

MATE ROV Competition Online Q & A Forum Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation Prevention Policy

By participating in the MATE ROV Competition Online Q & A Forum, I acknowledge that I have seen and agree to the following Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation Prevention Policy:

Policy Statement

MATE is committed to providing an environment that is free of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. The purpose of this policy is to promote equal employment opportunity to succeed in the workplace; prevent, deter and remediate unlawful harassment, discrimination, and retaliation in the workplace; and, to assist all persons in understanding their rights, duties, and obligations in this regard. Each individual involved with MATE has the right to a respectful atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities.

In order to keep this commitment, MATE strictly prohibits unlawful harassment, discrimination, and retaliation of any kind, including sexual harassment and discrimination or retaliation on the basis of sex (including pregnancy, perceived pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, or related medical conditions), race, color, religion (including religious dress and religious grooming), gender, gender identity (defined as each person's internal understanding of their gender or perception of a person's gender identity, which may include male, female, neither male nor female, a gender different from the person's sex assigned at birth, or transgender), gender expression (defined as a person's gender-related appearance or behavior, or the perception of such appearance or behavior, whether or not stereotypically associated with the person's sex assigned at birth), citizenship, age, mental or physical disability, legally protected medical condition or information, national origin, ancestry, marital status, registered domestic partner status, military or veteran status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, genetic information characteristics, any other characteristic protected under Federal or State law or local ordinance. This policy also prohibits discrimination and harassment based on the perception that anyone has any of those characteristics or is associated with a person who has or is perceived as having any of those characteristics. All such discrimination, harassment, and retaliation are unlawful.

One purpose of this policy is to eliminate the means by which people, by virtue of their sex, gender identity or gender expression, are treated differently, paid less, treated adversely based on stereotyping, subjected to conduct of a sexual nature, subjected to hostile work

environments, or made to suffer other forms of adverse action, and to guarantee that in the future equal employment benefits will be afforded regardless of the individual's sex.

MATE's policy against harassment, discrimination, and retaliation applies to all persons involved in the operation of MATE. This policy prohibits unlawful harassment, discrimination, and retaliation by all persons involved in the operation of MATE, including members of the MTS Board of Directors, Officers, employees, supervisors, paid or unpaid interns, students, parents, volunteers, guests, vendors, suppliers, volunteers, independent contractors, all persons involved in the ROV competition, and others doing business with MATE with whom employees come into contact during the course of their work. This policy also applies to harassment, discrimination, and retaliation between students involved with MATE.

MATE also prohibits abusive conduct in the workplace, which is conduct undertaken with malice that a reasonable person would find hostile, offensive, and unrelated to MATE's legitimate business interests. Abusive conduct may include repeated infliction of verbal abuse, such as the use of derogatory remarks, insults, and epithets; verbal or physical conduct that a reasonable person would find threatening, intimidating, or humiliating; or the gratuitous sabotage or undermining of a person's work performance.

In addition, this policy prohibits discrimination and harassment in the form of sexual favoritism, which occurs when individuals are qualified for but are denied an employment opportunity or benefit because the person who received the employment opportunity or benefit submitted to sexual advances or requests. Favoritism or preferential treatment in the terms and conditions of employment on the basis of sexual conduct, sexual attraction, appearance, and/or physical characteristics or attributes is prohibited.

This policy also prohibits harassment and discrimination in the form of sex stereotyping. As used in this policy, the term "sex stereotype" means an assumption about a person's appearance or behavior, or about an individual's ability or inability to perform certain kinds of work based on a myth, social expectation, or generalization about the individual's sex.

This policy prohibits discrimination and harassment against an individual who is transitioning, has transitioned, or is perceived to be transitioning. "Transitioning" in this context refers to a process some transgender people go through to begin living as the gender with which they identify, rather than the sex assigned to them at birth.

This policy also prohibits retaliation of any kind against individuals who file a complaint or who assist in MATE's investigation of a harassment or discrimination complaint.

Definition of Harassment

Harassment is unwelcome verbal, visual, or physical conduct that is severe and pervasive and creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile working environment or that interferes with work performance. This policy prohibits unlawful harassment, discrimination, and retaliation in any form including verbal, physical and visual harassment.

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which (1) has been made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, (2) is used as a basis for employment decisions such as promotions and benefits affecting such individual, or (3) substantially interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment can involve one or more incidents, and conduct constituting harassment may be physical, verbal, and non-verbal. Examples of conduct or behavior which constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

Physical conduct

Physical interference with normal work; Impeding or blocking movement; staring at a person's body; unwelcome physical contact including patting, pinching, stroking, kissing, hugging, fondling, or inappropriate touching; physical violence, including assault; physical contact, e.g., touching, pinching; the use of threats or rewards to solicit sexual favors; or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts when directed at an individual based on a protected characteristic listed in this policy that relate to a protected characteristic.

