HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY/PROCEDURE	
OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY: **Human Resources**	**EFFECTIVE DATE: 1/22/2026** **Revision Date: 10/22/2026** **Replaces: Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy**
SUBJECT: Equal Employment Opportunity Policy	
Approved By **Tiffany Homler Hawkins** **Chief Executive Officer, LYNX**	

SCOPE:

This Policy is implemented in accordance with the Authority's Administrative Rule 3 which governs Human Resources. With respect to Authority employees who hold positions represented by the Amalgamated Transit Union (Local 1749 and Local 1596), to the extent there is a discrepancy between a policy or practice in this Policy, or a separate governing Administrative Rule, and a provision within the operative collective bargaining agreement ("CBA"), the CBA shall prevail only with respect to specific provisions relating to an employee represented through such an agreement.

POLICY:

The Authority has a strong commitment to the community it serves and to its employees. As an equal opportunity employer, the Authority strives to have a workforce that reflects the community it serves. No person is unlawfully excluded from employment opportunities based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender, age, genetic information, disability, veteran status, or other protected class.

1. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

The Authority's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policy applies to all employment actions, including but not limited to, recruitment, hiring, selection for training, promotion, transfer, demotion, layoff, termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation.

All applicants and employees have the right to file complaints alleging discrimination with the EEO Officer. Retaliation against an individual who files a charge or complaint of discrimination, participates in an employment discrimination proceeding (such as an investigation or lawsuit), or otherwise engages in protected activity is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated by the Authority.

The Authority is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to applicants and employees who need them because of a disability or to practice or observe their religion, absent undue hardship.

The Authority's CEO has the overall responsibility and accountability for the Authority's compliance with its EEO Policy and Program. To ensure day-to-day management, including program preparation,

monitoring, and complaint investigation, the CEO has appointed an EEO Officer, who reports directly to the CEO and acts with the CEO's authority with all levels of management, labor unions, and employees.

All Authority executives, management, and supervisory personnel, however, share in the responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Authority's EEO Policy and Program within their respective areas and will be assigned specific tasks to ensure compliance is achieved. The Authority will evaluate its managers' and supervisors' performance on their successful implementation of the Authority's policies and procedures, in the same way the Authority assesses their performance regarding other Authority goals

The Authority is committed to its EEO Program, which sets forth the policies, practices and procedures, with goals and timetables, to which the Authority is committed and makes the EEO Program available for inspection by any employee or applicant for employment upon request.

The CEO and Authority are committed to a workplace that acts upon its daily responsibility to treat all applicants and employees with dignity and respect, as well as equitably under the guidelines of our EEO Policy and Program.

1.1 EEO Policy Reporting and Investigations Any Authority employee who in good faith believes they, or someone else, has been discriminated against in violation of this EEO policy must report the matter to the EEO Officer or CEO. Following the receipt of a report of discrimination in violation of this EEO policy, the matter will be investigated, and action will be taken to the extent determined necessary. Although confidentiality cannot be guaranteed based on the nature of such an investigation, the matter will be handled as confidentially as possible on a need-to-know basis. Should you have any questions, concerns or suggestions relating to this EEO policy, or wish to make a report regarding a suspected violation, please contact the Authority's EEO Officer or CEO.

2. Americans with Disabilities (ADA)

It is the Authority's policy to comply with federal, state and any applicable local laws regarding the employment of qualified persons with a disability. The Authority prohibits discrimination against a qualified individual with a known disability. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination with respect to application, hiring, promotion, discharge, compensation, benefits, training, and all other aspects of employment.

The ADA does not require that the Authority give preferential treatment to individuals with disabilities or lessen our qualification standards. The law does require that the Authority provide reasonable accommodations that will allow individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions of their jobs, if such an accommodation can be provided without undue hardship to the Authority. The Authority also complies with any requirement to make the workplace readily accessible to and usable to enable disabled employees to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment.

