

VILLAGE OF FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

VILLAGE COUNCIL

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Village of Friendship Heights

Non-Discrimination Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy establishes the Village's commitment to equal opportunity and non-discrimination in many-aspects of Village operations, including delivery of services to the public and contracting. (Non-discrimination in hiring and personnel practices is addressed in another policy). This policy applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers, and Councilmembers.

2. Policy Statement

The Village is committed to providing equal opportunity and maintaining an environment free from discrimination and harassment. No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in employment, Village programs, services, contracting opportunities, or activities on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, familial status, disability, genetic information, military or veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state, or local law.

3. Use of Village Facilities and Public Spaces

3.1 Equal Access and Accessibility

The Village shall:

- Ensure that all Village services, facilities, parks, recreational areas, and public spaces are accessible and available on a non-discriminatory basis
- Ensure facilities meet ADA accessibility standards
- Not deny access based on the protected characteristics of individuals or organizations seeking to use Village spaces
- Prioritize accessibility improvements in capital planning and facility maintenance
- Ensure that digital access systems and wayfinding are accessible to individuals with disabilities

3.2 Facility Rental and Permits

The Village shall:

- Apply rental fees, permit requirements, and usage rules without discrimination
- Make application processes accessible and transparent
- Evaluate rental and permit applications based on objective, content-neutral criteria
- Provide accommodations to ensure equal access for individuals with disabilities

4. Provision of Village Services

4.1 Service Delivery

The Village shall:

- Deliver all Village services equitably and without discrimination
- Ensure services are accessible to individuals with disabilities through modifications, auxiliary aids, or alternative service delivery methods
- Provide language access services for individuals with limited English proficiency, to the extent possible
- Design programs and services to be inclusive and culturally responsive

- Train staff on working effectively with interpreters and limited English proficient residents
- Ensure digital services and websites meet accessibility standards (WCAG 2.1 AA or higher)
- Offer multiple channels for accessing services (in-person, phone, online, mail)

4.2 Public Meetings and Civic Engagement

The Village shall:

- Hold public meetings in accessible locations
- Provide accommodations upon request (interpretation, captioning, assistive listening devices)
- Schedule meetings at varied times to accommodate different work schedules and family obligations, to the extent possible
- Utilize multiple engagement methods to ensure broad community participation

5. Harassment Prevention

5.1 Prohibition

The Village prohibits harassment based on any protected characteristic. Harassment includes unwelcome conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment, including:

- Verbal harassment (slurs, derogatory comments, offensive jokes)

- Physical harassment (assault, unwanted touching, threatening gestures)
- Visual harassment (derogatory posters, cartoons, drawings, emails, or messages)
- Sexual harassment (unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually explicit communications)

5.2 Reporting and Response

Employees, service recipients, or members of the public who experience or witness harassment should report it to the Village Manager or Village Council.

All complaints will be promptly investigated, and appropriate corrective action will be taken. The Village prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports discrimination or harassment or participates in an investigation.

6. Contracting and Procurement

6.1 Non-Discrimination Requirements

The Village shall:

- Include non-discrimination clauses in all contracts and agreements
- Require contractors and vendors to comply with equal opportunity and non-discrimination laws
- Encourage utilization of minority-owned, women-owned, and disadvantaged business enterprises
- Monitor contractor compliance with non-discrimination requirements

6.2 Equal Opportunity in Contracting

The Village shall:

- Ensure procurement processes are open, transparent, and accessible
- Provide technical assistance to support participation by small and disadvantaged businesses
- Report annually on contracting diversity

7. Data Collection and Accountability

7.1 Monitoring and Assessment

The Village shall:

- Collect demographic data on employees, service recipients, and facility users (while protecting privacy)
- Analyze complaint and investigation data to identify patterns or problem areas

7.2 Continuous Improvement

The Village shall:

- Review and update this policy every three years or as needed
- Conduct regular training on non-discrimination, implicit bias, and cultural competency
- Solicit feedback from employees and community members on equity concerns

8. Training and Education

The Village shall provide:

- Mandatory non-discrimination and harassment prevention training for all employees within 90 days of hire and every two years thereafter
- Specialized training for supervisors, managers, and human resources staff
- ADA and accessibility training for staff involved in service delivery and facility management
- Training on complaint investigation procedures for designated investigators

9. Complaint Procedures

9.1 Public Service Complaints

Individuals who believe they have experienced discrimination in Village services or facilities should:

1. File a complaint with the Village Manager or Village Council
2. Expect a response within 30 days

9.2 Remedies

This policy does not preclude individuals from filing complaints with:

- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
- Maryland Commission on Civil Rights
- Department of Justice
- Other applicable federal or state agencies

The Village will not retaliate against individuals who file complaints.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

10.1 Village Manager

- Ensure implementation and compliance with this policy
- Allocate resources necessary for policy implementation
- Oversee accessibility compliance in facilities and services

- Process accommodation requests
- Coordinate accessibility improvements
- Serve as primary contact for disability-related concerns
- Report to the Council on policy effectiveness

10.2 All Other Employees

- Implement non-discrimination practices within their purview
- Address discrimination complaints promptly
- Foster inclusive and respectful workplace cultures
- Comply with this policy
- Treat all individuals with respect and dignity
- Report discrimination or harassment
- Participate in required training
- Support an inclusive environment

11. Non-Retaliation

The Village strictly prohibits retaliation against any person who:

