, upgrading, promotion or demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, and selection for training. This Policy also protects Employees from harassment by third parties, including patrons, volunteers, vendors, contractors, partners and visitors.
- B. Any Park patron, volunteer, vendor, contractor, partner or visitor on Park District property who is subjected to sexual harassment by Park District Employee(s) is also covered by this Policy.

III. REPORTING PROCEDURES:

- A. A good faith verbal or written complaint of sexual harassment ("Complaint") may be made at any time. However, Employees are encouraged to bring their Complaints as soon as possible to help ensure an effective investigation and prompt correction of the conduct.
- B. Employees shall submit Complaints regarding a violation of this Policy directly to the Office of Prevention and Accountability ("OPA") by calling 312-742-5OPA (312-742-5672) or by emailing OPA@ChicagoParkDistrict.com. Employees are not required to submit Complaints to their supervisor before reporting violations of this Policy to OPA. Chapter 4 of the Chicago Park District Code specifies that OPA is authorized to investigate Complaints of any violation of the Human Rights Ordinance and this Policy.

Note: If a Park patron wishes to complain about sexual harassment by an Employee, those Complaints may also be submitted to OPA.

- C. Complaints should identify as much information as possible, including a full narrative of the

facts to identify: 1) the date(s) of incident(s), 2) approximate time of the incident(s), 3) the place(s) of incident(s), 4) the Employee(s) involved, 5) any witness(es) to the incident, 6) the precise nature of harassment, and 7) any additional information that could assist in the investigation. All good faith Complaints will be investigated.

- D. Confidentiality:** The District recognizes and respects an Employee's right to privacy and the need for confidentiality. To the extent possible and allowed by law, the reporting and investigation of all Complaints will be kept confidential. OPA may disclose the contents of a Complaint to the extent required by lawful subpoena, court order, or law or in order to investigate the allegations or where confidentiality would result in physical harm to any person, and/or jeopardize safety within the workplace.

IV. INVESTIGATION AND RESOLUTION OF THE COMPLAINT

- A. Communication with Complainant:** Upon receipt of a Complaint, OPA may contact the person who made the complaint ("Complainant") and obtain additional information, if necessary, including a full narrative of the facts in order to identify: 1) the date(s) of incident(s); 2) approximate time of the incident(s); 3) the place(s) of incident(s); 4) the individual(s) involved; 5) any witness(es) to the incident; 6) the precise nature of the harassment; and 7) any additional information that could assist in the investigation.
- B. Investigation/Fact-Finding:** After communicating with the Complainant, OPA shall, in collaboration with other Park District departments as appropriate, conduct a thorough, fair, impartial, and independent investigation into any alleged violation of this Policy.
1. This investigation may include, but is not limited to, collecting relevant documents and interviewing third-party witnesses and the alleged harasser(s).
 2. Employees are expected to cooperate in any investigation. Failure to cooperate with the investigation may result in disciplinary action. Every Employee has the duty to be truthful and must disclose all information known to the Employee when requested to do so. Any Employee who fails to be completely truthful or who withholds information shall be subject to disciplinary action.
- C. Intermediate Measures:** Intermediate measures may be taken before the completion of the investigation to ensure further harassment does not occur. Examples of such measures include but are not limited to: separating the parties, making scheduling changes to avoid contact between the parties, or placing the alleged harasser on non-disciplinary leave. Depending on the circumstances, the victim of sexual harassment may need to take time off, which may be permitted pursuant to the Park District policy on Victims Economic Security and Safety Act ("VESSA").
- D. Final Determination and Resulting Action:** After the completion of an investigation, OPA shall prepare a written report of its findings and any recommendations, which shall be submitted to the General Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer. The report shall not mention the

name of any informant, Complainant, witness, or person investigated, except as necessary to communicate and/or recommended penalties for violations or unless otherwise authorized by the General Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer. If the Complaint is sustained, the alleged harasser(s) and any other involved individuals (if applicable) will be subject to discipline under the Park District's Employee Code of Conduct. OPA will communicate the results of the investigation to the Complainant.

