



**Washington  
Global**

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

# **Employment Policies**

**SY20-21**

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## Harassment Policy

It is the policy of Washington Global to ensure equal employment opportunity without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions), gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, citizenship, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, ancestry, status as a covered veteran, or any other status protected by applicable federal, state and local laws. WGLO prohibits any such discrimination or harassment. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, any suggestions made to any employee (or student) that sexual favors will affect any term or condition of employment, or school performance evaluations, is strictly prohibited and will result in immediate discipline, up to and including termination.

### *Retaliation*

Washington Global encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination or harassment. It is the policy of WGLO to promptly and thoroughly investigate such reports. WGLO prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or participates in an investigation of such reports.

The School treats all claims of retaliation seriously. Complaints of retaliation will be investigated promptly, and as appropriate, actions will be taken to resolve such complaints. Any employee who, after appropriate investigation, is found to have violated any of the School's policies, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### *Harassment*

Under this policy, harassment is verbal, written or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his or her membership in a protected class under applicable federal, state, or local law, or that of his or her relatives, friends or associates, and that: a) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, b) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, or c) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Harassing conduct includes epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; and written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group that is placed on walls or elsewhere on the employer's premises or circulated in the workplace, on company time or using company equipment by e-mail, phone (including voice messages), text messages, social networking sites or other means.

Employees must report any violation(s) or suspected violation(s) of this policy to the Principal. Any member of management who fails to report any violation(s) or suspected violation(s) of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Claims of harassment will be investigated with due regard for the privacy of the individuals involved and will be kept confidential to the extent possible and subject to the need to conduct a thorough investigation. If it is found that inappropriate conduct occurred, the School will take prompt and effective action

to remedy the situation. Any employee who knowingly retaliates against an employee because they have reported workplace harassment or discrimination shall be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

*Sexual harassment*

Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state and local laws. For the purposes of this policy, “sexual harassment” is defined, as in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines, as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example: a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment, b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 recognizes two types of sexual harassment: a) quid pro quo and b) hostile work environment. Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not-so-subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors; sexual jokes and innuendo; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual’s body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; leering, whistling or touching; insulting or obscene comments or gestures; display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; and other physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

*Student Sexual Abuse and Harassment by School Staff*

In accordance with the School Safety Omnibus Amendment Act of 2018, Washington Global strictly prohibits actions of student sexual abuse by any school staff. Any behavior by Washington Global staff toward a student that is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature and would reasonably cause the student to feel uncomfortable is prohibited, regardless of whether such behavior is complained of by the student, the behavior is overtly sexual, or such behavior could constitute a crime. These behaviors may include, but are not limited to:

<b>Mode of Contact</b>	<b>Examples of Inappropriate Interactions</b>
Physical Contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Kisses</li> <li>● Showing affection in isolated areas</li> <li>● School staff sleeping in a bed with a student</li> <li>● Allowing students older than kindergarten-age to sit on personnel’s knees</li> <li>● Wrestling</li> <li>● Piggyback rides</li> <li>● Tickling</li> <li>● Allowing a student to cling to a school staff member’s leg</li> <li>● Any type of massage given by or to a student</li> <li>● Any form of affection that is unwanted by the student</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Touching stomach, bottom, chest, or genital areas</li> </ul>
Verbal Interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliments related to physique or body development</li> <li>• Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving students in the personal problems or issues of school staff</li> <li>• Off-color or sexual jokes</li> </ul>
Interactions Outside of School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking one student on an outing, even with the parent/guardian’s written permission</li> <li>• Visiting one student in the student’s home, without a parent/guardian present</li> <li>• Entertaining one student in the staff member’s home</li> <li>• Students spending the night in the staff member’s home</li> </ul>
Electronic and Telephonic Interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any private electronic communication or image sharing, including via text, instant message, personal email accounts, or the use of social networking websites for direct messaging students</li> <li>• Posting pictures of students on personal social media sites</li> <li>• Adding students as friends on personal social media sites</li> <li>• Any private telephonic communication, including texting, voice calls, and video calls</li> </ul>

The School takes all allegations of student sexual abuse seriously. When the School knows or reasonably should know that such an act has occurred, the School will take immediate action and follow the procedures outlined in this policy. The School shall act upon any knowledge of abuse, regardless of whether the student who was abused has filed a complaint or has otherwise notified the School.

