



**Oral History Association  
Employment Policies  
Adopted July 2020**

All employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner showing courtesy and consideration to members and officers of the Oral History Association, to the general public, and to fellow employees. In all dealings with the public and with each other, all OHA employees are expected to be considerate of the rights of others and to respect the dignity of each individual. This includes in the office, off site, and on social media.

**OHA Statement on Diversity and Inclusivity**

The Oral History Association reaffirms our values of *Democracy, Inclusivity, and Equality* to “bring together people interested in oral history as a way of collecting and interpreting memories to foster knowledge and dignity.”

Our membership remains committed to documenting personal narratives of complex and diverse histories and advocating for a collaborative practice of oral history which values and honors people, communities, subjects, and events that otherwise might not be included in the historical record.

An open exchange of stories and ideas can only occur when participants are free from fear. With this reaffirmation of our fundamental values of respect, empowerment, diversity, engagement, and inclusion, we reject the current rhetoric of hate, division, exclusion, and discrimination.

Oral history, the acts of questioning, listening, recording, and preserving diverse historical perspectives, remains a powerful model for bridging divides, advocacy, public engagement, and greater historical understanding. The Oral History Association will strengthen our commitment to uphold our core principles and values and continue to welcome diverse individuals and communities into our Association and at its meetings and activities.

**Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment has been defined generally as including unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature whenever: (1) submission to the conduct is either an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment; (2) an individual’s reaction to the conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting that individual; (3) the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual’s work performance; or (4) the conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

No employee, member, volunteer, or attendee should be subjected to sexual harassment or unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures, nor should any employee, member, volunteer, or attendee be led to believe that any benefit will in any way depend upon “cooperation” of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment is not limited to demands for sexual favors. It also may include such actions as: (1) sex-oriented verbal “kidding,” “teasing,” or jokes; (2) repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions; (3) continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature; (4) graphic or degrading comments about an individual or his or her appearance; (5) the display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; (6) subtle pressure for sexual activity; and (7) inappropriate physical contact.

Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature or consensual personal and social relationships without a discriminatory employment or professional effect. It refers to behavior that is not welcome and that is personally intimidating, hostile, or offensive.

### **Other Unlawful Harassment or Conduct**

Harassment on other grounds, including race, color, religion, national origin, age, marital status, gender identity, or disability is also prohibited. Harassment may include such actions as: (1) jokes or verbal “kidding,” or “teasing;” (2) verbal abuse and epithets; (3) degrading comments; (4) the display of offensive objects and pictures; (5) conduct or comments of a lewd or lascivious nature; and (6) other conduct that an individual might reasonably find to be intimidating, hostile, offensive, coercive, or threatening.

### **Scope of Policy**

This policy prohibiting harassment, whether sexual or of another nature, is not limited to relationships between and among employees, members and volunteers, but also extends to interaction with attendees and vendors. No officer, director, members, or other volunteer shall subject any employee, member, volunteer, attendee, or vendor to sexual or other harassment of any nature, including that conduct described above. Any forms of harassment as described in this policy are reportable immediately to the ombudsperson on call at the annual meeting, any OHA Council member, or either of the co-executive directors.

The Oral History Association will fully investigate all complaints and will maintain confidentiality to the greatest extent possible. Anyone who is found to have engaged in harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include the following: (1) a written reprimand or censure; (2) a request for resignation; (3) removal of such person from the individual’s position within OHA; or (4) suspension or termination of the individual’s membership, employment, engagement, and/or participation in current and/or future OHA-operated, sponsored and/or affiliated events. No individual will be retaliated against for making a complaint or assisting with the investigation of a complaint.

### **Informal and Formal Complaint Procedures**

OHA Council will appoint an ombudsperson from its membership to serve as a point of contact during the annual meetings. The ombudsperson would be available at set times during the conference to receive complaints of harassment or unprofessional conduct. Members and attendees at OHA functions who believe themselves to be victims of harassment could then

initiate complaints in person, by text, email, or other means to the ombudsperson. Complaints could also be made to any OHA Council member or to either of the co-executive directors. Such initial contacts would then be referred to the ombudsperson who would then initiate the investigation process. Complainant would be informed of two options: initiate an informal resolution and/or launch a formal investigation. The informal resolution process would be employed if the complainant desires a confidential and immediate intervention to stop the harassing behavior. A formal investigation would be employed if the complainant so desires. At the initiation of the complaint and any subsequent time, the complainant can request a formal investigation. An informal resolution in no way precludes a subsequent formal investigation.

The ombudsperson working with co-executive directors would have the unilateral power to intervene and remove an individual from any OHA function in cases where behavior is egregious, disruptive, or violent, and prevents the normal conduct of the Association's business.

If the complainant desires a formal investigation, such a process would be initiated by the submission of a confidential written request to the ombudsperson. At the initiation of the complaint, one or both of the co-executive directors would oversee an investigation in cooperation with the ombudsperson, soliciting written statements from the parties involved. If the complainant lodges an accusation against an individual on Council or the Executive Office staff, the ombudsperson would conduct the investigation with the assistance of two members of the Association in good standing identified by the president or president-elect. All materials would then be submitted to the executive committee comprised of the current president, immediate past president, and president elect for adjudication on the basis of the preponderance of evidence and, if warranted, appropriate sanction as indicated under the section "Scope of Policy." Confidentiality to the greatest extent possible would be maintained throughout the process.

### **A Commitment to Education**

OHA will create an information page on its website, explaining this policy and offering educational materials about harassment and appropriate professional conduct. The policy will also be included in the conference program. This will be in place by the opening of registration for the annual meeting.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance**

The OHA complies fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you are an employee with an actual or perceived disability and require reasonable accommodations to perform the essential functions of your position, you are encouraged to discuss your situation with the Executive Director(s) so that needed workplace accommodations can be implemented to the extent possible without causing an undue burden to the OHA.

### **Drug-Free Work Place**

A drug-free workplace policy will be strictly enforced so that the OHA remains in compliance with federal law and regulations. Employees are prohibited from reporting to work or working when the employee uses any controlled substance, except when the use is pursuant to a doctor's orders and the doctor advised the employee that the substance does not adversely affect the employee's ability to safely perform his or her job duties. Employees are also prohibited from reporting for duty or remaining on duty when intoxicated. Employees are further prohibited from

consuming alcohol during working hours, including meal and break periods. Notwithstanding the foregoing, an employee who chooses to do so may consume alcohol that is offered at appropriate work-related functions or activities. However, you should be mindful of maintaining your professional decorum at any event at which you are representing the OHA. Any violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The company reserves the right to take any and all appropriate and lawful actions necessary to enforce this substance abuse policy including, but not limited to, the inspection of desks, personal effects or other areas where evidence supporting a policy violation may be found.

### **Equal Employment Opportunity**

The OHA provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.

This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training.

### **Employment at Will**

Your employment with the Oral History Association is at will. This means your employment is for an indefinite period of time and it is subject to termination by you or the Oral History Association with or without cause, with or without notice, and at any time. Nothing in this policy or any other policy of the Oral History Association shall be interpreted to be in conflict with or to eliminate or modify in any way, the at will employment status of the Oral History Association employees.

The at will employment status of an employee of the Oral History Association may be modified only in a written employment agreement with that employee which is signed by the Executive Director(s) of the Oral History Association.

By your signature below, you acknowledge your understanding that your employment with the Oral History Association is at will, and that nothing in this document is intended to constitute a contract of employment, express or implied.

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Employee Signature

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Employee Printed Name

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Date

