

# **Respect for All**

Resources and Support for  
Employees, Learners and Volunteers

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Your guide to recognizing and addressing  
concerns of discrimination, harassment,  
bullying and disrespectful behavior with  
colleagues, patients and families.

Office of Equity & Diversity  
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## SUMMARY

The Respect for All document is a guide for employees, learners and volunteers at all Children's Mercy locations about our organizational values of Kindness, Curiosity, Inclusion, Team and Integrity.

This guide:

- Describes behaviors and expectations of each other as colleagues.
- Provides guidance on how to handle behavior that is inconsistent with our values.
- Addresses behaviors and expectations of patients and families.
- Offers sample scripting, communications, documentation and reporting processes.
- Provides employees and learners with valuable support resources at CM and in the community.

### Introduction

Children's Mercy strives to be a safe, respectful and welcoming place for all people. This includes people of all ages, cultures, abilities, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, sexual orientations, national origins, races, colors, religions and veteran/military statuses. To fully leverage the richness of diversity at CM, we must create, maintain and promote a community of inclusion. Inclusion means we honor, respect, embrace and value the uniqueness and perspectives of all employees, patients, families, students, trainees, volunteers and our local and global communities. It also includes removing barriers to individual success.

This guide will provide information on how to recognize, address, manage and respond to conduct, such as discrimination, harassment, bullying and disrespectful behavior, that does not reflect our core values.

All are welcome at CM. Discrimination, harassment, bullying and disrespectful behavior have no place here. We will not tolerate them. The principles of inclusion and diversity are embedded in our culture. We are committed to these principles and must continue to raise our voices so that others may hear.

This guide will evolve and continue to improve as we develop more tools and resources.

Contact the Office of Equity and Diversity at [oed@cmh.edu](mailto:oed@cmh.edu) or (816) 302-3813 if you have any comments, questions or feedback, including requests for resources to support your CM colleagues.

## QUICK GUIDE

Children's Mercy strives to offer an environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying and disrespectful behavior and prohibits behavior not consistent with our shared values. Our goal is to prevent and immediately address any discriminatory, harassing, bullying or disrespectful behavior, whether it rises to the level of "unlawful" behavior or not.

### Your responsibility

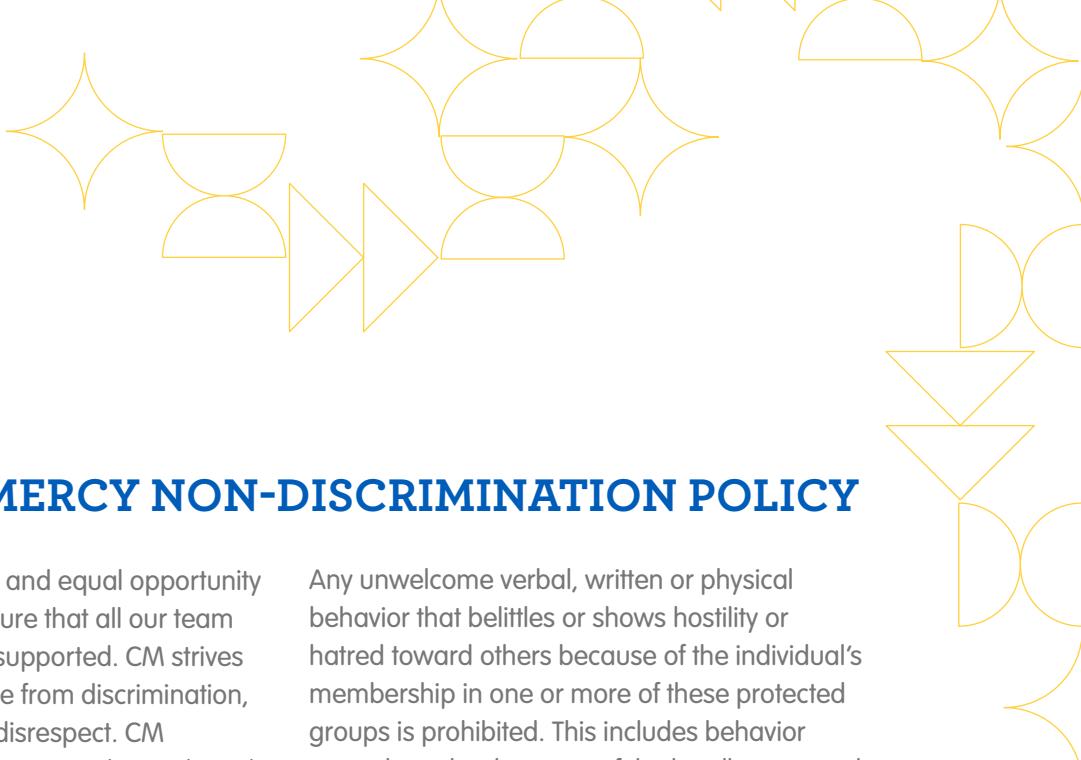
- Understand and comply with CM's policies.
- Refrain from any behavior that is discriminatory, harassing, bullying or disrespectful.
- Hold yourself and others accountable to identify and address all forms of discrimination, harassment, bullying or disrespect.

