Code of Conduct for Vendors and Contractors

Assabet Co-op Market | 86 Powder Mill Road, Maynard, MA | Revised 8.8.25

OUR COMMITMENT

Assabet Co-op Market is committed to building a just, sustainable, and community-driven business. Our Code of Conduct outlines the expectations we have for all contractors and vendors who work with us. We expect all contractors and vendors to uphold the same principles that guide our co-op: social, economic, and environmental responsibility, diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice, and community engagement.

1. Respect for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

We strive to create a welcoming and inclusive environment where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect. All contractors and vendors are expected to foster an atmosphere of inclusivity and fairness, ensuring their practices align with our commitment to diversity, equity, and social justice. Discrimination, harassment, or disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated in any form.

2. Collaboration and Open Communication

We value open and transparent communication. Contractors and vendors are expected to maintain clear, respectful, and professional communication with all co-op staff, customers, and community members. Collaboration is key. We encourage innovative solutions that serve our community and promote positive change in our shared environment.

3. Ethical Practices, Sustainability, and Local Support

Contractors and vendors are encouraged to align with Assabet Co-op Market's values by:

- Operating with integrity and transparency in business transactions
- Adopting environmentally responsible practices and reducing waste
- Sourcing locally produced, sustainably harvested products
- Supporting fair practices and fostering relationships with local producers and farmers
- Contributing to our educational mission by sharing best practices for sustainability and social responsibility

These practices are encouraged as part of our broader commitment to community and sustainability.

4. Compliance with Laws and Co-op Policies

Contractors and vendors must comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations. This includes health and safety standards, labor laws, and environmental regulations. Contractors must also adhere to Assabet Co-op Market's internal policies, including those related to workplace safety, product standards, and operational protocols.

5. Harassment or Discrimination Policy

Assabet Co-op Market is committed to a workplace free from harassment or discrimination. We will not tolerate harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, gender expression, sex, color, national origin, disability, religion, marital status, veteran status, age, or any other characteristic protected by law, affecting employees, customers, members, contractors, or vendors.

If you believe you have experienced harassment or discrimination, report it immediately to management or the General Manager. All complaints will be investigated, and corrective action will be taken when necessary.

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including termination of the contract or vendor relationship. While confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible, it cannot be guaranteed.

Retaliation against individuals reporting harassment or discrimination, or cooperating in investigations, is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. Complaints made in bad faith may also lead to disciplinary action, including contract termination.

6. Sexual Harassment Policy

Assabet Co-op Market is committed to a workplace free from sexual harassment, whether in the workplace or in work-related settings. Retaliation for reporting sexual harassment or cooperating with an investigation is unlawful and will not be tolerated.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is made a condition of employment, or
- Such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Examples include unwelcome touching, sexual jokes or comments, displaying sexually suggestive images, leering, or inquiries into one's sexual experiences.

Retaliation for reporting sexual harassment or cooperating with an investigation is strictly prohibited. Any individual found retaliating will face immediate disciplinary action.

If you experience or witness sexual harassment, report it immediately. You are encouraged to report any conduct that violates this policy to your supervisor, a member of management, or the General Manager.

> **YOUR RIGHT TO FILE EXTERNALLY**
> It is important to note that reporting harassment internally does not limit your right to file a complaint with local, state, or federal agencies. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) both accept complaints within 300 days of the alleged incident.

7. Retaliation Policy

Assabet Co-op Market is committed to maintaining a working environment that is free from harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. We strive to create a culture in which contractors, vendors, and employees can report concerns about violations of policies or laws without fear of reprisal.

We prohibit retaliation against any individual who:

- Makes a complaint or reports concerns related to discrimination, harassment, or violations of federal, state, or local laws
- Provides information or participates in investigations related to such concerns

Retaliation may include adverse actions such as demotion, pay reduction, or termination. If you believe you have been subjected to retaliation or are aware of retaliation against others, you are required to immediately report the matter to your supervisor, a member of management, or the General Manager.

8. Reporting Harassment, Discrimination, or Retaliation

The Co-op encourages the prompt reporting of any incidents involving harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, regardless of the identity or position of the individual involved. If you feel you have been subjected to any inappropriate conduct or if you witness such conduct, you should immediately report the incident to your supervisor, another member of management, or the General Manager.

WHERE TO REPORT

If the employee's direct supervisor is involved in the alleged behavior or is unavailable, you should report the incident directly to the General Manager. In cases where the General Manager is involved, the issue can be reported to the Board of Directors.

9. Important Notice to All Contractors and Vendors

Contractors and vendors who have experienced conduct they believe violates this policy are strongly encouraged to utilize the complaint procedure outlined in this Code of Conduct.

While the availability of this formal complaint procedure is a critical resource, individuals are also encouraged, when appropriate, to promptly advise the offender that the behavior is unwelcome and request that it cease. This proactive approach can sometimes resolve issues swiftly and directly.

However, if direct communication is not feasible or the issue persists, we strongly encourage the use of our formal reporting channels, ensuring that all concerns are addressed in a timely and thorough manner.

10. Investigation of Harassment, Discrimination, or Retaliation Complaints

Any reported allegations of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation will be investigated promptly and thoroughly. The investigation may involve interviews with the individuals involved, as well as others who may have witnessed the alleged conduct or have relevant knowledge.

To the extent possible, confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigative process. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed and will be limited to what is necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and take appropriate corrective action, in compliance with applicable laws.

Assabet Co-op Market is committed to ensuring that all complaints are handled in a fair, impartial, and timely manner, with the goal of resolving issues effectively and preventing further incidents.