Verbal conduct

Jokes, epithets, derogatory jokes or comments; slurs, negative stereotyping, and unwelcome and/or patronizing remarks or questions when directed at an individual based on a protected characteristic listed in this policy about an individual's body, race, gender, age, physical characteristics, appearance, sexual identity, or talents; epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs, threats, negative stereotyping, and unwelcome remarks about an individual's body, color, physical characteristics, appearance, or talents; references to women as "honey," "doll," or "sweetheart," questions about a person's sexual practices, or patronizing terms or remarks based on a protected characteristic listed in this policy; comments on someone's appearance, age, private life; sexual comments, stories, and jokes; repeated and unwanted social invitations for dates or physical intimacy; or condescending or paternalistic remarks.

Visual conduct

Display of sexually explicit or suggestive material; sexually suggestive gestures.

Offensive, derogatory, sexually oriented, or obscene photographs, calendars, posters, cards, cartoons, drawings, gestures, or tattoos; display of sexually suggestive or lewd objects, e-mail, computer graphics or images; unwelcome notes or letters, and any other written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of a protected characteristic, that is placed on walls, bulletin boards, or elsewhere on MATE premises or circulated in the workplace; whistling; or leering.

Sexually harassing conduct may take the form of either:

Quid pro quo (Latin for “this for that”) conduct, where sexual harassment is characterized by explicit or implicit conditioning of a job or promotion on an applicant or employee’s submission to sexual advances or other conduct based on sex; or creation of a hostile work environment, which exists when unwelcome comments or conduct based on sex unreasonably interfere with an employee’s work performance or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment can occur between any individuals, including harassment of women by men, of men by women, and same sex, gender-based harassment. Sexual harassment need not be motivated by sexual desire.

Harassment, including sexual harassment, comes in many forms and may involve any employee at all levels of the organization, or a third party. Any individual who engages in prohibited harassment or discrimination in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including termination and will be subject to the sanctions and disciplinary measures outlined in Section IV of this Policy. In addition, the individual may be personally liable in any legal action brought against the individual.

Anyone can be a victim of sexual harassment, regardless of their age, sex, and the sex of the harasser. MATE recognizes that sexual harassment may also occur between people of the same sex.

All unlawful harassment, discrimination and retaliation is prohibited whether it takes place within MATE premises or outside, including at social events, training sessions, or conferences.

Reporting Unlawful Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation

Anyone who believes or suspects that the comments, gestures, or conduct of members of the MTS Board of Directors, Officers, employees, supervisors, paid or unpaid interns, students, parents, volunteers, guests, vendors, suppliers, independent contractors, all persons involved the ROV competition, and others doing business with MTS with whom employees come into contact during the course of their work is harassing, discriminatory,

or retaliatory, is required to promptly report the facts of the incident to the employee's immediate supervisor, the CEO, or any other officer or Board Member of MTS.

The complainant's report may be verbal or written (preferred) and should include details of the incident or incidents, names of the individuals involved and names of any witnesses. If a report is made verbally, the person receiving the report shall summarize it in written form, show it to the complainant, and ask the complainant to affirm that it is correct and complete. The report should be made as soon as possible after any incident the individual believes is prohibited harassment, discrimination, or retaliation. No adverse action will be taken against an individual who makes a good faith report or cooperates in the investigation of a report of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation. It is the responsibility of each individual subject to this policy to promptly make such a report any time the individual believes there has been a violation or suspected violation of this policy.

Employees who receive a complaint of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation are required to report that complaint to the CEO, or any other officer or Board Member of MTS so the complaint can be investigated in accordance with this policy.

MATE's policy is to have a qualified individual immediately conduct a thorough, fair, objective and complete investigation of the complaint that provides all parties appropriate due process. The MTS CEO shall determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether such investigation should be conducted by the CEO (supported by a committee of the Board, if the CEO so desires), or whether an external investigator should be hired to conduct the investigation. If the CEO determines that an external investigator should be hired, such external investigator must be a licensed private investigator or an attorney acting in his or her capacity as an attorney. Employees, Board members, and other individuals are required to cooperate in the investigation of any complaint of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation. MTS will track the investigation to ensure reasonable progress. At the conclusion of its investigation, MTS will attempt to determine whether unlawful harassment, discrimination, or retaliation occurred based on the evidence collected. MTS will look at the totality of the circumstances, including the nature of the conduct and the context in which it occurred and will determine appropriate options for remedial actions and resolutions where necessary. If appropriate, MTS will, as promptly as possible, communicate its findings to the accused, and the remedial action (if any) to be taken, to the complainant, and, when appropriate, to other persons who are directly concerned. MTS will keep the complaint and investigation confidential to the extent possible.

If it determines that harassment, discrimination, or retaliation has occurred, MTS will take remedial action. Disciplinary action may be taken against the offender up to and including termination or expulsion from MTS. Steps will be taken, as necessary, to prevent any further

unlawful harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. No individual will suffer any reprisals or retaliation for making a report of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, or perceived harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, for making any complaints of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, or for participating in any investigation of incidents of harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or perceived harassment.

MATE requires individuals to promptly report any incidents of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation forbidden by this policy so that complaints can be resolved. Employees should also be aware that the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission investigates and prosecutes complaints of prohibited harassment, discrimination, and retaliation in employment.