### Action you can take

- **Individual discussion:** If you perceive the issue to be a minor, one-time event and you are comfortable doing so, it is usually best to talk directly to the individuals involved.
- **Reporting:** If the issue is significant or recurring or you are not comfortable talking directly to the individuals involved, discuss the concern with your supervisor or contact HR-Employee Relations directly at (816) 234-3587.
- **Security:** If your safety or the safety of a patient is threatened, contact Security immediately at (816) 234-3345.

### Support you can count on

Review page 8 for sample scenarios and how you might respond. See the **Resources** section for tips on dealing with mental, emotional and physical needs. Find links to CM programs that are available to assist you in looking after your well-being.



## CHILDREN'S MERCY NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

CM is an affirmative action and equal opportunity employer. We want to be sure that all our team members are valued and supported. CM strives to offer an environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying and disrespect. CM prohibits behavior not consistent with our shared values. Our goal is to prevent and immediately address any discriminatory, harassing, bullying or disrespectful behavior, whether it rises to the level of "unlawful" behavior or not.

Protected categories identified in our policy:

- Race
- National origin/ethnicity
- Color
- Sex/gender
- Age
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity/expression
- Disability
- Religion
- Whistleblower status
- Military service/vets
- Use of protected leave
- Filing civil rights complaints
- Pregnancy
- Genetic information
- Others under federal, state and local laws

Any unwelcome verbal, written or physical behavior that belittles or shows hostility or hatred toward others because of the individual's membership in one or more of these protected groups is prohibited. This includes behavior toward another because of the legally protected status of one with whom the individual is associated. This applies to all individuals who work for or are associated with CM, including managers, supervisors, employees, patients, visitors, vendors, volunteers and learners.

Examples:

- Prohibited behavior against any person of protected status by law.
- Verbal behavior such as racial nicknames, offensive comments or slurs.
- Unwanted sexual advances, comments or invitations.
- Physical behavior such as unwanted touching.

## YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

All CM employees, learners and volunteers are expected to behave in a professional, honest and ethical manner when acting on behalf of CM or while participating in CM activities in the community. That includes treating our patients, their families, visitors, vendors and other members of the CM community with respect and dignity.

CM does not tolerate harassment, discrimination, bullying or disrespect. This includes any behavior that disrupts another's work performance or creates an intimidating, offensive, abusive or hostile work or learning environment including through the following methods:

- Electronic (via social media, email, recordings, photos or video)
- Physical conduct such as unwanted touching
- Nonverbal and verbal conduct such as racial epithets, derogatory comments, slurs, etc.

See the [Social Media Policy](#) for information about how these concepts apply to your personal use of social media.

You are responsible for speaking up immediately if you have a concern about a decision, behavior or action that you believe needs to be addressed. CM can improve every time you ask a question or raise a concern. When you speak up to clarify a policy or report questionable behavior, you are supporting your colleagues, the interests of patients, employees, learners and volunteers, and the reputation of CM.

