Handling an Employee Complaint
Quick Reference Guide

If an employee feels that he or she has been harassed, the employee may first come to you to discuss the issue. Allegations of discrimination and harassment are handled in accordance with BSU Policy Number 1060, Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment.

As a supervisor, your obligation is to ensure that the harassment or other inappropriate conduct stops immediately. Consult Human Resource Services regarding appropriate action during an investigation.

How do I handle an employee complaint?

- Talk in private.
- Actively listen.
- Remember that there are no stereotypical harassers or victims.
- Start with general open-ended questions and narrow down to specifics.
- Find out whether the individual told the accused that the behavior was unwelcome.
- Avoid questions or comments that suggest a bias against either the victim or the accused.
- Do not assume answers, ask clarifying questions.
- Avoid editorial comments or legal conclusions. (i.e. “Yep, sounds like harassment to me.”)
- Ensure that complaints of harassment and discrimination are taken seriously.
- Do not promise complete confidentiality.
- Act promptly – tell complainant what you will be doing and when you will get back to him/her.
- Take immediate and appropriate corrective action.
- Notify the Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Director of the complaint.
- If the complaint involves a student, notify the Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities.

No Retaliation

- It is unlawful to take adverse action against an employee who complains of discrimination/harassment.
- An employee may not retaliate against any individual involved in the investigation of a complaint, including witnesses.
- Retaliation can include: poor work assignments, discipline for issues you let go before, avoidance, cold shoulder.
- If you need to discipline an employee who has made a complaint, coordinate with Human Resource Services.