



## Employee Policies

I Dream Public Charter School

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### Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is prohibited by federal, state and local laws, and applies equally to men, women, and those who identify as non-binary. Federal law defines sexual harassment as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favor(s), or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to the conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an employee’s employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an employee is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the employee; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.



These behaviors may include, for example: subtle or overt pressure for sexual favors; inappropriate touching; lewd, sexually oriented comments or jokes; foul or obscene language; posting of suggestive or sexually explicit posters, calendars, photographs, graffiti, or cartoons; and repeated requests for dates. School policy further prohibits harassment and discrimination based on sex stereotyping (For example, sex stereotyping may occur when one person perceives a man to be unduly effeminate or a woman to be unduly masculine and harasses or discriminates against that person because he or she does not fit the stereotype of being male or female.). The School encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of sexual harassment, regardless of who the offender may be. Every employee is encouraged to raise any questions or concerns with the Director of Operations and/or Executive Director.

### Supervisors' Responsibilities

All supervisors are expected to ensure a work environment free from sexual and other harassment. They are responsible for the application and communication of this policy within their work area. Supervisors should:

- Encourage employees to report any violations of this policy.
- Make sure the Director of Operations and/or Executive Director is made aware of any inappropriate behavior in the workplace.
- Create a work environment where sexual harassment is not permitted.

### Process for Reporting and Investigating Sexual Harassment

Employees should report incidents of inappropriate behavior or sexual harassment as soon as possible after the occurrence. Employees who believe they have been sexually harassed, regardless of whether the offensive act was committed by a supervisor, co-worker, vendor, visitor, or client, should promptly notify their immediate supervisor or the Director of Operations (which includes Human Resources). If the employee's immediate supervisor is involved in the incident, the employee should report the incident to the Director of Operations and/or Executive Director. Every claim of sexual harassment will be treated seriously, no matter how trivial it may appear. All complaints of sexual harassment or other inappropriate sexual conduct will be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the School.

There will be no retaliation for filing or pursuing a sexual harassment claim. To the extent possible, all complaints and related information will remain confidential except to those individuals who need the information to investigate, educate, or take action in response to the complaint.



All employees are expected to cooperate fully with any ongoing investigation regarding a sexual harassment incident. Employees who believe they have been unjustly charged with sexual harassment can defend themselves verbally or in writing at any stage of the investigation.

To protect the privacy of persons involved, confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent practicable and appropriate under the circumstances. Investigations may include interviews with the parties involved, and where necessary, individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or who may have relevant knowledge.

At the conclusion of a sexual harassment investigation, the complainant (alleged victim) and the “alleged harasser” (accused) shall be informed of the determination. Where appropriate, the accused and the complainant may be offered counseling through an employee assistance program (EAP), or mediation.

### Restorative Practices for Violation of Sexual Harassment Policy

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the School will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct, and take such action as is appropriate under the circumstances. Such action may range from counseling, creating a safe work environment by separating the employees, to termination of employment, and may include such other forms of restorative action, as the School deems appropriate under the circumstances and in accordance with applicable law.

### Workplace Violence

All employees, customers, vendors and business associates must be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from conduct that may be dangerous to others.

Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, customer, vendor or business associate will not be tolerated. The School’s resources may not be used to threaten, stalk or harass anyone at the workplace or outside the workplace. The School treats threats coming from an abusive personal relationship as it does other forms of violence.

Indirect or direct threats of violence, incidents of actual violence and suspicious individuals or activities should be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor, security personnel, Director of Operations and/or Executive Director. When reporting a threat or incident of violence, the employee should be as specific and detailed as possible. Employees should not place themselves in peril, nor should they attempt to intercede during an incident.



Employees should promptly inform the Director of Operations of any protective or restraining order that they have obtained that lists the workplace as a protected area. Employees are encouraged to report safety concerns with regard to intimate partner violence. The School will not retaliate against employees making good-faith reports. The School is committed to supporting victims of intimate partner violence by providing referrals to community resources and providing time off for reasons related to intimate partner violence.