2.1 Policy Reporting and Inquiries: The Authority is committed to complying with ADA requirements. We encourage all employees to help us achieve this objective. If you believe that you or someone else has been discriminated against on the basis of disability, or if you would like to seek a reasonable accommodation, or you have any questions, concerns or suggestions relating to the ADA, contact the EEO Officer.

2.2 ADA Accommodation: The Authority will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a known disability if necessary to enable an individual to perform the essential functions of the individual's job and/or to ensure the workplace is readily accessible to and usable by an

employee. Such reasonable accommodation will be made unless it creates an undue hardship for the Authority. The individual must make known to the Authority the need for a reasonable accommodation, and is free to suggest an accommodation, but there is no guarantee that the suggested accommodation will be provided.

An employee seeking a reasonable accommodation must contact the EEO Officer, and in their absence, Human Resources, and provide sufficient information for the request to be evaluated. When a reasonable accommodation is requested, the Authority will engage in an interactive process with the employee in order to assess the request and the Authority's business needs. Submission of sufficient medical and accommodation information by the employee is required to allow assessment by the Authority and support the request and need for an accommodation. Requests by qualified individuals with disabilities for reasonable accommodations will be considered by the Authority's EEO Officer and Human Resources and discussed with others on a need to know basis to determine the nature and scope of the accommodation to be made (if appropriate), after consideration of the particular circumstances, including any hardship to the Authority. Please refer to the Authority's policy addressing leave of absences, including Family and Medical Leave, and return to work/fitness for duty certifications, if the request for an accommodation includes a request for time off or an extended leave of absence. The Authority will work with the employee on a reasonable accommodation but it may not be the accommodation that is being specifically requested by the employee. Employees with questions on this policy must direct those questions to the EEO Officer or Human Resources.

All information obtained concerning the medical condition or history of an applicant or employee will be maintained in separate medical files and will be treated as confidential information.

3. Religious Accommodations

The Authority respects the religious beliefs, observances, and practices of all employees and embraces religious diversity. The Authority will make good faith efforts to reasonably accommodate an employee's sincerely held religious belief, unless such an accommodation would create an undue hardship for the Authority.

An employee whose sincerely held religious beliefs (or non-beliefs), observances, or practices conflicts with their job, work schedule, with Authority's policy or practice on dress and appearance, or with other aspects of employment and who seeks a religious accommodation must submit a written request for the accommodation to the EEO Officer, and in the absence of the EEO Officer, to Human Resources. The written request must include the type of religious conflict that exists and the employee's suggested accommodation. Generally speaking, social, political, economic philosophies, and personal preferences, are not "religious" beliefs or practices which must be accommodated except as otherwise provided by law. Religious accommodation requests are considered on a case-by-case basis.

The EEO Officer, Human Resources, the employee's supervisor, if applicable, and the employee will meet to discuss the request. The EEO Officer (who may consult with other appropriate managers) will determine the nature and scope of the accommodation to be made after consideration of the particular circumstances, including the type of conflict and suggested accommodation, any hardship to Authority, and any work-related matters that are permitted to be assessed. The employee will be informed of the decision on the accommodation to be provided and if no accommodation is able to be made that will be explained to the employee. If the employee accepts the proposed religious accommodation, the decision will be implemented. If the employee rejects the proposed accommodation, the employee will be provided with an opportunity to further discuss this situation with the EEO Officer and Human Resources

to ensure the Authority had all available information when making the decision. The employee will be informed of the final decision, which the EEO Officer will make.

Any supervisor or manager who becomes aware of any situation that may require the Authority to consider a religious accommodation must immediately notify the EEO Officer. Any supervisor or other employee who has questions concerning the application of this policy, including the denial of a requested accommodation, must raise them with the EEO Officer.

An employee who is not requesting a religious accommodation but who has a concern about a matter involving religion in the workplace must bring those matters to the Authority's attention in accordance with the policy on workplace conduct.

There will be no retaliation against an employee who has requested a religious accommodation or who has made a good faith report of religious discrimination.