- E. Inconclusive Results:** In some instances, the evidence gathered may be inconclusive, wherein the Park District may undertake further preventative measures including training and monitoring.

V. EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND PREVENTION

The Park District will provide sexual harassment prevention and bystander training annually in compliance with applicable state and local laws, including 5 ILCS 430/5-10.5 and Chicago Municipal Code §6-10-040, to educate board members, officers, department heads, supervisory personnel, and Employees about the Park District's Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy and the creation of a harassment-free workplace. The Park District will also make efforts to publicize its Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy to Park patrons.

VI. SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

As soon as a supervisor or manager becomes aware of a Complaint or should reasonably be aware of sexually harassing conduct, the supervisor or manager is responsible for reporting the matter to OPA as soon as possible, but no later than **within five (5) business days** after being made aware. Even if the individual making the allegations ("Complainant") requests that the conduct not be investigated or be kept confidential, the supervisor or manager must still report the Complaint to OPA as the Park District is under an obligation to investigate. Failure to timely report may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The supervisor or manager's written report shall include the following:

1. the name, region (if applicable), location, and phone number of the Complainant;
2. the name, region, and phone number of the person referring the matter;
3. the date the Complaint was made; and
4. any additional information voluntarily provided by Complainant, but no additional information need be solicited.

Supervisors and managers should keep information in Complaints reported to OPA confidential, except where disclosure to a superior or Human Resources is required to allow the Park District to address the concern or where confidentiality would result in physical harm to any person, and/or jeopardize safety within the workplace. Supervisors and managers also are responsible for ensuring the Complainant is not subject to any retaliation for making a Complaint.

VII. FALSE AND FRIVOLOUS COMPLAINTS PROHIBITED

- A.** This Policy relies on bona fide or good faith complaints. False and frivolous charges refer to instances where the Complainant is using a sexual harassment Complaint to accomplish some end other than stopping sexual harassment.
- B.** Given the seriousness of the potential consequences for the accused and the waste of time and resources in investigating frivolous complaints, a false or frivolous charge is a serious offense that violates the Code of Conduct and which can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

VIII. RETALIATION PROHIBITED; WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS AVAILABLE

- A.** Retaliation against any person for having made a good faith Complaint or report of sexual harassment, or against any person participating in or aiding an investigation of sexual harassment, is strictly prohibited and illegal pursuant to state and local laws. Any person who believes that they have been subjected to retaliation should report the retaliatory conduct in the same manner as outlined in Section IV.A.1 (Reporting Procedures). Retaliation will be considered a serious act of misconduct that is subject to discipline, up to and including termination.
- B.** Employees are also protected from retaliatory actions under Illinois law, including but not limited to: the Illinois State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, the Illinois Human Rights Act, the City of Chicago Human Rights Ordinance, and the Illinois Whistleblower Act.

IX. RESOURCES FOR FILING COMPLAINTS

In addition to the complaint procedures set forth above, any employee who believes they have been harassed or discriminated against may file a complaint with the government agencies listed below.

Chicago Commission on Human Relations (CCHR)

740 N. Sedgwick, 4th Floor

Chicago, IL 60654

312-744-4111

Website: <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/cchr.html>

Email: cchr@cityofchicago.org

Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR)

555 W. Monroe Street, Suite 700

Chicago, IL 60601

312-814-6200

312-740-3953 (TTY)

Website: www.illinois.gov/dhr

Email: IDHR.Intake@illinois.gov

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

Chicago District Office

230 South Dearborn St., Suite 1866

Chicago, Illinois 60604

312-872-9744

866-740-3953 (TTY)

Website: <https://publicportal.eeoc.gov/Portal/Login.aspx>

X. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Other resources are available to victims of sexual harassment, including:

- IDHR's Illinois Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Helpline at 877-236-7703.
- The National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656-HOPE(4673) or via chat online at <https://hotline.rainn.org/online>.
- Chicago Rape Crisis Hotline at 888-293-2080. More information is available at www.ywcachicago.org.
- Resilience: 312-443-9603. More information is available at www.OurResilience.org.
- Chicago Park District Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at 877-215-6614.

