



Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation

1. Policy Statement

Gemological Institute of America (“GIA,” the “Institute,” or “our”) is committed to upholding standards that promote respect and dignity in an environment that fosters teamwork, professionalism and excellence. It is GIA’s policy to maintain an educational and work environment free from all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment and retaliation.

GIA prohibits and does not tolerate unlawful discrimination against or harassment of its employees, students, clients, vendors, visitors, contingent workers, unpaid interns and volunteers, or applicants for employment or admission, on the basis of age, race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, ethnicity, natural hairstyles and hair texture, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, pregnancy (which includes pregnancy, childbirth and medical conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding), genetic information, marital or familial status, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity (including transgender identity), gender expression, gender or sex stereotyping, reproductive health choices (including but limited to a decision to use or access a particular drug, device or medical service), domestic violence victim status, covered military or veteran status, citizenship or immigration status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law.

In addition, GIA prohibits unlawful retaliation, i.e., adverse action being directed against an individual because the individual filed in good faith a charge of discrimination, opposed a practice believed in good faith to be unlawful discrimination or participated in an employment discrimination proceeding.

All members of the GIA community are expected to uphold this Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation (“Policy”). Engaging in unlawful discrimination or harassment will result in appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from GIA. It should be noted that conduct that does not fully satisfy the legal elements required to make such conduct unlawful but nonetheless amounts to inappropriate conduct based on GIA’s standards, which promote respect and dignity, will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from GIA.

2. Prohibited Conduct

2.1. Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination may occur when an individual is treated less favorably with respect to the terms and conditions of employment or education, or with respect to the individual’s receipt of employment or educational benefits, because of their membership in a protected class. Specifically related to employment, all employment-related decisions, including but not limited to decisions relating to recruitment, hiring, promotion, transfers, compensation, benefits and any other terms and conditions of employment and education, will be made without regard to the employee’s or applicant’s age, race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, ethnicity, natural hairstyles and hair texture, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, pregnancy (which includes pregnancy, childbirth and medical conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding), genetic information, marital or familial status, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity (including transgender identity),



gender expression, gender or sex stereotyping, reproductive health choices (including but limited to a decision to use or access a particular drug, device or medical service), domestic violence victim status, covered military or veteran status, citizenship or immigration status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law.

2.2. Harassment and Sexual Harassment

Harassment includes verbal, physical or visual conduct when the conduct creates an intimidating, offensive or hostile working or educational environment or unreasonably interferes with job or academic performance. Verbal harassment may include but is not limited to epithets, derogatory comments or slurs based upon one of the individual's characteristics noted above. Physical harassment may include but is not limited to assault, impeding or blocking movement, or any physical interference with normal work or movement, when directed at an individual because of the individual's protected characteristic. Visual forms of harassment may include but are not limited to derogatory posters, electronic communications, cartoons or drawings based on an individual's protected characteristic.

In addition, prohibited sex discrimination covers sexual harassment, including sexual violence. Sexual harassment includes any request or demand for sexual favors that is implicitly or expressly a condition of employment, continued employment or receipt of an employment benefit, admission to GIA, participation in educational programs or activities, or evaluation of academic performance. Examples of conduct that could give rise to sexual harassment include but are not limited to sexual advances or suggestions, unwelcome sexually-oriented remarks, dirty jokes, the display or distribution of offensive photographs, emails or other electronic communications, posters or cartoons, any unwelcome intentional touching, or physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is unable to give consent, regardless of whether harassing conduct was motivated by sexual desire and whether the person who is the object of that harassment sustains a loss of tangible job or education benefits.

2.3. Unlawful Retaliation

GIA prohibits and does not tolerate retaliation against any individual who in good faith files a complaint of unlawful discrimination or harassment or is involved as a witness or participant in the complaint or investigation process. Engaging in unlawful retaliation will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from GIA.

GIA encourages any individual, who believes they have been subject to unlawful retaliation, or observes or is otherwise aware of an incident of unlawful retaliation in violation of this Policy, to report the incident promptly pursuant to the complaint procedure identified below. The investigation and corrective action procedures set forth below will similarly apply in the case of a complaint of unlawful retaliation in violation of this Policy.