### Your responsibilities include:

- Behaving in a manner consistent with our organizational values of Kindness, Curiosity, Inclusion, Team and Integrity.
- Holding yourself and others accountable to identify those behaviors that are not consistent with our values so they can be addressed.
- Remembering that discrimination, harassment, bullying and disrespect violate

our values. They may also violate the law, even when they involve individuals outside the CM community or acts that occur outside the workplace. If you believe you have been the subject of, or have witnessed prohibited conduct described in the [Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment](#) policy, you must report this to a supervisor or HR-Employee Relations.

- Not engaging in:
  - » Degrading jokes
  - » Slurs
  - » Bigotry
  - » Physical or verbal intimidation
  - » Unwelcome sexual advances
  - » Speaking negatively about patients or families
  - » Microaggressions
  - » Other disrespectful behavior
- Understanding that offensive messages, insulting remarks and inappropriate jokes are not acceptable and not consistent with our culture and values.
- Telling the person if you are upset by their actions or inappropriate language, explaining why and asking the person to stop. Use the hospital's complaint process if:
  - » The behavior continues.
  - » You are not comfortable taking a direct approach.
  - » Such resolution is not possible or appropriate.
- Listening if someone says you are offending them with your words or actions, and evaluating adjustments you can make, even if you believe you are acting innocently or in a non-offensive manner.

## Inclusive patient care

CM is committed to providing inclusive patient care. We will not exclude or treat patients, guests or visitors differently based on any protected class. Any complaint received by CM alleging an employee has harassed a patient, visitor or another third party will be referred to HR-Employee Relations for an investigation under the [Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment](#) policy.

CM does not exclude, deny benefits to, or otherwise discriminate against any person protected by law who participates in or receives services and benefits from federal financial assistance programs and activities.

Please refer to the [Non-Discrimination of Services and Medical Care Policy](#).

## Patient, guest and visitor behavior

Patients, guests and visitors are also expected to behave respectfully. Hateful or racist speech is not allowed. CM will not tolerate any discriminatory or harmful behaviors. Please keep in mind that some patient conditions or illnesses may cause outbursts or disruptive behaviors. Staff should feel supported in managing these encounters. They can ask for assistance by using the Staff Advocacy Team activation (additional information noted below). Please refer to the [Patient Rights and Responsibilities](#) Policy and the [Disruptive or Dangerous Persons](#) Policy.

The Patient Rights brochure is written in family-friendly language. It is available and accessible at all primary entrances in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). The brochures are available for order through the [IPOC system on The Scope](#) for clinical areas that wish to provide them to patients and families. The [Patient Rights and Responsibilities](#) Policy is also available to patients and families on the CM website.

We have respect for all. Our goal is to provide resources to address potential discriminatory requests for changes of health care providers by families or patients, including those based on a preference for specific characteristics unrelated to medical need, modesty or cultural concerns if they occur. See the next section to assist in navigating these situations.

Refer to the [Disruptive or Dangerous Persons](#) Policy if you have challenges in explaining this to patients and families. You can also contact the Staff Advocacy Team (SAT) 24/7 by calling x 51129 or the operator, (816) 234-3000. The SAT team can help determine the next steps with staff, patients and families.





## HOW TO RESPOND TO DISCRIMINATORY OR BIASED ENCOUNTERS

How to respond to a request for, or refusal of, health care professionals with specific characteristics.

CM is an affirmative action and equal opportunity employer. We value diversity in our community. We want to be sure that all our team members are valued and supported.

Use clarifying language if you think someone is being discriminatory. Be sure to report the incident to your supervisor. Document the incident in the Disruptive Event Note Form in Cerner. Review the Disruptive or Dangerous Persons Policy for guidance.

The following are sample scripts you can use to respond to possible discrimination:

**1. Acknowledge and clarify whether the request for a different health care professional is discriminatory:**

- *"I want to be sure I understand the reason for your request. Are you saying that you want a different health care provider because of their <gender, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.>?"*

**2. Take action:**

- If no: Identify the behaviors of the health care professional that the patient would like to change: *"I see you have some specific requests to deliver your care. Let's work together with <health care provider name> so we can try to meet your expectations. I'll ask <employee name> to come in so we can all talk about your request."* Or, *"Let me contact your nurse and <employee name> so they can talk to you about your requests."*