- Files a discrimination or harassment complaint
- Participates in an investigation
- Opposes discriminatory practices
- Requests reasonable accommodations
- Exercises rights under civil rights laws

Retaliation includes adverse employment actions, harassment, intimidation, or any conduct that would deter a reasonable person from exercising their rights. Violations will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

12. Enforcement

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including:

- Verbal or written warning
- Termination of contracts or agreements
- Denial or revocation of permits or facility use privileges

13. Policy Dissemination

This policy shall be:

- Posted on the Village website and in all Village facilities
- Included in employee handbooks and orientation materials
- Referenced in facility rental agreements and service applications
- Made available in alternative formats upon request
- Translated into commonly spoken languages in the community

- Reviewed with all employees annually

14. Contact Information

Questions or complaints regarding this policy should be directed to:

Village Manager:

Julian Mansfield
4433 South Park Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
Email: jmansfield@friendshipheightsmd.gov
Phone: (301) 656-2797
Fax: (301) 907-3922

Adopted: March 9, 2026

Effective Date: March 9, 2026

Last Revised: N/A

Next Review Date: April 9, 2027

Approved by: Friendship Heights Village Council

Village of Friendship Heights

Complaint Form

CONFIDENTIAL

This form is used to report allegations of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation in violation of the Village of Friendship Heights Non-Discrimination Policy. All complaints will be taken seriously and investigated promptly and impartially. Information will be shared only on a need-to-know basis.

SECTION 1: COMPLAINANT INFORMATION

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone (Primary): _____ Phone (Alternate): _____

Email: _____

Preferred method of contact: Phone Email Mail In person

Preferred language for communication: _____

Do you need an interpreter? Yes No Language: _____

Do you need any accommodations to participate in this process? Yes No

If yes, please describe: _____

SECTION 2: YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE VILLAGE OF FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

I am a (check all that apply):

Village employee

Department: _____ Position: _____

Job applicant

Position applied for: _____

Resident/member of the public receiving Village services

Contractor or vendor

Company name: _____

Volunteer

Member of the Council

Facility or space user

Other (please describe): _____

SECTION 3: TYPE OF COMPLAINT

This complaint involves (check all that apply):

Employment-Related:

Hiring or recruitment

Promotion or advancement

Compensation or benefits

Performance evaluation

Discipline or termination

Training or professional development

Terms and conditions of employment

Reasonable accommodation (denied or inadequate)

Workplace harassment

Retaliation

Service-Related:

- Denial of service
- Unequal service delivery
- Lack of accessibility
- Language access barriers
- Harassment by staff or officials
- Retaliation for prior complaint

Facility/Space Use:

- Denial of facility access or rental
- Unequal treatment in permit process
- Facility accessibility barriers
- Discriminatory policies or rules

Contracting/Procurement:

- Denied contract opportunity
- Unequal treatment in bidding process
- Other procurement-related discrimination

SECTION 4: BASIS OF DISCRIMINATION

I believe I was discriminated against or harassed based on my (check all that apply):

- Race
- Color
- National origin/Ancestry
- Religion/Religious beliefs
- Sex/Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity or expression
- Disability (physical or mental)
- Age
- Marital status
- Familial status (having children)
- Pregnancy
- Genetic information
- Military or veteran status
- Retaliation for prior complaint or protected activity
- Other (please specify): _____

2. Name: _____ Phone/Email: _____
What did they witness? _____
3. Name: _____ Phone/Email: _____
What did they witness? _____
-

SECTION 7: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Do you have any documents or other evidence that support your complaint?

Yes No

If yes, please check all that apply: Emails or written correspondence

Text messages

Photos or videos

Performance evaluations

Medical records

Audio recordings

Facility rental application or denial

Service application or records

Other: _____

Please attach copies of all supporting documents. Do not submit original documents.

List of documents attached: _____

SECTION 8: PRIOR ACTIONS TAKEN

Have you reported this matter to anyone else? Yes No

If yes, please provide details:

Person/Office notified: _____

Date notified: _____ Method: Verbal Written Email

Response received: _____

Have you filed a complaint with any external agency? Yes No

If yes, please check all that apply: Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
 State Civil Rights Agency
 Department of Justice
 Office for Civil Rights
 Other: _____

Date filed: _____ Case number (if known): _____

SECTION 9: DESIRED RESOLUTION

What would you like to see happen as a result of this complaint?

SECTION 10: CERTIFICATION AND SIGNATURE

I certify that the information I have provided in this complaint is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that:

- Filing a false complaint may result in disciplinary action or denial of services
- The Village prohibits retaliation against anyone who files a complaint in good faith
- Information will be kept confidential to the extent possible, but may need to be shared during the investigation
- I may be contacted for additional information or to participate in an investigation interview
- I have the right to have a support person or representative present during any interviews

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Print Name: _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: _____ Received by: _____

Complaint Number: _____ Assigned to: _____

Initial Assessment Date: _____ Priority: Urgent Standard

Investigation Start Date: _____ Target Completion: _____

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Submit this form by:

- **In Person:** [Office address and hours]
- **Mail:** [Mailing address]
- **Email:** [Email address] (use encrypted email if possible)
- **Fax:** [Fax number]
- **Online:** [Website portal, if available]

Questions? Contact: **Village Manager**

You will receive written acknowledgment of your complaint within 5 business days and will be informed of the investigation timeline and process.

Alternative formats of this form are available upon request, including large print, audio, and translated versions.

Interpretation and translation services are available at no cost.