



LOUISIANA PUBLIC DEFENDER BOARD

Effective: September 11, 2012

Policy and Procedures Anti-Discrimination Statement Concerning Clients

The Rules of Professional Conduct (Rule 1.2(b) and Rule 8.4(d),(f)) and the vision, mission and core values of the Louisiana Public Defender Board prohibit any defender or defender staff member from discriminating against clients on the basis of actual or perceived race, national origin, alienage or citizenship status, ethnicity, class, public benefit, political view, military status, religious affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression¹, family structure, prior record of arrest or conviction, genetic predisposition or carrier status, age, disability, or experience as a victim.

Violation of this anti-discrimination statement is considered a breach of the professional and ethical responsibilities of legal representation, a threat to clients' constitutional right to effective assistance of counsel, and will result in appropriate disciplinary action. District Defenders and Executive Directors, per their contract with the Louisiana Public Defender Board, are obligated to create and maintain a practice culture that complies with this directive so that their office is a place of hope and justice for all of the clients it serves.

Retaliation against an individual who files a complaint of harassment or participates in an investigation of such a complaint is strictly prohibited. The Louisiana Public Defender Board will ensure that all District Defenders and Executive Directors receive notice of this policy and will encourage all office leadership to develop and adopt anti-discrimination statements/policies for their district or program offices.

¹ Actual or perceived gender identity and expression refers to a person's actual or perceived gender, and includes self-image, appearance, and behavior, whether or not different from that traditionally associated with the legal sex assigned to the person at birth.