



Academy Prep Center of Lakeland Ethics Policy

Summation of Policies & Procedures Regarding
Non-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment, Violence Prevention,
Child Abuse, Abandonment, or Neglect
2023-2024

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT:

1. Our school values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. Essential to the achievement of these standards are the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
2. Our primary concern is the student and the development of the student's potential. Employees will therefore strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.
3. Concern for the student requires that our instructional personnel:
 - a. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental and/or physical health and/or safety.
 - b. Shall not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.
 - c. Shall not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.
 - d. Shall not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.
 - e. Shall not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
 - f. Shall not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.
 - g. Shall not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.
 - h. Shall not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.
 - i. Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
4. Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of colleagues, of students, of parents, and of the community, employees of our school must display the highest degree of ethical conduct. This commitment requires that our employees:
 - a. Shall maintain honesty in all professional dealings.
 - b. Shall not on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition if otherwise qualified, or social and family background deny to a colleague professional benefits or advantages or participation in any professional organization.
 - c. Shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.
 - d. Shall not engage in harassment or discriminatory conduct which unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance of professional or work responsibilities or with the orderly processes of education or which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive environment; and, further, shall make reasonable effort to assure that each individual is protected from such harassment or discrimination.
 - e. Shall not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

Any person, official, or institution participating in good faith in any act authorized or required by this chapter, or reporting in good faith any instance of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the department or any law enforcement agency, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action.

Except as provided in this chapter, nothing contained in this section shall be deemed to grant immunity, civil or criminal, to any person suspected of having abused, abandoned, or neglected a child, or committed any illegal act upon or against a child.

No resident or employee of a facility serving children may be subjected to reprisal or discharge because of his or her actions in reporting abuse, abandonment, or neglect pursuant to the requirements of this section.

Any person making a report under this section shall have a civil cause of action for appropriate compensatory and punitive damages against any person who causes detrimental changes in the employment status of such reporting party by reason of his or her making such report. Any detrimental change made in the residency or employment status of such person, including, but not limited to, discharge, termination, demotion, transfer, or reduction in pay or benefits or work privileges, or negative evaluations within a prescribed period of time shall establish a rebuttable presumption that such action was retaliatory.

Additionally, employees have a duty to report actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment or neglect. Failure to report is a misdemeanor of the first degree as described in Section 39.205, Florida Statutes. In cases of actual or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect, your concern should immediately be relayed to the Head of School where appropriate actions will be taken, including notifying and involving local Department of Children and Families (DCF) authorities, as required, or contacting DCF directly. The statewide, toll-free abuse hot-line number is 1-800-96ABUSE. Possible penalties for employees who fail to report abuse or misconduct by instructional personnel or administrators, which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student, may include written reprimand, suspension with or without pay, or termination of employment.

Reference: Florida Statute 39.203 (Immunity from liability in cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect)

EMPLOYER DISCLOSURE:

An employer who discloses information about a former or current employee to a prospective employer of the former or current employee upon request of the prospective employer or of the former or current employee is immune from civil liability for such disclosure or its consequences unless it is shown by clear and convincing evidence that the information disclosed by the former or current employer was knowingly false or violated any civil right of the former or current employee protected under chapter 760.

Reference: Florida Statute 768.095 (Employer immunity from liability; disclosure of information regarding former or current employees)

INTERNAL PROCEDURES:

Conduct that is in some way connected with employment at Academy Prep and that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, student, student's family member, school guest or volunteer, vendor, or a member of the public at any time, including off-duty periods, will not be tolerated.

Examples of such conduct include, but are not limited to, verbal insults, hostile acts, threats or jokes that relate to race, age, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, disability/handicap, veteran status, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, or other applicable legally protected category.

All individuals connected with Academy Prep, including employees and contractors, are expected to refrain from verbal or physical fighting (including "horseplay"), or other conduct that may be dangerous to others. Firearms, weapons, and other dangerous and hazardous devices or substances are strictly prohibited from any Academy Prep premises or at any Academy Prep sponsored or work-related events.

It is Academy Prep's policy to prohibit intentional and unintentional harassment of any individual by another person on the basis of any protected classification including, but not limited to, race, creed, color, religion, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, gender expression, gender identity, alienage or national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, physical or mental disability, veteran or military status, genetic information, arrest record, pregnancy or any other applicable legally protected category. This policy also extends to behaviors that may constitute bullying in the workplace that are not based on a protected category. Prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to, verbal abuse; threatening, intimidating, or humiliating behaviors; work interference – sabotage – that prevents work from being done; or some combination of the above. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate employees' personal morality, but to ensure that in the workplace, no one harasses another individual. The prohibition against harassment applies to employees at every level at Academy Prep including upper management personnel. It is also Academy

Prep's policy to prohibit non-employees such as customers or vendors having contact with Academy Prep's employees from harassing Academy Prep's employees.

If an employee believes that they have been subjected to conduct which violates this policy or witnesses such conduct, they should immediately report the matter to the employee's immediate supervisor. Additionally, employees are encouraged to report conduct they believe may be prohibited harassment or that, if left unchecked, may rise to the level of prohibited harassment, even if they are not sure the conduct violates this policy. If the employee is unable for any reason to contact an immediate supervisor or next level manager, or if the employee has not received a satisfactory response within five (5) business days after reporting any incident of what the employee perceives to be harassment, the employee may contact AES's Human Resources Department at 813-994-4114 or 877-994-4114. You may also leave a message, with contact information, on the HR Hotline at 813-994-9114 or email Info@accurateemployersolutions.com Employees choosing to leave a message on the HR hotline or to make contact via email to Info@accurateemployersolutions.com anonymously, or identified at their discretion, are requested to provide as much of the following information as possible: the alleged harasser(s), alleged victim(s), and any witnesses; the date(s) of the alleged harassment; the location(s) of the alleged harassment; and a description of the alleged harassment.