TO CONTACT:

The Office of Prevention and Accountability:

Email: OPA@ChicagoParkDistrict.com

Hotline: 312-742-5OPA (312-742-5672)

Website: www.ChicagoParkDistrict.com/OPA

CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY

I. Purpose and Overview

The Chicago Park District (“Park District”) is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to providing equal opportunity in its recruitment, hiring, promotions, and other employment actions. The Park District prohibits discriminatory employment actions based on actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, marital status, military status, disability, or any other category protected by state or federal law or local ordinance.

The Office of Prevention and Accountability (“OPA”) is tasked with the implementing and enforcing the Park District’s Equal Employment Opportunity Policy (“Policy”). Any violation of this Policy or any concerns regarding the implementation of this Policy should be reported to OPA. Retaliation against any person who makes a report concerning potential violations of this Policy, or assists OPA in enforcing this Policy, is forbidden pursuant to the terms of this and other Park District policies.

All employees are expected to comply with this Policy, and department heads and supervisors are expected to cooperate fully in meeting the Park District’s equal employment goals.

II. Prohibited Conduct

A. Discrimination. The Park District prohibits employment decisions and practices based on an individual’s race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, marital status, military status, disability, or any other category protected by state or federal law or local ordinance.

B. Harassment. The Park District prohibits sexual harassment and harassment based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, marital status, military status, disability, or any other category protected by state or federal law or local ordinance.

Harassment includes any unwelcomed conduct that is based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, marital status, military status, disability, or any other category protected by state or federal law, or local ordinance. Additional forms of harassment may include, but are not limited to, the use of vulgar language, abusive acts or language, hostility, physical aggression, intimidation, or unequal treatment. *See also*, Chicago Park District Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy, Section D, Conduct Prohibited.

C. Retaliation. This Policy prohibits retaliation against any employee who: (1) makes a good

faith complaint or report of discrimination, harassment, or any conduct prohibited by this Policy; (2) opposes discriminatory practices within the workplace; and/or (3) cooperates with or assists the District in resolving or investigating a complaint of discrimination, harassment, or any conduct.

III. Applicability

This Policy is applicable to current and former employees of the Park District and applicants for Park District employment. Nothing in this Policy is intended to nor shall be construed to create a private right of action against the Park District or any of its employees. Furthermore, no part of this Policy shall be construed to create contractual or other rights or expectations. Furthermore, nothing herein is intended to affect the right of any person to make a charge of discrimination at the Chicago Commission on Human Relations or to any state or federal agency with jurisdiction over such claims, raise a grievance under a collective bargaining agreement, or consult a private attorney.

IV. Responsibilities of Regional Managers/Department Heads

Each department head must take necessary steps to implement this Policy within their department.

V. Responsibilities of Supervisors

Reporting Potential Violations. Any supervisor who becomes aware of conduct that may be considered discriminatory, harassing, or retaliatory as stated in this Policy must report such conduct to OPA. A supervisor who is aware of, or reasonably should be aware of discriminatory, harassing, or retaliatory conduct—whether or not a complaint has been made by an employee—must report it to OPA as soon as possible, but no later than five (5) business days after being made aware. Failure to timely report may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

VI. Reporting Prohibited Conduct

Any employee or applicant for employment who believes that they have been discriminated against, or harassed on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, marital status, military status, disability, or any other category protected by state or federal law, or local ordinance, or who claims to have suffered retaliation as described in Section II of this Policy, should submit a complaint to OPA.¹

- A.** Employees should bring their complaints as soon as possible to help ensure an effective investigation. This allows for preservation of relevant information to ascertain the best remedial measures. Filing a complaint with OPA does not bar the right of a person to file

¹ In cases of allegations of sexual harassment, please follow the procedures set out in the Chicago Park District's Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy.

a similar charge with the Chicago Commission on Human Relations or any local, state, or federal agency with the authority to hear matters of discrimination.