The School recognizes that school staff may meet one-on-one with a student, and if that occurs, the following will occur:

- To the maximum extent possible, the student and staff member will meet in a public place where both the staff member and the student are in full view of others.
- School staff will avoid physical contact that can be misinterpreted.
- If the meeting is in a room or office, the school staff will leave the door open or move to an area that can be clearly observed by others if passing by. If the door must be closed due to a confidential setting (e.g., a mental health counseling session), then the staff member will ensure that the window is not blocked so that anyone walking by can view into the room.
- School staff shall document and immediately report any unusual incidents, including disclosures of abuse or maltreatment, behavior problems and how they were handled, injuries, or any interactions that might be misinterpreted.

- School staff should always email students from school-issued email addresses. When sending or replying to emails and text messages from students, copy a supervisor and/or the students' parent/guardian.

### *Student, Parent, and Guardian Reporting*

Students, parents, guardians, and other individuals are encouraged to file complaints as soon as possible after the alleged act of sexual abuse. There is no time limit upon when a complaint may be filed. Complaints, including anonymous complaints, may occur through any form of communication, including in writing, via telephone, or via in-person conversation. Complaints shall be filed with Washington Global's Title IX Coordinator, Howard Mebane at [hmebane@washingtonglobal.org](mailto:hmebane@washingtonglobal.org) or (202) 796-2415. The name, office address, and contact information for the Title IX Coordinator is also available in the main office and the website. If a student, parent, guardian, or other individual files a report of student sexual abuse with a school staff member other than the Title IX Coordinator, then that school staff member shall immediately follow mandated reporter requirements to alert MPD by calling 911. The staff member shall then report the information to the Title IX Coordinator.

Reporting students, parents, guardians, or other individuals may choose to simultaneously alert MPD by calling 911. Even if MPD is investigating, the School will continue its own investigation, as legal standards for criminal investigations are different from the standards under Title IX. The School will not delay their investigation while the MPD investigation occurs. However, the School shall refrain from interviewing any involved parties until after MPD has conducted its interviews.

If a reporting student decides against filing a formal complaint, the School shall still investigate and take appropriate steps to resolve the situation and ensure the safety of all students. Furthermore, the School shall investigate any incidents of misconduct involving direct observation by school staff, regardless of whether the student files a report or requests any action. In an effort not to compromise the integrity of the law enforcement and child protective services investigation, the timing and manner of the School's investigation shall be coordinated with both of those entities.

The School shall discuss confidentiality standards and concerns with the reporting student. Every effort shall be taken to protect the confidentiality of reporting students in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Some reporting students may wish to remain anonymous. The School shall inform the reporting student that a confidentiality request may limit the School's ability to respond. If the reporting student continues to request to remain anonymous, then the School shall take all reasonable steps to investigate and respond to the complaint consistent with the reporting student's request, as long as doing so does not prevent the School from responding effectively to the complaint and preventing the action from recurring with other students. Retaliation against any person who has filed a complaint, or has testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing

under this policy is prohibited, and any party engaged in retaliatory behavior shall be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Equal Employment Opportunity Statement**

At WGLO, we pride ourselves on being an Equal Opportunity Employer. We provide equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions), gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, citizenship, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, ancestry, status as a covered veteran, or any other status protected by applicable federal, state and local laws. We comply with applicable federal, state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfers, leaves of absence, compensation and training.

WGLO expressly prohibits any form of unlawful employee harassment based on a protected status. Improper interference with the ability of WGLO employees to perform their expected job duties is absolutely prohibited.