4. Genetic Information Non-discrimination Act (GINA)

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits employers and other entities covered by GINA Title II from requesting or requiring an employee' genetic information or of their family members. In order to comply with this law, the Authority will not request, and asks that an employee not provide, any genetic information when responding to any request by the Authority for medical information. "Genetic Information," as defined by GINA, includes an individual's family medical history, the results of an individual's or family member's genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual's family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

5. Veteran's Preference

The Authority complies with the requirements that public employers provide employment, retention, and promotion preferences to eligible veterans, spouses of veterans, and other veterans' preference eligible individuals. To the extent that you seek application of a veteran preference, please contact the EEO Officer or Human Resources.

6. Prohibited Discrimination, Unlawful Harassment and Retaliation

The Authority does not and will not condone discrimination or unlawful harassment against employees on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions) and gender in all lawful forms, national origin, genetics, physical or mental disability, marital status, veteran's status, pay, or other legally protected classification under federal, state and/or local law.

It is the intent of the Authority to exclude unlawful discrimination, unlawful harassment in all forms, and retaliation, in all of its workplaces and working relationships. Our workplace is not limited to the Authority's facilities, but may also include client and vendor facilities, as well as anywhere a business-related function is taking place. All employees have the right to work in an environment free of discrimination, any form of unlawful harassment, or retaliation.

To help ensure that no employee feels subject to discrimination or unlawful harassment, the Authority prohibits any offensive physical, written, or spoken conduct regarding any of these items, including conduct of a sexual nature, off-color jokes, racial, ethnic, or religious slurs or innuendos, whether in person, in writing, or by way of electronic media (the "Conduct").

Sexual harassment is a form of unlawful sex discrimination and is prohibited by the Authority. Offensive Conduct of a sexual nature may constitute unlawful harassment when engaged in by someone employed by the Authority in a position to influence employment decisions when (1) submission to such conduct is made, either expressly or implicitly, a condition of the recipient's continued employment; or (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by the recipient is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the recipient. This includes gender and sex based harassment against a person of the same sex as the alleged wrongdoer. Any sexual advances or personal relationships between a supervisor and a subordinate are prohibited.

The Authority also prohibits repeated and unwelcome physical, written or spoken conduct that substantially interferes with an individual's work performance or creates what a reasonable person could consider to be an intimidating, hostile, abusive or offensive working environment.

Any such Conduct to or by not only fellow employees, but also customers, vendors or visitors of the Authority, customers off-premises of the Authority served by the Authority, in any gathering sponsored by the Authority or in which the Authority is officially participating, will be cause for immediate investigation upon report of such offensive Conduct or situations to the EEO Officer, Director of Human Resources, or the CEO.

In addition, the same prohibition of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation applies to all employees of the Authority who act on behalf of the Authority on the premises of the Authority's customers and community business partners or anywhere the Authority provides its services.

6.1 Harassment Definitions: Unlawful harassment or discrimination is not always capable of precise definition. For example, what may be unwelcome sexual harassment to one person could be nothing more than socializing, teasing, locker room banter, or flirtation to another person. Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not so subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Therefore, the Authority must treat all complaints seriously and admonishes all employees to guard against any conduct that tends to cause discomfort or harassment to another employee, even though one might not believe it to be offensive.

The following are examples of what may be considered sexual (regardless of the sex or gender of the persons involved) or other unlawful harassment, depending on the facts and circumstances:

1. **Verbal Harassment:** derogatory or vulgar comments regarding sex or demands for sexual favors, sexual jokes, epithets, slurs, and innuendo, racial or religious slurs, or the like.

2. **Visual Harassment:** distribution or viewing of written or graphic materials containing sexually explicit or sexually or racially demeaning pictures or language (including email messages with attached files).

3. **Physical Harassment:** Unwelcome or unsolicited sexual advances or other physical conduct of a sexual nature, such as touching, pinching, or causing one to fear that they will be touched inappropriately.

These examples apply whether during working hours, outside working hours, in person, or by other means of communications such as phone or electronic communications (e-mail, text messages, tweets, blogs, social networking sites or other means).