VII. Investigation of Complaints

- A. Initiating the Investigation.** OPA shall, in collaboration with other Park District departments as appropriate, conduct thorough, fair, impartial, and independent investigations regarding any alleged violation of this Policy.
- B. Duty to Cooperate.** All employees shall cooperate in the course of an investigation under this Policy. Failure to cooperate may subject an employee to discipline. Any employee who knowingly makes a false discrimination, harassment, or retaliation accusation or knowingly provides false information in the course of an investigation may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. A complaint made in good faith will not be considered a false accusation, even if it is found to be unsubstantiated.
- C. Investigation Reports.** At the conclusion of the investigation, OPA shall prepare a written report of its findings and any recommendations, which shall be submitted to the General Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer. The report shall not mention the name of any informant, complainant, witness, or person investigated, except as necessary to communicate and/or recommended penalties for violations or unless otherwise authorized by the General Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer.
- D. Notification of Parties.** OPA shall provide written notification to the complaining party and the accused party, informing them of the outcome of the investigation.
- E. Departmental/Human Resources/General Counsel/Superintendent Response.** If a report issued by OPA recommends an action, the responsible party will be given a reasonable time frame to respond. The response shall be in writing and shall indicate the actions taken, including whether the recommendation in the report was followed, whether an alternative action was taken, or whether no action was taken.
- F. Confidentiality.** All complaints and investigations will be confidential to the extent possible and allowed by law. To aid in preserving confidentiality, the distribution of the investigative report and investigation file may be limited.

VIII. Complaints Against District Vendors

Where there are allegations of inappropriate conduct by individuals employed by Park District vendors, partners or contractors, complaints should be submitted to OPA. The Park District's authority over non-Park District employees may be limited.

IX. Withdrawing Complaints

A complaint under this Policy may be withdrawn at any time by the person who filed the complaint. Withdrawal of a complaint must be made or confirmed in writing.

Before making a decision to end an investigation, OPA shall determine whether corrective action is needed to address inappropriate conduct. In some instances, OPA will find it appropriate to end the investigation when the complaint is withdrawn. In other instances, OPA may determine that it needs to continue the investigation or recommend action to remedy inappropriate behavior.

X. Penalties

Employees found to be in violation of this Policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

XI. Contacting the Office of Prevention and Accountability

The Office of Prevention and Accountability may be contacted at:

Confidential Hotline: 312-742-5OPA (312-742-5672)

Email: OPA@ChicagoParkDistrict.com

Website: <https://www.ChicagoParkDistrict.com/OPA>

CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT

VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY

Statement of Policy

The Chicago Park District ("Park District") is committed to providing a safe workplace for the benefit of its employees and the public. To ensure a safe work environment and to reduce the risk of violence, all employees should review and understand all provisions of this Violence in the Workplace Policy ("Policy").

Prohibited Conduct

The Park District does not tolerate any type of workplace violence committed by or against employees. Employees are prohibited from making threats or engaging in violent activities.

Examples of prohibited conduct include:

- Using physical force against another person;
- Making direct or implied threats either verbally, electronically, or in writing that create a reasonable fear of harm to a person or the person's property;
- Exhibiting aggressive or hostile behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person or subjects another individual to emotional distress;
- Intentionally damaging Park District property or the property of another employee;
- Possessing a weapon while on Park District property or while conducting Park District business;
- Sexual harassment, domestic violence, or gender violence.

Reporting Procedures

If a violent incident is currently taking place or if someone is experiencing an imminent threat to their safety or well-being, employees should:

1. Call 911 immediately, and
2. Notify Park District Security at 312-747-2193.

If an employee is injured and/or requires medical treatment or evaluation, the employee's supervisor should:

1. Report the matter to Risk Management immediately by calling 312-735-8888, and
2. Submit an Incident Report to Risk Management as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours following the occurrence of any violent incident.