## **Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace**

Washington Global will not tolerate the presence or use of alcohol or illegal drugs, or the illegal use of legal drugs, in our workplace. The use, possession, distribution, or sale of controlled substances such as drugs or alcohol, or being under the influence of such controlled substances, is strictly prohibited while on duty, while on school premises or driving for school purposes. If you need to take a prescription drug that affects your ability to perform your job duties, you are required to discuss possible accommodations with HR or the CEO. This information, which will be kept confidential, is necessary to properly assess an employee's ability to safely and productively perform his or her regular or other assigned duties. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Additionally, if you witness anyone violating this policy, you must report it to your supervisor and/or the HR Department immediately.

## **Complaint/Concern Procedure**

WGLO encourages employees to raise complaints or concerns internally in accordance with the following procedure. The employee should direct all complaints to the Principal and/or the Human Resources Department as soon as possible. The employee may also be asked to provide a written complaint. The complaint should include specific details of the incident(s), names of individuals involved, and/or the names of any witnesses. This information will be conveyed to the Principal, and the Human Resources Department if it initially is provided to another supervisor. The Human Resources Department will conduct a preliminary internal investigation

of the matter. If the complaint is in relation to the Human Resources Department, the Principal will conduct the initial investigation.

Based on a preliminary investigation, the Human Resources Department and/or the Principal may request that the parties meet with them to discuss the incident. If the applicable parties agree, this meeting will be arranged, and the parties will be encouraged to mediate their differences.

Whether the parties do or do not meet and mediate the dispute, the Human Resources Department and/or the Principal will complete a thorough investigation of the complaint. WGLO will take reasonable measures to keep the reporting and investigation of complaints as confidential as possible under the circumstances and to the extent permitted by applicable law. If the investigation leads to a determination that inappropriate conduct or conduct in violation of WGLO's policies has occurred or is occurring, the Principal, along with the Human Resources Department, will take prompt corrective action reasonably calculated to immediately end the inappropriate conduct. Such corrective action may include, but is not necessarily limited to, disciplinary action against any employee engaged in the wrongful behavior, up to and including termination of employment. If either of the involved parties disagrees with the determination of the Principal and the Human Resources Department, the party may request that the CEO reviews the Principal and the Human Resources Department's determination, by notifying the CEO in writing. If this occurs, the CEO will review the incident and the response of the Principal and the Human Resources Department and provide the school's response within 15 business days. The appeal package must include:

- The nature and date of the grievance and any related or supporting documents.
- The results of previous discussions to resolve the conflict, including any correspondence.
- The reason for the employee(s)' dissatisfaction with the decisions previously rendered.
- A description of the relief sought.

To the extent that an employee's complaint concerns the CEO, the employee may provide her or his initial notice to the Human Resources Department, who will communicate the notice to the School's Board. The complaint should include the information described in the first paragraph of this policy.

Nothing in this policy is intended to mitigate the School's belief in and offer to provide mediation between staff, either before or at any time during the complaint process. Further, that an employee complaint process exists does NOT suggest that any complaint process must or should take place prior to or in lieu of any termination of employment. The complaint process is unrelated and in no way mitigates the right of Washington Global PCS to terminate employees.

This process is not intended to mitigate or supersede the procedures described below in the section on Harassment/Discrimination.



## Whistleblower Policy

The Code of Ethics and Conduct of Washington Global requires Principals, officers and employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethic in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As employees and representatives of the School, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

### *Reporting Responsibility*

It is the responsibility of all Principals, officers and employees to comply with the Code and to report violations or suspected violations in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy.

### *No Retaliation*

No Principal, officer or employee who in good faith reports a violation of the Code shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment consequence. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment. This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns within the School prior to seeking resolution outside the School.

### *Reporting Violations*

The Code addresses the School's open door policy and suggests that employees share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints with someone who can address them properly. In most cases, an employee's supervisor, or if you are not satisfied with your supervisor's response, you are encouraged to speak with someone in the Human Resources Department or anyone in management with whom you are comfortable with approaching. Supervisors and managers are required to report suspected violations of the Code of Conduct to the School's Compliance Officer, who has specific and exclusive responsibility to investigate all reported violations. For suspected fraud, or when you are not satisfied or uncomfortable with following the School's open door policy, individuals should contact the School's Compliance Officer directly.

Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation of the Code must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation of the Code. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

### *Confidentiality*

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant or may be submitted anonymously. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.