

## **HELEN M. PLUM MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT**

### **P-26 Anti-Bullying**

Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees September 16, 2025.

#### **Bullying**

Helen Plum Library prohibits bullying. The Library prioritizes creating a safe environment where employees can thrive and be productive.

Bullying behavior is the persistent mistreatment, intimidation, or alienation of an employee or group of employees. Bullying interferes with the employee's or group of employees' ability to work by causing emotional distress and/or fear of physical harm.

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited, to:

- Spreading rumors, gossip, or innuendo about another employee
- Excluding or isolating someone socially
- Intimidating an employee
- Undermining or impeding an employee's work
- Making derogatory, demeaning, or offensive jokes
- Tampering with personal belongings or work equipment
- Criticizing a person persistently
- Removing areas of responsibilities without cause
- Constantly changing work guidelines
- Establishing deadlines that are impossible to meet
- Withholding necessary information or purposefully giving the wrong information
- Assigning unreasonable duties or workload
- Unwarranted punishment
- Blocking applications for training, leave, or promotion
- Targeted and disproportionate enforcement of workplace rules

#### **Procedure for Reporting and Investigating**

All employees have a responsibility to report bullying in the workplace. An individual who believes that they have been subjected to bullying, or who has witnessed bullying, should immediately report the incident to their manager, any other manager, or Human Resources. If a manager receives a complaint of bullying or becomes aware of such conduct, the complaint or conduct should be immediately reported to Human Resources. If a report is made verbally, the Library may follow up in writing to ensure complete understanding and subsequent resolution of the specific complaint. There are no exceptions to this reporting requirement.

The Human Resources Coordinator and Executive Director will promptly investigate all complaints and make all reasonable efforts to resolve the matter. These efforts may include, but are not limited to, meeting with the person making the complaint, the person accused, and any possible witnesses. The Library may put reasonable interim measures in place, such as a leave of absence (with or without pay), while the investigation takes place.

Complaints by an elected or appointed official against another elected or appointed official will be submitted to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will, in consultation with legal counsel for the Library, ensure that an independent review is conducted with respect to such allegations.

Employees and officials are required to cooperate with investigations conducted by the Library.

A substantiated complaint against an employee will subject the individual to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The Library will also take appropriate action to address a substantiated complaint of bullying by a third party or non-employee.

If an investigation results in a finding that the complainant falsely accused another of bullying knowingly or in a malicious manner, the complainant will be subject to appropriate discipline, including the possibility of discharge.

### **Retaliation is Prohibited**

Reporting bullying or participating in an investigation will not reflect adversely upon an individual's status or affect future employment. Any form of retaliation against an individual who reports bullying or participates in an investigation is strictly prohibited by the Illinois Human Rights Act. Any individual who retaliates against another for exercising his or her rights under this policy shall be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. The Library will also take appropriate action to address a third party or non-employee who engages in retaliation.