3. Complaint Reporting Procedure



- 3.1. Do not allow an inappropriate situation to continue by not reporting it, regardless of who is responsible for creating the situation. GIA encourages any person, who feels that they have been subjected to unlawful discrimination, harassment, retaliation or treated inappropriately, or observes or is otherwise aware of an incident of unlawful discrimination, harassment, retaliation or inappropriate conduct, to report the incident promptly. To assist in the investigation, GIA may request that a complaint be made in writing with a detailed description of the facts giving rise to the complaint, the names of any individuals involved, including any witnesses, and copies of any documents that support or relate to the complaint. Although GIA may request the submission of a written complaint, an oral complaint is sufficient to initiate the procedures set forth under this Policy.
- 3.2. Complaints may be made to any of the people listed in 3.2.1 through 3.2.8 below who are GIA's designated officers for handling the complaints and implementing the Institute's policy against unlawful discrimination and harassment. Reports or allegations of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment, or violence, the person to whom the report was made, including the Deputy Title IX Coordinator, will inform the Title IX Coordinator of the report.
 - 3.2.1. Kimberly Overlin, Director, Student Services and Dean of Students and Title IX and 504/ADA Coordinator
The Robert Mouawad Campus
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 - 3.2.2. Director of New York Education, and Deputy Title IX and 504/ADA Coordinator
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 - 3.2.4. Vice President, Human Resources
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3.2.5. Director, Human Resources (New York)

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3.2.6. Manager, Security Operations

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3.2.7. Manager, Security Operations

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mshabbir@gia.edu

3.3. Other ways to make a report: If for any reason the person making the complaint does not feel comfortable directly reporting the incident to any of the appropriate individuals identified above in Section 3.2, the complaint may be reported through alternative channels. In the case of a complaint by a GIA employee, the complaint may be made to the employee's supervisor, manager, the human resources department or GIA's [Concern Reporting](#) system. **If the complaint involves the employee's supervisor, the employee is not required to report the complaint to the supervisor and is encouraged to contact one of the other individuals described in this Policy.** In the case of a complaint by a student, the complaint may be made to the Title IX Coordinator, the dean of students, the security department, an instructor or GIA's [Concern Reporting](#) system. Anyone receiving a complaint through one of these alternative channels must immediately transmit the complaint to one of the appropriate individuals identified in Section 3.2.

3.4. In cases involving potential criminal conduct, GIA will determine whether appropriate law enforcement or other authorities should be notified.

4. Investigation and Corrective Action

GIA will investigate every reported complaint of unlawful discrimination, harassment, retaliation or inappropriate conduct with a fair, thorough and timely investigation.

If the conclusion of the investigation is that inappropriate conduct occurred in violation of this policy, GIA will initiate corrective action, as appropriate under the circumstances. For employees, the corrective action will range from verbal warnings up to and including termination from employment. For students, corrective action will be imposed in a manner consistent with GIA's Student Code of Conduct or other applicable procedures. If the individual found to have engaged in unlawful



discrimination or harassment is not an employee or student of GIA, corrective action within GIA's reasonable control, and as appropriate under the circumstances, will be initiated.

The employee or student who raised the complaint will be advised in general terms the results of the investigation, unless doing so is prohibited by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") or other applicable law. Similarly, an employee or student who is accused of unlawful discrimination or harassment will be advised of the results of the investigation.

5. Confidentiality

- 5.1. In investigating and in imposing any discipline, GIA will attempt to preserve confidentiality to the extent that the needs of the situation allow.

6. Other Resources

In addition to the internal resources described above, individuals may pursue complaints with the government agencies that enforce the laws prohibiting discrimination, harassment and retaliation, including:

- 6.1. [California Civil Rights Department \("CRD"\)](#)
- 6.2. [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#)
- 6.3. [United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights](#)

7. Responsibility

- 7.1. Responsible Executive – senior vice president and general counsel
- 7.2. Policy Owner – vice president, human resources
- 7.3. Title IX Coordinator:
 - 7.3.1. The Title IX Coordinator oversees implementation and enforcement of this Policy, which includes primary responsibility for coordinating GIA's efforts related to this intake, investigation, resolution, and implementation of supportive measures to stop, remediate, and prevent discrimination, harassment, and retaliation prohibited under this Policy.
- 7.4. Deputy Title IX Coordinator:
 - 7.4.1. Under the direction of the Title IX Coordinator provides support with Title IX compliance at the New York campus.