If an individual has concerns about potentially dangerous situations, workplace violence complaints that do not involve an imminent threat, or questions related to this Policy, the individual should contact the Office of Prevention and Accountability ("OPA"):

- By emailing OPA@ChicagoParkDistrict.com or
- By calling 312-742-5OPA (312-742-5672).

Workplace violence complaints can be submitted to OPA anonymously.

Employees impacted by domestic violence should notify their immediate supervisor and Human Resources if they obtain an order of protection that might cover a Park District premises and/or place restrictions on a Park District employee, patron, volunteer, vendor, partner, contractor, or visitor.

Risk Reduction Measures

While the Park District does not expect employees to be experts at identifying potentially dangerous persons, employees are expected to exercise good judgment and report any individual who exhibits behavior that could be a sign of a potentially dangerous situation. Such behavior includes:

- Discussing weapons or bringing them to the workplace;
- Displaying overt signs of extreme stress, resentment, hostility, or anger;
- Making threatening remarks;
- Displaying irrational or inappropriate behavior.

Dangerous/Emergency Situations

Employees should avoid confronting armed and/or dangerous individuals. After calling 911 and/or contacting Park District Security, employees should notify their supervisor if that notification can be made without endangering the safety of the employee or others.

Employees should assist persons injured as a result of workplace violence, including summoning Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel (where reasonable and where doing so would not put the employee in harm's way), staying with the injured person(s) until EMS personnel arrive, and assisting Park District officials in reaching the emergency contact(s) of any injured person(s). Employees who suffer post-incident distress as a result of workplace violence should be referred to the Employee Assistance Program for evaluation and referral.

Enforcement

Threats, threatening conduct, or any other acts of aggression or violence in the workplace will not be tolerated. Any employee determined to have committed such acts will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Any employee or non-employee who engages in violent acts on Park District property will be reported to the proper authorities.

Investigations

Pursuant to [Chapter IV of the Chicago Park District Code](#), OPA is tasked with administering and enforcing the Human Rights Ordinance. OPA, in collaboration with Human Resources and other Park District departments as appropriate, will conduct thorough, impartial, and independent investigations regarding any alleged violation of this Policy. At the conclusion of its investigation, OPA will issue a report to the General Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer outlining the findings of the investigation. OPA's report may include recommendations – including recommendations for any disciplinary action or penalties for violations of this Policy.

As part of OPA's investigation, employees and other witnesses may be questioned concerning incidents of workplace violence. All Park District employees have a duty to cooperate and provide truthful information in all investigations conducted by OPA.

Additional Duties of Personnel

Managers and supervisors shall implement and maintain safe workplace practices, including practices outlined in this Policy, and communicate this Policy to subordinates.

Employees shall report incidents of violence in the workplace or any potentially dangerous situation to their supervisors, to Risk Management, to OPA and, where appropriate, to law enforcement authorities.

Confidentiality and Protection from Retaliation

Consistent with the necessity of prevention and investigation of violence in the workplace, personal information obtained in the course of an investigation under this Policy shall be considered confidential and not subject to public disclosure except as may be necessary as part of the disciplinary process or as otherwise required by law.

Retaliation against a person for having made a good faith complaint or report of violence in the workplace or for aiding in an investigation of violence in the workplace under this Policy is prohibited. Any person who believes that they have been subject to such retaliation should contact the OPA by emailing OPA@ChicagoParkDistrict.com or calling 312-742-5OPA (312-742-5672).

CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING POLICY

ALL CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT EMPLOYEES ARE MANDATED REPORTERS AS IT RELATES TO CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT.

All Chicago Park District employees must take child abuse and neglect seriously and are required by Illinois law to report suspected child abuse and neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services ("DCFS"). Failure to report suspected instances of child abuse or neglect to DCFS constitutes a Class A misdemeanor. Simply reporting suspicions to a superior does not satisfy an employee's legal obligations as a Mandated Reporter under Illinois' Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.