- If yes: Focus on relevant facts/mirror mutual respect: *"I want to reassure you that all of our team members are competent and skilled. We all are specially trained to provide you with the care you need. At Children's Mercy, we care for all individuals who need our services. We respect all our team members. I would be glad to (or glad to contact your nurse to) address any specific requests or questions you feel are important to your medical care. Is your request related to medical need, modesty or cultural concerns?"*

**3. Reclarify your stance. If you meet resistance:**

- *"I understand that you do not want <employee name> to care for you because of their <gender, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.> We have respect for all. That is for both patients and our team members. We generally do not change our care teams based on a patient's or parent's preference for specific characteristics of our team members that is unrelated to medical need, modesty or cultural concerns."* If the request is related to medical need, modesty or cultural concerns, assist with alternatives for care.

- If a person continues to object: *"If you would like, I can put you in touch with the Patient Advocate Office (or Administrator on Call, if outside of normal business hours)."*

**4. Follow up with the team members who may have experienced discrimination if you are an observer or witness:**

- *"I heard/know that <patient name> said/ did something that may have been hurtful or distressing to you. I want to let you know that their behavior is not acceptable to me, and I am here to support you if you would like. You*

## How to respond to a perceived discriminatory act by a patient or family member.

In some cases, you may experience what could be perceived as discriminatory acts from patients or family members (e.g., display of racist symbols, being called a slur). The following are sample scripts you can use to respond to possible discrimination:

### 1. Acknowledge and clarify the potentially discriminatory behavior:

- *"I find your comments/behavior about my <gender, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.> to be inappropriate or offensive."*

### 2. Take action:

- *"Please do not make comments like that. They are hurtful and discriminatory."*
- Document the exchange. Note that you asked the other party to stop making comments by using the Disruptive Event Note Form in Cerner.
- Acknowledge that as an employee/health care provider, you may stop the treatment relationship if the behavior persists.

#### [Terminating the Health Care Provider-Patient Relationship Policy](#)

- Contact your immediate supervisor for support. If you need additional support, activate the Staff Advocacy Team.

*"are a valuable member of our community and an asset to our team."*

- You may also refer the team member to the **Resources** section of this guide.

- The direct supervisor should immediately de-brief the employee who experienced the discriminatory act. Resources for support are noted below.

## How to respond to a perceived discriminatory act by a patient or family member toward colleagues.

In some cases, you may witness perceived discriminatory acts from patients or family members about or toward your colleagues. These could be a display of racist symbols or the use of a discriminatory slur. The following are sample scripts you can use to respond to possible discrimination:

### 1. Acknowledge and clarify the potentially discriminatory behavior:

- *"I find your comments/behavior about my colleague's <gender, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.> to be inappropriate."*

### 2. Take action:

- *"Please stop making comments like that. They are hurtful and discriminatory."*
- Document the exchange. Note that you asked the other party to stop making comments, using the Disruptive Event Note Form in Cerner.
- Acknowledge that as an employee/health care provider, you may stop the treatment relationship if the behavior persists.

#### [Terminating the Health care Provider-Patient Relationship Policy](#)

- Contact your immediate supervisor for support.

- The immediate supervisor should immediately de-brief the employee who experienced the discriminatory act and provide resources for support.

## How to respond to potentially discriminatory or offensive images, symbols, apparel or accessories.

In some cases, you may experience patients or families wearing or showing offensive, insulting or discriminatory symbols or images. The following are sample scripts you can use to respond to possible discrimination:

### **1. Acknowledge and clarify the perceived discriminatory behavior:**

- *"I find your <T-shirt/mask> offensive in a child-friendly environment."*

### **2. Take action:**

- *"Can you please turn your shirt inside out?"*  
Or, *"Please use the mask provided by the hospital."*

- Document the exchange. Note that you asked the other party not to display the offensive symbol, image or words, using the Disruptive Event Note Form in Cerner.
- Acknowledge that as an employee/health care provider, you have the right to stop the treatment relationship if the behavior persists. [Terminating the Health care Provider-Patient Relationship Policy](#).
- Contact your immediate supervisor and Patient Advocate for support.
- The immediate supervisor should immediately de-brief the employee who experienced the discriminatory act and provide resources for support.

