Ingleside Animal Hospital

**HARASSMENT, INCLUDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

It is the policy of Ingleside Animal Hospital that all our employees should be able to enjoy a work environment free of discrimination and unlawful harassment. Actions, jokes, words, or comments based on an individual’s sex, race, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated.

This policy refers to, but is not limited to, harassment in the following areas: (1) age, (2) race, (3) color, (4) national origin, (5) religious creed, (6) sex or gender, (7) sexual orientation, (8) gender identity or expression, (9) disability, (10) genetic information, (11) ancestry and (12) membership in uniformed services.

Harassment includes the display or circulation of written materials or pictures which are degrading or hostile on the basis of the above factors and verbal abuse, slurs or insults based on those factors and directed at or made in the presence of persons having those characteristics. Harassment also refers to behavior which is personally offensive, impairs morale, and interferes with the work effectiveness of employees. Any harassment of employees by other employees will not be permitted, regardless or their working relationship.

This policy and the complaint and investigation procedures apply to sexual, as well as, other forms of illegal harassment.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) defines sexual harassment as follows:

 *Quid Pro Quo - Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and*

 *Other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute quid pro quo when*

 *(1) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or*

*Condition of an individual’s employment and, or (2) submission or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions*

*Affecting an individual.*

*Hostile Environment – Is one in which unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and verbal or other conduct of a physical nature occur and when*

*such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.*

Some examples of sexual harassment include but are not limited to:

* Unwanted sexual advances, including but not limited to touching/groping
* Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors
* Making threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances
* Visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, or displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons, or posters
* Verbal conduct such as making derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, sexually explicit jokes or comments about an employee’s body or dress
* Verbal sexual advances or propositions
* Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentary about an individual’s body, sexually degrading words to describe an individual or suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitations
* Physical conduct such as touching, assault or impeding or blocking movement
* Retaliation for reporting harassment or threatening to report harassment

Any employee who believes he/she has experienced such conduct by anyone, including a supervisor, coworker or by persons doing business with or for Ingleside Animal Hospital should tell the offender that such conduct is unwelcome and unacceptable. If the offensive behavior does not stop, or if the employee is uncomfortable confronting the offender, the employee must immediately report such conduct to their supervisor or to the Practice Manager. All harassment complaints should be made in writing. Sexual harassment or any other form of harassment or intimidation is a violation of Ingleside Animal Hospital policy and is not tolerated.

The Practice Manager will oversee an investigation of any harassment complaints in a confidential and timely manner. Ingleside Animal Hospital prohibits retaliation against any employee who complains of harassment or who participates in an investigation. All aspects of the complaint-handling procedure will be handled discreetly. However, it may be necessary to include others on a “need to know” basis. The investigation will be completed as quickly as practicable and a determination regarding the reported harassment will be made and communicated to the employee who complained and to the accused harasser. Employees engaged in any form of harassment or intimidation will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. It is important that our work environment be conducive to effective job performance and free of harassment and intimidation.

If you believe you have been the victim of harassment, or know of another employee who has, report it immediately. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal.

Any supervisor who becomes aware of possible harassment should promptly advise the Practice Manager who will handle the matter in a timely and confidential manner.

Employee signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_