The School will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of violence or incidents of actual violence and of suspicious individuals or activities related to school business. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as possible. The School will not retaliate against employees making good-faith reports of violence, threats or suspicious individuals or activities. In order to maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, the School may suspend employees suspected of workplace violence or threats of violence, either with or without pay, pending investigation.

Anyone found to be responsible for threats of or actual violence or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to prompt discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

The School encourages employees to bring their disputes to the attention of their supervisors or the Director of Operations before the situation escalates. The School will not discipline employees for raising such concerns. However, if it is determined after an investigation that an employee willfully and intentionally provided false information regarding the complaint, that individual will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## Equal opportunity

### Equal Employment Opportunity

I Dream PCS is an equal opportunity employer. We will extend equal opportunity to all individuals without regard to race, religion, color, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, lactation, and related medical conditions), creed, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status (including registered domestic partnership status), age, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender (including gender identity and expression), military or veteran status, immigration status (except as necessary to comply with federal, state, or local law), or any other status protected under applicable federal, state or local law. Our policy reflects and affirms our commitment to the principles of fair employment and the elimination of all



discriminatory practices. Details of our equal employment opportunity policies are further explained in Part 3 below.

## Your Employment Relationship with the School

I Dream PCS generally does not offer individual employees a formal employment contract with the School. Employment is “at-will,” meaning that you or the School may end or change your employment at any time for any lawful reason, with or without cause, and with or without advance notice.

This Employee Handbook is not a contract. It does not create any agreement, express or implied, guaranteeing you any specific terms or conditions of employment. Nothing contained in this Handbook should be construed as creating a contract guaranteeing employment for any specific duration. Neither does it obligate you to continue your employment for a specific period of time. Unless you have entered into an employment agreement that supersedes this document, either you or the School may terminate or change the employment relationship at any time. Neither does the Handbook guarantee any prescribed process for discipline and discharge. Nothing in this Handbook or any oral statement changes the at-will relationship.

No supervisor or other representative of the School, other than the Executive Director has the authority to enter into any agreement guaranteeing employment for any specific period. No such agreement shall be enforceable unless it is in writing and signed by the Executive Director and the employee.

## Drug-free workplace

Substance abuse of any kind is damaging to the community, creating safety risks, emotional trauma, and undermines the School’s ability to maintain its core values. Any employee who is convicted of any violation occurring on School property or during working times, shall notify the Director of Operations within five (5) days of the date of conviction. A conviction includes a finding of guilt, including a plea of no contest, or imposition of sentence, or both. Should there be reasonable cause for suspicion of drug use or intoxication on School property, school leadership maintains the right to request testing. The School cannot randomly test any staff member without reasonable cause for suspicion. The School also maintains the right to engage the employee in restorative practices in accordance with the School’s core values to promote healing within the community and for the employee.



## Substance Abuse

Substance abuse is a serious problem adversely affecting the lives of millions of Americans, corporate profits, organizational effectiveness, and our nation's ability to compete in the world economy.

I Dream PCS recognizes alcohol and drug abuse as potential health, safety and security problems. I Dream PCS expects all employees to assist in maintaining a work environment free from the effects of alcohol, drugs or other intoxicating substances. Accountability with this substance abuse policy is made a responsibility of employment, and violations of the policy may lead to restorative protocols and/or discharge.

All employees are accountable to refrain from engaging in the unlawful manufacture, possession, use, distribution or purchase of illicit drugs, alcohol or other intoxicants, as well as the misuse of prescription drugs on School premises or at any time and any place during working hours. While we cannot control your behavior off the premises on your own time, we certainly encourage you to behave responsibly and appropriately at all times. All employees are required to report to their jobs in appropriate mental and physical condition, ready to work.