## How to respond to a potentially discriminatory act by a colleague, co-worker or vendor.

In some cases, you may believe you have experienced discrimination, bias or microaggressions from colleagues, co-workers or vendors. The following are sample scripts you can use to respond to possible discrimination:

### **1. Acknowledge and clarify the perceived discriminatory behavior:**

- *"I find your comments/behavior about my <gender, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.> to be inappropriate."*

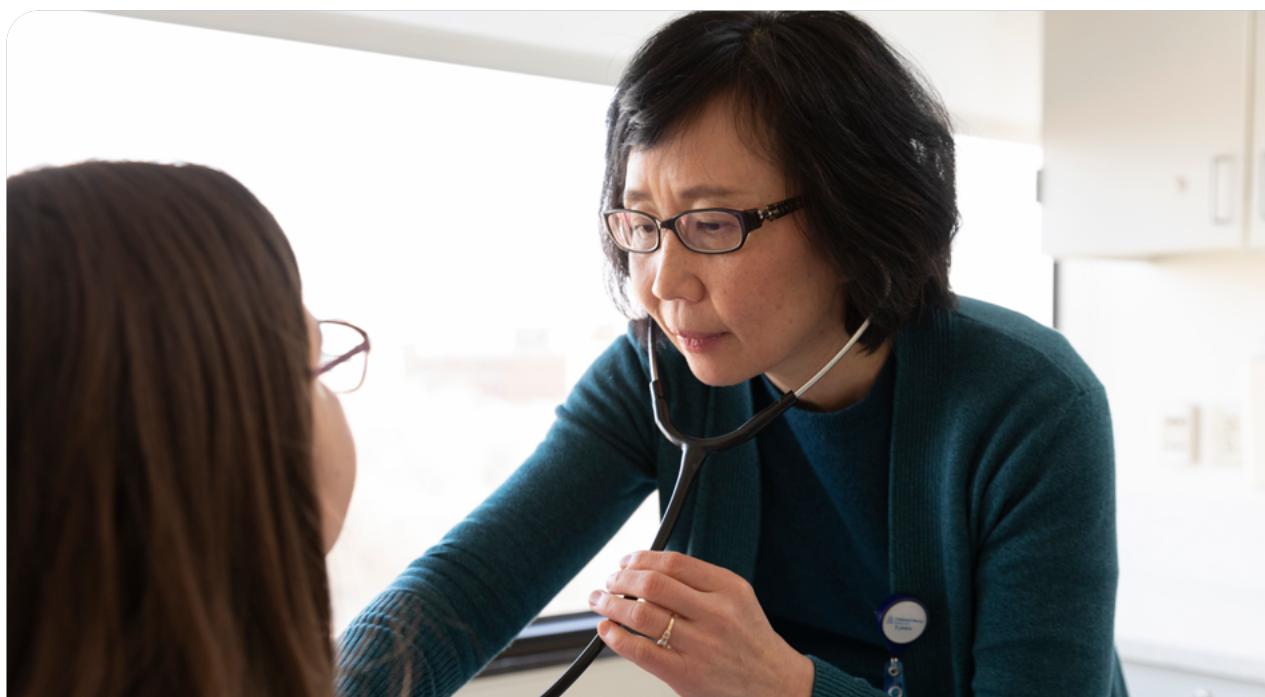
- A similar statement could be made if a colleague states something about a patient or family.

## **2. Take action:**

- *"Please stop making comments like that. They are hurtful and unproductive."*
  - Consider documenting the exchange to assist with communication to your supervisor or Human Resources.
- ## **3. Reclarify your stance, if you meet resistance:**
- If the colleague continues to make comments or insists upon discussing it further, advise them that you do not wish to discuss the matter further and that you'd prefer to just have them refrain from similar comments.
  - Reach out to HR-Employee Relations and/or your leader if the behavior persists or you experience any kind of retaliation.
  - Share any documentation that you may have related to the exchanges.

## **4. Follow up with the team members who may have experienced possible discrimination if you are an observer or witness:**

- *"I heard/know that <colleague, co-worker or vendor> said or did something that may have been hurtful or distressing to you. I want to let you know that their behavior is not acceptable to me. I am here to support you. You are a valuable member of our community and an asset to our team."*
- Note reporting obligations described in the [Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy](#).
- You may also refer the team member to the [Resources](#) section of this guide.





# REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO CONCERNS OF DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, BULLYING OR DISRESPECT

The following options apply to complaints regarding staff, patients, families, learners, vendors and visitors. Regardless of how you report them, complaints of discrimination and harassment will be escalated to HR to investigate.

## Reporting – Your Role

- **Individual discussion:** If you perceive the issue to be a minor, one-time event and you are comfortable doing so, it is usually best to talk directly to the individuals involved.
- **Reporting:** If the issue is significant or recurring or you are not comfortable talking directly to the individuals involved, discuss the concern with your supervisor or contact HR-Employee Relations directly at (816) 234-3587.
- **Security:** If your safety or the safety of a patient or family member is threatened, contact Security immediately at (816) 234-3345.
- **Privacy:** Maintain the privacy of your fellow employees. Only discuss the incident with those who need to know, such as your supervisor or HR-Employee Relations.

## Responding – The Supervisor's Role

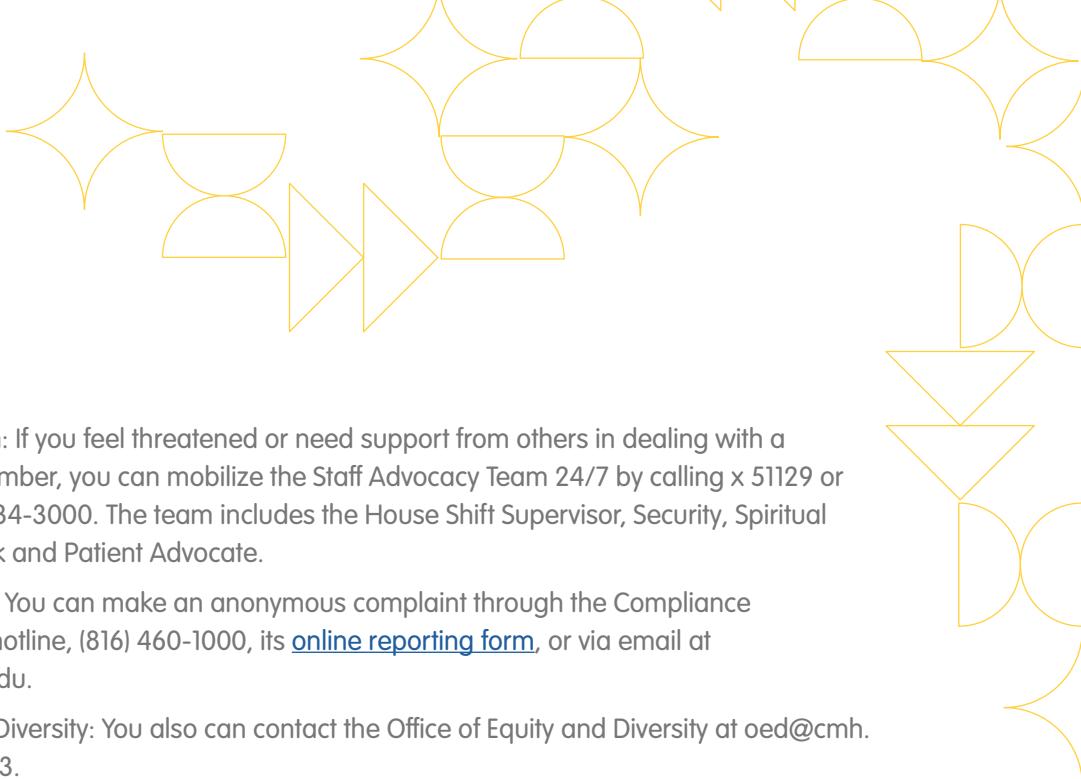
- Create a safe space by being open to understanding the issue. Seek to understand what the individual is concerned about and why.