6.2 Employee Complaint Process: If an employee believes that they are being discriminated against, or are being subjected to any of the above forms of Conduct or harassment, or believes other employees are receiving favored treatment in exchange, for example, for sexual favors, they must promptly report the believed discrimination or harassment to the EEO Officer or Director of Human Resources so the matter may be investigated. Employees who believe others are being subjected to such behavior are likewise asked to inform the EEO Officer or Director of Human Resources about the situation. The very nature of harassment makes it difficult to detect unless the individual being harassed registers their discontent with the EEO Officer or Director of Human Resources, or someone does so on that person's behalf. No one is authorized to discourage anyone from reporting what a person, in good faith, believes is or may be a problem under this policy or from participating in the Authority's investigation of a situation under this policy.

6.3 Investigation by the Authority: In order for the Authority to address violations of this policy, employees must report the offensive Conduct or situations to the EEO Officer or Director of Human Resources. If those persons are not available, or if it would be inappropriate to contact both the EEO Officer and Director of Human Resources (e.g. the complaint is about person(s) or the employee is uncomfortable discussing it with such persons), the employee must immediately contact the Authority's CEO. The person reporting the matter will be asked to provide a written statement of the date(s), times, location, and nature of the Conduct as well as the names of any witnesses. After a complaint has been received, the Authority will promptly investigate the allegations. Employees must also report any future occurrences of the complained of actions, or similar actions, and advise the EEO Officer or Director of Human Resources if they feel there is any reprisal or if they feel that they are being retaliated against for reporting any action under this policy or participating in an investigation (as a witness, investigator, or otherwise). It is understood that any person electing to utilize this complaint resolution procedure will be treated courteously, and the investigation and resolution of the situation will be handled as quickly as possible.

6.4 Management Responsibilities: Any supervisor or manager who becomes aware of possible violation of this policy whether it be inappropriate Conduct, discrimination or sexual or other unlawful harassment (whether personally observed, suspected or reported to the supervisor or manager) must promptly advise the EEO Officer or Director of Human Resources, who will handle the matter in a timely, discreet and appropriate manner. Supervisors and managers are defined by this policy to be those persons having authority to make a significant change in a person's employment status, such as hiring, firing, failing to promote, reassignment with significantly different responsibilities, or a decision causing a significant change in benefits. While not all supervisors or individuals in a lead position will meet this definition, they must still report instances that may be in violation of this policy. All such situations and potential situations must be reported so the Authority can look into the situation. When a complaint has been brought to a manager, it must be reported, even when the employee complaining asks the supervisor or manager to keep the allegation confidential and take no action. Managers and supervisors who have not been designated as persons to respond to a complaint should not undertake an investigation on their own. They must instead follow the required reporting process under this policy.

Managers or supervisors who fail to report, who engage in or allow discrimination, harassment, or retaliation will be in violation of this policy will be subject to corrective action which may include disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

6.5 No Retaliation: Retaliation or attempted retaliation in response to lodging a complaint or invoking the complaint process is a violation of this policy. Retaliatory conduct is prohibited. Some examples of retaliatory conduct include: (i) threatening action or criticizing an employee for filing a complaint or providing information; or (ii) firing, demoting, disciplining an employee or taking any other adverse action against an employee because the employee filed a valid complaint or participated in an investigation. Employees who believe they are being retaliated against must report the retaliation to the EEO Officer, Director of Human Resources or the CEO. Reports of retaliation will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken consistent with the findings of the investigation.

6.6 Actions: Appropriate action will be taken consistent with the findings of the investigation. At the completion of the investigation the complainant will be informed of the outcome to the extent appropriate. An employee engaging in discrimination, sexual or other form of unlawful harassment, or retaliation will be subject to corrective action which may include disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. False and malicious complaints may result in appropriate disciplinary action. No discipline will result, however, if a complaint is made in good faith, even if the Authority's investigation is inconclusive or determines no discrimination, harassment, or retaliation occurred.

