
Safe Haven – A Process for Solutions
Guidelines for Employees (Updated 4/26/2016)

Purpose:

The City of Tempe strives to provide a work environment that is inclusive and respectful of its employees. The purpose of this guideline is to define Safe Haven and the role it plays in serving as another resource to the workforce in resolving conflict or issues at the earliest possible opportunity.

Policy:

The Safe Haven Process is listed in the City of Tempe Personnel Rules under Rule 4, Section G: Workplace Issues/Complaints Resolution Processes. This process allows employees who believe they may be experiencing discrimination, harassment, retaliation, a hostile work environment or any other workplace issue or concern, to circumvent their chain of command and raise issues directly with Diversity or Human Resources. The Safe Haven is a process, outside of the workgroup chain of command, that an employee can contact to discuss behaviors or events taking place at work that are causing concerns to the reporting individual.

When a workplace issue or concern arises, an employee may, at his or her option, notify the offending party that their activities are unwelcome, undesirable and/or offensive. Utilizing the "SOLVE" conflict resolution tool, attached to this guideline and also available at www.tempe.gov/diversity is an approved and effective approach to addressing these situations.

If SOLVE is either not utilized or does not resolve the issue, then an employee may take the issue to their supervisor and up the chain of command in their department or initiate the Safe Haven process.

To begin the Safe Haven process employees should contact Diversity or Human Resources.

Diversity

Tempe City Hall
2nd Floor
31 East Fifth Street
Tempe, AZ 85281

480-350-2905
480-350-2907 (fax)
www.tempe.gov/diversity

Human Resources

525 Building
1st Floor
20 East Fifth Street
Tempe, AZ 85281

480-350-8278
480-350-8060 (fax)
<http://www1.tempe.gov/hr>

Arrangements can be made to meet offsite as needed. Flexible hours are always available.

Responsibilities:

Employees should be aware that Safe Haven offices will make every effort to keep information provided in this context confidential. Safe Havens and other affected City offices will limit disclosure of information provided by reporting individuals and any notes or other documents generated during the process only to those employees within the City who are responsible for investigating and/or responding to safe haven complaints, or as otherwise required by law.

Once an issue has been presented to a Safe Haven, employees should avoid discussing it in the workgroup. However, they may seek out the support and advice of their employee group representative.

Employees who raise a concern with a Safe Haven or who are interviewed by a Safe Haven are expected to be truthful and provide complete information and maintain the confidentiality of all discussions or correspondence.

Human Resources, Diversity and City Attorney's office will work together with department management to inquire, and if necessary, investigate the complaint so that it may be resolved. The City is committed to protecting reporting employees from retaliation.

Under the State Public Records law, the City of Tempe will treat Safe Haven notes as confidential until the process is complete, unless a compelling legal basis exists requiring disclosure. Once the Safe Haven process has been finalized, any records created during that process may be to be subject to disclosure under Public Records law.

Program/Process Controls

The Safe Haven process will be overseen by the Safe Haven Steering Committee consisting of the City Manager, Deputy City Managers, the Department Directors of Diversity and Internal Services and the City Attorney or their designees

Human Resources and Diversity share in the role of providing the Safe Haven process for employees and the responsibility of receiving and following up on the employee concern. Only Human Resources and departmental supervisors/directors play a role in employee disciplines and grievances.

Employees who are interviewed by a Safe Haven during the investigation phase may be asked to sign a Safe Haven Agreement stating that they are providing complete and truthful responses and that they will maintain the confidentiality of discussions and correspondence relating to the issue under review.

Procedures:

The employee will discuss their concerns with a designee from Diversity or Human Resources, and following this initial interview, steps will be taken to remedy the concern. These steps may include but are not limited to the following:

1. The issue is simply a need by the employee to receive coaching, counseling or guidance from the Safe Haven official.
2. The issue requires a referral to another resource or service. The Safe Haven official will refer the employee and will also follow-up within five business days to determine that the concern is being addressed.
3. The issue indicates possible harassment, discrimination or retaliation. The Safe Haven official begins an **initial inquiry** to gather further information to determine if an investigation

is needed. This initial inquiry will involve first contacting the Department Director for assistance, and shall not result in disciplinary action being taken against any employee. The Department Director is expected to fully cooperate and respond to the Safe Haven official within five business days.

4. At the end of the initial inquiry if the Safe Haven official believes further review of the issue is warranted, consultation will first take place between the Safe Haven Steering Committee and when applicable with the Department Director or designee, to determine whether there is consensus to move forward with a formal investigation.
5. The City Attorney's Office will determine the most appropriate persons to conduct an investigation. Any investigation shall comply with the applicable provisions of the Personnel Rules, departmental policies, and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with recognized employee groups.
6. The Safe Haven Steering Committee, made up of the City Manager, Deputy City Managers, the City Attorney and the Directors of Diversity and Internal Services or their designees will have oversight of the investigation, including witness interviews and data review. Employees, including accused employees, have the right to bring forward facts and/or information both verbally or in writing. The Safe Haven Steering Committee will reconvene at the conclusion of the investigation to determine findings and recommendations.
7. During the investigation, the City will make every attempt to ensure the anonymity of employee(s) who contributed information during the investigation. If the investigation results in the initiation of a disciplinary process against any employees, the City will comply with the requirements of due process and fundamental fairness, as enumerated in the Personnel Rules.
8. If at any time there are conflicting recommendations or findings by two or more offices involved in the Safe Haven process, the City Attorney's Office will resolve the differences.
9. A Safe Haven official will notify the Deputy City Managers, any applicable Department Directors and both the employee who raised an issue and all employees who have been alleged against or collaterally involved as to the current status of the inquiry or investigation at a minimum of once every ten (10) business days.

This Guideline has been reviewed and approved by:


Strategic Management and Diversity Director 4/26/2016
Date


Internal Services Director 4/26/16
Date


City Manager 4-27-2016
Date

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT TOOL

SOLVE

The following SOLVE Solutions Checklist serves as conflict management tool for the workforce. Employees are expected to work through the various steps in creating solutions to issues, conflict or challenges.

Solutions Checklist

S SITUATION / SELF INVENTORY

What is the conflict? What are the solutions?

Define what I would like to see have happen. What are the three possible solutions to this situation? What will the situation look like once it has improved? What can I do to help resolve this situation?

O OPENNESS

Speak with the person directly. Share concerns and, just as importantly, share your three recommendations/suggestions for resolving the issue. Show that you are concerned about this issue and that you are willing to work together to resolve it.

L LEVELS

If the issue persists please speak to the next in command -- Middle Management then Deputy Department Head then Department Head. Always combine your concerns with your ideas for SOLUTIONS.

V VOLLEY IDEAS

Bounce your ideas back and forth. This is a good time to try the mediation program. Have I tried the Mediation Program? Speak to a Human Resource Analyst for guidance.

E EMPLOYEE SAFE HAVEN

Conflict still unresolved? Call the Human Resources Director or Diversity Director for assistance