



California Legislature
Policy on Appropriate Workplace Conduct:
Creating a Culture of Respect, Civility and Diversity

The Legislature is responsible for debating and enacting California law and policy, on behalf of all Californians. Members and staff engage the public, advocates, and each other in vigorous discussion of what is best for California. The Legislature’s success depends on creating a culture of respect, civility and diversity.

In creating that culture, the Legislature faces unique challenges. Members are elected by the people, not employed by the Legislature. Legislative staff includes some just entering the workforce and others with decades of experience. Legislation often addresses sensitive issues. The legislative calendar includes times of long hours, fast action, and stress, as well as times of more deliberate analysis and review. These challenges have led to incidents that counter efforts to promote respect, civility and diversity.

The California Legislature therefore adopts this Policy on Appropriate Workplace Conduct (Policy) to build a workplace culture based upon the values of respect, civility and diversity. All Members and legislative staff are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the Policy as well as all applicable local, state, and federal laws. They are encouraged to judge their own actions through the prism of these core values for a professional workplace. The Legislature seeks to build a workplace where all community members are respected, interaction and engagement is civil, and diversity is valued. Building that workplace will require time and the Legislature will need to invest the resources necessary to support that effort.

The purpose of this Policy is to preserve the dignity, respect, and professionalism of the legislative workplace as well as to protect the right of employees to be free from unlawful discrimination, sexual harassment and all other forms of unlawful harassment, retaliation and inappropriate conduct toward others based on a protected status. Retaliation, as well as discrimination, sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, and inappropriate conduct toward others based on a protected status, is contrary to the values of the Legislature. For the protections of individuals under this Policy, the term “employee” shall include unpaid interns, fellows, volunteers, applicants, and persons providing services pursuant to a contract. In addition, Members are both protected by this policy and required to abide by its terms. As a preventive measure, the Legislature will not tolerate inappropriate conduct toward others, even if the conduct does not meet the legal definition of unlawful discrimination, harassment,