Mandated reporters who report alleged child abuse and neglect to DCFS in good faith cannot be held liable for damages under criminal or civil law. In addition, their names cannot be given to the person they name as the perpetrator or to anyone else unless ordered by a hearing officer or judge.

What is Child Abuse and Neglect?

Child abuse is the mistreatment of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caretaker, someone living in the child's home, or someone who works with or around children. Mistreatment causes injury or puts a child at risk of physical injury. Child abuse can be physical (such as burns, broken bones, or marks on the body that do not appear to have been caused by an accident), sexual (such as fondling or incest), or emotional.

Neglect occurs when a parent or caretaker fails to provide adequate supervision, food, clothing, shelter, or for other basic needs for a child. If a child appears to be undernourished, is dressed inappropriately for the weather, or is young and has been left alone, you should report this as child abuse.

Reporting Child Abuse.

- 1. Telephone 1-800-25-ABUSE.** As soon as you have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, telephone 1-800-25-ABUSE.¹ This is DCFS's Child Abuse Hotline ("Hotline"). Park District employees should not conduct their own investigation by interviewing suspected victims, witnesses or any other involved party.

When you call, a trained Hotline intake worker will listen to your report, ask questions, and determine whether to take a formal report. If a formal report is taken, you will be asked to submit a written confirmation called the CANTS 5 form. DCFS will provide direction on how to submit this form. Illinois law requires that mandated reporters submit the completed CANTS 5 form to DCFS within 48 hours of the initial call to the Hotline.

Please retain a copy of the CANTS 5 form for your records. When calling the Hotline, employees should obtain the DCFS worker's name and the intake number assigned to the matter. Any

¹ DCFS also provides for online reporting for non-life threatening and non-emergency incidents at <https://dcfonlinereporting.dcf.illinois.gov/Reporting/ReportingMain>. If you believe the abuse or neglect you are reporting requires immediate action, including if the involved adult has or will have access to a child within the next 24 hours, you must call the Hotline.

questions about the CANTS 5 form or reporting to DCFS should be directed to the Office of Prevention and Accountability (“OPA”) at OPA@ChicagoParkDistrict.com or 312-742-5OPA (312-742-5672).

2. Have the following information available when you call:

- The child's name, address, and age
- The nature of the suspected abuse or neglect, including when and where it occurred
- The names of suspected perpetrators and their relationship to the child
- Any additional information you think may help

Even if this information is not readily available, the reporter should not delay in calling the Hotline.

Notify OPA and Your Supervisor or Department or Unit Head. Immediately after a report is made to DCFS, all Park District employees should notify OPA by emailing OPA@ChicagoParkDistrict.com or by calling 312-742-5OPA (312-742-5672). Employees should also notify their supervisor after a DCFS report has been made, unless the alleged abuser is the employee’s supervisor. In that case, the employee should report to OPA to receive further direction.

3. Who are mandated reporters?

All Chicago Park District employees are mandated reporters. Illinois law mandates that workers in certain professions must make reports if they have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect. A mandated reporter’s failure to report suspected instances of child abuse or neglect to DCFS constitutes a Class A misdemeanor.

Simply reporting suspicions to a supervisor does not satisfy legal requirements.

4. When should I call the Hotline?

You should call the Hotline as soon as possible whenever you believe that a person who is caring for a child, who lives with a child, or who works with or around children has caused injury or harm or has put the child at risk of physical injury. Some examples include:

- If you see someone hitting a child with an object.
- If you see marks on a child’s body that do not appear to have been caused by accident.
- If a child tells you that they have been harmed by someone.
- If a child appears to be undernourished, is dressed inappropriately for the weather, or is young and has been left alone.

If you are concerned that a situation may involve abuse or neglect but are uncertain, please call the Hotline. The Hotline intake worker will ask questions to help determine if the situation does qualify as a DCFS matter.