I Dream PCS will not conduct formal employer drug testing as part of onboarding or as a matter of policy at any time, either randomly or otherwise. However, if there is reasonable suspicion that an employee is under the influence during the workday, they will be required to undergo an immediate drug test, at the expense of I Dream PCS. Failure to undergo the requested test will result in the employee being asked to leave I Dream PCS for the day, and will not be allowed to return to work until the drug test is completed. A positive drug test or refusal to submit to a drug test is grounds for further restorative action, up to and including termination from I Dream PCS.

Substance abuse is an illness that can be treated. Employees who have an alcohol or drug abuse problem are encouraged to seek appropriate professional assistance. You are safe to inform the Director of Operations or the Support Specialist for assistance in seeking help to address substance abuse. The Director of Operations can also help you determine coverage available under the School's medical insurance plan.

When work performance is impaired, admission to or use of a treatment or other program does not preclude appropriate action by the School.

Any violator of this substance abuse policy will be subject to restorative action up to and including termination of employment.



## Staff complaint resolution process

### Affirming Inclusion- Discrimination Is Prohibited

I Dream PCS is an equal opportunity employer and makes all employment decisions without regard to race, religion, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, lactation and related medical conditions), national origin, physical or mental disability, age, genetic information, marital status (including registered domestic partnership status) gender identity or expression, military or veteran status, immigration status (except as necessary to comply with federal, state, or local law), or any other category protected by federal, state, or local law. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, benefits, compensation, and training. We seek to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws related to discrimination.

I Dream PCS makes decisions concerning employment based strictly on an individual's qualifications and ability to perform the job under consideration, the comparative qualifications and abilities of other applicants or employees, and the individual's past performance within the organization.

If you believe that an employment decision has been made that does not conform with management's commitment to equal opportunity, you should promptly bring the matter to the attention of the Director of Operations and Executive Director. Your complaint will be thoroughly investigated. There will be no retaliation against any employee who files a complaint in good faith, even if the result of the investigation produces insufficient evidence to support the complaint.

### Prohibited Practices

Under the DC FMLA, I Dream PCS cannot interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided by the DC FMLA or terminate the employment of or discriminate against any individual for opposing any practice or because of involvement in any proceeding relating to the DC FMLA. In addition, I Dream PCS cannot use the taking of family and medical leave as a negative factor in employment actions, such as hiring, promotions, or disciplinary actions.

An employee may file a complaint with the DC Office of Human Rights or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer. However, I Dream PCS encourages all employees to first bring any concerns they have regarding this policy to the attention of I Dream PCS by contacting the Director of Operations and/or the Executive Director.



I Dream PCS prohibits retaliation against any employee for bringing any complaint forward in good faith under this policy.

The DC FMLA does not affect any federal or DC laws prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any DC law that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

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## Whistleblower policy

This policy is intended to encourage and enable all employees, and others, to raise serious concerns within the School prior to seeking resolution outside of the School. No director, officer, or employee who, in good faith, reports a violation shall experience harassment, retaliation, or adverse employment consequences. An employee who retaliates against someone who reports a violation in good faith, is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

If you are uncomfortable speaking with an immediate supervisor, or are not satisfied with the supervisor/supervisor's response, please speak with someone in School Leadership with whom you feel comfortable speaking. School leaders are required to report suspected violations of the Code of Conduct to the Executive Director, as long as the Executive Director is not the accused, who has specific and exclusive responsibility to investigate all reported violations. For suspected fraud, or when employees are not satisfied with speaking with any employee of the School or the Executive Director is the accused, he/she should contact the Board Chair.

Anyone filing a complaint concerning a suspected violation, or a violation of the Code of Conduct, must be acting in good faith and must have reasonable grounds for believing the disclosed information designates a violation of the Code of Conduct. Any allegations which are not substantiated, and which prove to have been made with malicious intent or made knowing the accusation is false, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Violations, or suspected violations, may be confidentially submitted by the employee or may be submitted anonymously. These reports will be kept confidential to the extent possible consistent with the need to investigate the report.