

2025 -- H 6166

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

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A N A C T

RELATING TO PUBLIC OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES -- CODE OF ETHICS

Introduced By: Representatives Tanzi, and Ajello

Date Introduced: April 02, 2025

Referred To: House State Government & Elections

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 36-14 of the General Laws entitled "Code of Ethics" is hereby
2 amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **36-14-22. Prohibiting sexual harassment.**

4 (a) Sexual harassment is prohibited. For purposes of this section, "sexual harassment"
5 means any sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical
6 contact of a sexual nature, that a reasonable person would find inappropriate.

7 (b) This section applies to all of the following individuals, while they are actively engaged
8 in activities that involve legislative business:

9 (1) Senators and representatives;

10 (2) Regular, full-time, part-time, temporary or contractual employees of the general
11 assembly;

12 (3) Volunteers, interns, and pages; and

13 (4) Lobbyists.

14 (c) Complaints under this section, shall be made to the Rhode Island ethics commission
15 established pursuant to the provisions of § 36-14-8, and will be investigated, in accordance with
16 the provisions of § 36-14-12. To the extent practicable, the investigation shall respect the privacy
17 of all individuals involved.

18 (d) If the investigation supports a finding of a violation of the provisions of this section,
19 the ethics commission shall order prompt and effective remedial action including, but not limited

1 to, a warning, reprimand, withholding of a promotion or pay increase, reassignment, temporary
2 suspension without pay, termination or other appropriate punishment the commission deems
3 appropriate.

4 (e) Each individual covered by this section shall complete an annual education and training
5 program on sexual harassment, consistent with the aims and purposes of this section. Program
6 completion records shall be maintained by the Rhode Island ethics commission and be made
7 available to the public. Failure to comply, shall result in disciplinary action including, but not
8 limited to, any penalty available under subsection (d) of this section.

9 (f) On or before December 1, 2026, the Rhode Island ethics commission shall issue rules
10 effectuating this section.

11 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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RELATING TO PUBLIC OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES -- CODE OF ETHICS

- 1 This act would create a new law to address the issue of "sexual harassment" involving those
- 2 individuals that are actively involved in legislative business.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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