If the employee and Academy Prep are willing to have AES attempt to facilitate a resolution, AES may do so in its discretion. If AES, in its sole discretion, agrees to be involved in the facilitation of a resolution, AES's role shall be strictly limited. AES shall not be a decision-maker/joint employer, and AES's role shall be limited to conducting such investigation deemed appropriate by AES and attempting to facilitate a resolution of the issue(s) which is mutually agreeable to you and to Academy Prep. The responsibility to defend, resolve and/or end any such inappropriate conduct which may be occurring rests solely with Academy Prep, as Academy Prep, to the extent allowed by law, has sole and exclusive control over the employees and over the locations where employees work. If your immediate supervisor is the person who is engaging in harassment, or you do not feel comfortable discussing your complaint with him/her, you may also complain to the next level of management or any upper management personnel of Academy Prep. Every report of perceived harassment will be fully investigated and corrective action will be taken where appropriate. All complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible, but confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. In addition, Academy Prep will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who report unwelcome conduct to management or who cooperate in the investigations of such reports in accordance with this policy. If an employee feels he or she has been subjected to any such retaliation, he or she should report it in the same manner in which the employee would report a claim of perceived harassment under this policy. Violation of this policy, including any improper retaliatory conduct, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. All employees must cooperate with all investigations.

All managers must immediately report any incidents of harassment to AES's Human Resources Department. The harassment complaint will be thoroughly investigated and confidentiality will be maintained to the maximum extent possible under the circumstances. If harassment is found to have occurred, appropriate disciplinary action, including immediate termination, will be taken.

It is Academy Prep's policy to prohibit harassment of any employee by any supervisor, employee, customer, or vendor on the basis of actual or perceived sex or gender. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate personal morality within Academy Prep. It is to ensure that at Academy Prep all employees are free from sexual harassment. The prohibition against harassment applies to employees at every level of Academy Prep including upper management personnel.

Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal harassment, such as racial or ethnic jokes and insults, curse words, and degrading remarks, slurs or slang, which refer to a personal category or characteristic protected by law;
- Physical harassment, such as suggestive movements or gestures mimicking stereotypical behavior; and
- Visual harassment, such as insulting or inappropriate images, videos, letters, or notes.

While it is not easy to define precisely what types of conduct could constitute sexual harassment, examples of prohibited behavior include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, obscene gestures, displaying sexually graphic magazines, calendars, or posters, sending sexually explicit emails, text messages and other verbal or

physical conduct of a sexual nature, such as uninvited touching of a sexual nature or sexually related comments. Depending upon the circumstances, improper conduct also can include sexual joking, vulgar or offensive conversation or jokes, commenting about an employee's physical appearance, conversation about your own or someone else's sex life, or teasing or other conduct directed toward a person because of his or her gender which is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create an unprofessional and hostile working environment.

If the employee feels that he or she has been subjected to conduct which violates this policy or witnesses such conduct, the employee should immediately report the matter to their immediate supervisor or upper-level management, if appropriate. Additionally, employees are encouraged to report conduct they believe may be prohibited sexual harassment or that, if left unchecked, may rise to the level of prohibited sexual harassment, even if they are not sure the conduct violates this policy. If unable for any reason to contact their immediate supervisor or upper-level management, or if the employee has not received a satisfactory response within five (5) business days after reporting any incident of perceived harassment, the employee may contact AES's Human Resources Department at 813-994-4114 or toll-free at 877-994-4114. You may also leave a message, with contact information, on the HR Hotline at 877-994-4114 or email info@accurateemployersolutions.com. Employees choosing to leave a message on the HR hotline or to make contact via email to info@accurateemployersolutions.com anonymously, or identified at their discretion, are requested to provide as much of the following information as possible: the alleged harasser(s), alleged victim(s), and any witnesses; the date(s) of the alleged harassment; the location(s) of the alleged harassment; and a description of the alleged harassment.

If the employee and Academy Prep are willing to have AES attempt to facilitate a resolution, AES may do so in its discretion. If AES, in its sole discretion, agrees to be involved in the facilitation of a resolution, AES's role shall be strictly limited. AES shall not be a decision-maker/joint employer, and AES's role shall be limited to conducting such investigation deemed appropriate by AES and attempting to facilitate a resolution of the issue(s) which is mutually agreeable to you and to Academy Prep.

Every report of perceived harassment will be fully investigated and corrective action will be taken where appropriate. All complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible, but confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. In addition, Academy Prep will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who report unwelcome conduct to management or who cooperate in the investigations of such reports in accordance with this policy. If an employee feels that he or she has been subjected to any such retaliation, the employee should report it in the same manner in which a claim of perceived harassment would be reported under this policy. Violation of this policy, including any improper retaliatory conduct, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. All employees must cooperate with all investigations.

TRAINING REQUIREMENT:

All employees of Academy Prep must complete annual training on the above policies and procedures regarding ethical conduct.