- Follow up on the concern. Act as appropriate by providing information, support or referral to another resource for further review and assistance.
- Escalate any report of discrimination or harassment to your HR-Employee Relations Representative immediately.
- Cooperate in any internal investigation. When appropriate, help with determining and implementing corrective action.
- Maintain the privacy of your employee. Remind the employee that you will only discuss the incident with those who need to know
- Monitor and address other acts of misconduct or incidents of retaliation against any individual who has reported or participated in an investigation. It may be helpful to refer to the [Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy](#) and the [Non-Retaliation: Prohibition from Reprisal Policy](#).

## Other Reporting Options

**Leadership:** If you aren't comfortable talking with your immediate supervisor or manager, you may contact the next higher level of leadership.

You also may wish to contact one of the following resources:

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- Staff Advocacy Team: If you feel threatened or need support from others in dealing with a patient or family member, you can mobilize the Staff Advocacy Team 24/7 by calling x 51129 or the operator, (816) 234-3000. The team includes the House Shift Supervisor, Security, Spiritual Services, Social Work and Patient Advocate.
  - Compliance Hotline: You can make an anonymous complaint through the Compliance Department's 24/7 hotline, (816) 460-1000, its [online reporting form](#), or via email at [compliance@cmh.edu](mailto:compliance@cmh.edu).
  - Office of Equity and Diversity: You also can contact the Office of Equity and Diversity at [oed@cmh.edu](mailto:oed@cmh.edu) or (816) 302-3813.

## Retaliation Is Prohibited

- CM does not allow retaliation against anyone who makes a good faith report of an alleged violation of the law or CM's policies and procedures, regardless of the type of misconduct reported or the method of reporting.
- Retaliation happens when someone takes hostile action against any person who brings a concern forward, participates or cooperates in an investigation, or is closely associated with someone who reported, assisted or cooperated with a discrimination or harassment complaint or investigation. Please refer to the [Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy](#) and the [Non-Retaliation: Prohibition from Reprisal Policy](#).
- We view reporting as a positive action. We take claims of retaliation seriously.
- Employees who believe they have experienced or witnessed retaliation should immediately notify their supervisor or a member of the HR-Employee Relations team.

If you are a supervisor and you become aware of this type of incident, you are required to report the incident to a member of the HR-Employee Relations Team no more than 48 hours after becoming aware of the situation. [Non-Retaliation: Prohibition from Reprisal Policy](#), [Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy](#)

All reports of inappropriate behavior under the [Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy](#) or the [CM Equal Opportunity Employment Policy](#) will be promptly and thoroughly investigated. CM will take the action necessary to stop improper behavior and prevent it from happening again.

Any employee (supervisory or non-supervisory) who violates this policy will be subject to the full range of corrective action, up to and including termination of employment. CM will inform the person making the complaint of the conclusion of the investigation as appropriate.

## YOUR RESOURCES

### Dealing with Disrespectful Treatment

If you believe you have experienced distress as a result of disrespectful treatment, in addition to the reporting guidelines, please consider the following:

- We understand that discrimination, harassment, bullying and disrespectful behavior may negatively affect your physical and mental health.
- It is OK to seek medical or mental health care as needed.
- Connect with those you trust. Social support is important. Expressing concern about how you are being affected can be clarifying and energizing.
- Review resources from The American Psychological Association about healthy ways to cope with experiences of discrimination.
- Seek assistance from the Children's Mercy Resources listed here.

### Children's Mercy Resources for Well-being and Resilience

CM has many resources available. The following links may be helpful for your well-being and resilience during this difficult time.

- [Center for Professional Well-Being](#)
- [Resilience at Work – Trauma-Informed Care](#)
- [Keep CALM Verbal De-Escalation Program](#)
- [Staff Advocacy Team](#)
- [Employee Wellness Center offers mental and physical health services](#)