6.7 Confidentiality: The reporting complaining employee must understand that confidentiality of the complaint involving the substance of the allegations cannot reasonably be expected due to the very nature and process of the investigation of the complaint. Nonetheless, due to the serious nature of such complaints, the Authority will make an effort to restrict the dissemination of the complaint to those having a need to know. The Authority urges all employees who are involved in an investigation to respect the privacy of both the complaining employee and the alleged wrongdoer so as not to impair the careers or reputations of either or the integrity of the investigation. All parties must be aware of the seriousness of such complaints and the damage that can be done to everyone concerned.

The Authority urges all employees to report any improper Conduct as set out in this policy. Unless the Authority knows of a problem, it cannot take steps to resolve it.

Employees who fail to cooperate with any investigation conducted by the Authority, or who participate in the investigation and breach confidentiality during the open investigation resulting in a threat to the integrity of the investigation, may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. The Authority will assess the breach of confidentiality during an employee investigation on a case-by-case basis to determine if the actions give rise to discipline. The Authority is committed to objectivity and abiding by legal standards during workplace investigations. Confidentiality during an open investigation is to ensure that the investigation is fair, unbiased and to prevent the influence of witnesses and potential retaliation for those involved in the investigation.

7. Anti-Bullying Policy

To ensure a safe and efficient workplace, bullying will not be tolerated. Workplace bullying refers to repeated, unreasonable actions of individuals or a group of individuals directed towards an employee or group of employees (the target) which are intended to threaten, intimidate, degrade, humiliate, or undermine the target; which create a risk to the health or safety of the target(s); and which a reasonable person would find abusive. While generally "bullying" is not currently unlawful workplace conduct as is discrimination, it is nevertheless prohibited by the Authority as there is a zero policy for bullying. Examples of bullying may include, but are not limited to repeated conduct such as:

- Work interference or sabotage that prevents work from being performed;
- Blame without factual justification;
- Verbal abuse - derogatory remarks, insults, epithets;
- Exclusion or social isolation;
- Violent or threatening behavior;
- Abuse or misuse of power/authority;
- Conduct that threatens the health or safety of others; or
- Exploitation of a person's known vulnerability.

Prohibited conduct includes verbal, written, graphic or physical communications and conduct by any means including cyber-bullying and the use of electronically transmitted communications, as well as postings and communications on interactive social or professional media and other web-based/Internet sources. Different from aggression, which typically involves only a single act, bullying typically involves repeated attacks against the target, creating an on-going pattern of behavior. Communications from "tough" or "demanding" bosses is not bullying when the communications do not violate this policy, are respectful, fair, and motivated by the supervisor's desire to obtain the best performance by setting high, yet reasonable, expectations.

All employees are expected to engage in a professional and civil manner towards each other, customers and members of the public.

Any employee who feels they have been victimized by bullying (whether by an employee, customer, or other member of the public) is encouraged to report the matter to Human Resources. Any report of workplace bullying will be treated seriously and investigated promptly, as confidentially as possible, and impartially.

8. Whistleblower Policy

The Florida Whistleblower Act, Section 112.3187, F.S. (the "Act"), prohibits retaliatory action by an organization against an employee who reports to an appropriate agency violation of law on the part of a public employer or independent contractor that creates a substantial and specific danger to the public's health, safety, or welfare. Additionally, this Act protects employees reporting improper use of a government office, gross waste of funds and/or public resources, or any other abuse or neglect of duty on the part of an agency, public officer, or employee.

It is the Authority's intent to encourage the proper disclosure and reporting of violations of law, improper use of governmental funds and/or other resources, and any other abuse or gross neglect on the part of the Authority, its public officers or its Employees under the Act.

8.1 No Retaliation: No Employee who is protected by the Florida Whistleblower Act shall be dismissed, disciplined, or have any other adverse personnel action taken against him/her for reporting information pursuant to that Act except as otherwise allowed by law.

8.2 Reporting: Should an employee believe in good faith that they are being retaliated against for making a report under the Act, the employee should immediately report the suspected retaliation to the EEO Officer or Human Resources Director. The Authority will promptly investigate any such claim of retaliation.