8. Definitions

- 8.1. [Definitions](#)

9. References and Related Documents



Department:
Policy Owner:
Version Effective Date:

Human Resources
Vice President, Human Resources
May 13, 2025

- 9.1. [Code of Conduct \(Global\)](#)
- 9.2. [Complaint Form for Reporting Harassment \(U.S.\)](#)
- 9.3. [Concern Reporting System](#)
- 9.4. [Education Catalog](#)
- 9.5. [Sexual Harassment Policy for GIA New York State Employees \(U.S.\)](#)
- 9.6. [Title IX Non-Discrimination Grievance Policy and Process \(U.S.\)](#)
- 9.7. [US Employee Handbook](#)
- 9.8. [Whistleblower and Non-Retaliation Policy \(Global\)](#)
- 9.9. [Workplace and Campus Violence Policy \(U.S.\)](#)

10. Related Regulations

- 10.1. [California Department of Fair Employment and Housing \(“DFEH”\) Sexual Harassment Prevention Training](#)
- 10.2. [California Fair Employment and Housing Act \(“FEHA”\)](#)
- 10.3. [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(“FERPA”\)](#)
- 10.4. [New York City and New York State Human Rights Laws](#)
- 10.5. [Title 34 C.F.R. Part 106](#)
- 10.6. [Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 \(“Title IX”\)](#)
- 10.7. [Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 \(“VAWA”\)](#)
- 10.8. [Protection of Sexual and Reproductive Health Decision Making for NY Employees](#)

11. Revision History

Revision Date	Description	Approved By
10/24/2016	Initial Release	President’s Policy Committee
01/31/2019	Title updates. Added Deputy Title IX Coordinator. Formatting revisions.	Senior Vice President and General Counsel
10/21/2019	Updated 1. Policy statement language; 2.1 Discrimination language; Updated policy links.	Senior Vice President and General Counsel
08/14/2020	Updated Section 2.4; Updated personnel and titles; Updated Sections 7.3, 9 and 10.	Senior Manager of Education Compliance, Title IX and 504/ADA Coordinator
07/12/2021	Updated Sections 1 and 2 to add familial status and language regarding reproductive health choices. Updated Section 3.2 with current GIA contacts.	President’s Policy Committee
04/10/2023	Added natural hairstyles and hair texture and immigration status in Sections 1 and 2. Updated titles. Updated 6.1 with the revised departmental agency. Added Section 10.8.	Executive Committee



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	Replaced Definitions, Section 7 with Transitional rather than Transsexual.	
11/21/2023	Updated Section 3.2.1	CPMO
05/13/2025	Updates made to Section 3.2.	CPMO



Definitions

1. Gender Expression

A person's gender-related appearance or behavior, whether or not stereotypically associated with the person's sex at birth.

2. Gender Identity

A person's identification as male, female, a gender different from the person's sex at birth or transgender.

3. Pregnancy

Includes pregnancy or perceived pregnancy (e.g., early signs of pregnancy, without a complete evaluation from a doctor), childbirth, breastfeeding or any related medical condition.

4. Sex

Includes, but is not limited to, pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, and any related medical conditions, and gender identity and expression.

5. Sex Stereotype

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.

6. Transgender

A person whose gender identity differs from the person's sex at birth. A transgender person may or may not have a gender expression that is different from the social expectations of the sex assigned at birth. A transgender person may or may not identify as "transsexual."

7. Transitioning

"Transitioning" is 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 process may include, but is not limited to, changes in name and pronoun usage, facility usage, participation in employer or education institution-sponsored activities (e.g., sports teams, team-building projects, or volunteering), or undergoing hormone therapy, surgeries, or other medical procedures.