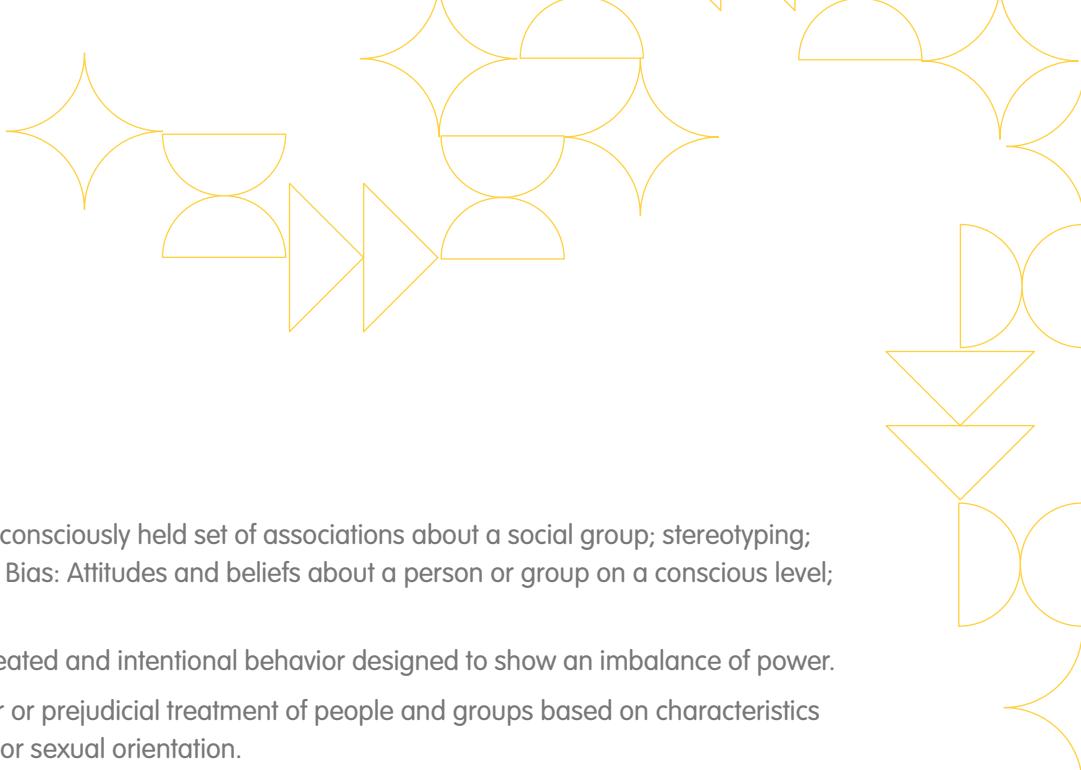
- [Employee Assistance Program also has behavioral health resources available](#)

- [Patient Advocate Department](#)

### References

- "Respect for All: Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying: Resources and Support for Employees and Students." By Oregon Health Sciences University
- "Dealing with Racist Patients" and "Patient Racial Preferences and the Medical Culture of Accommodation" by Kimani Paul-Emile, JD, PhD
- "How Should Organizations Support Trainees in the Face of Patient Bias?" By Kimani Paul-Emile, JD, PhD





## GLOSSARY

**Bias** – Implicit Bias: Any unconsciously held set of associations about a social group; stereotyping; social conditioning. Explicit Bias: Attitudes and beliefs about a person or group on a conscious level; discrimination.

**Bullying** – Aggressive, repeated and intentional behavior designed to show an imbalance of power.

**Discrimination** – The unfair or prejudicial treatment of people and groups based on characteristics such as race, gender, age or sexual orientation.

**Disrespect** – To disrespect someone is to act in an insulting way toward them. When you disrespect people, you think very little of them, showing the opposite of respect by acting rude, impolite or offensive.

**Diversity** – Psychological, physical and social differences that occur among individuals; including, but not limited to, race, color, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, veteran status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, genetic information and learning styles. A diverse group, community or organization is one in which a variety of social and cultural characteristics exist.

**Harassment** – A course of conduct that annoys, threatens, intimidates, alarms or puts a person in fear of their safety.

**Microaggression** – Everyday derogations, slights and invalidations that are often delivered to people of minority or marginalized backgrounds.

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This glossary is based on information from the National Multicultural Institute, *Racial Equity Resource Guide: "Community Strategies to End Racism and Support Racial Healing"*; the Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative, *"A Community Builder's Tool Kit"*; the American Psychological Association's *"Microaggressions: What They Are, And How They Are Associated With Adjustment Outcomes"* and *"Psychologist Offers Insight on Bullying and How to Prevent It"*; vocabulary.com; and definitions.uslegal.com.



**Children's Mercy**  
KANSAS CITY



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