



Diocese of Prince George

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RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE POLICY Bullying & Harassment Prevention

A respectful workplace is one which promotes acceptance, recognizes diversity and fosters respect for the dignity and the interests of each person.

This applies to all personal interaction of employer, supervisor and employee, with each other and with those whom we serve. Interactions include not only those that are face-to-face but also those that occur through written, telephone and electronic means.

In carrying out the mission of Christ through our employment in the Diocese of Prince George we respect and value:

- the fact that we are all different from one another
- views and opinions of others even when they differ from our own
- contributions made by all, regardless of the level or role within the workplace
- needs, views and expectations of all people with whom we interact, both within the workplace and those whom we serve
- property and personal interests of those around us and the workplace itself

Everyone has the right to respect in the workplace. The Diocese is committed to maintaining an environment that recognizes the dignity of the individual, is free from bullying and harassment and encourages individuals to take responsibility for resolving interpersonal conflicts.

Bullying and Harassment

The Diocese recognizes the employee's right to protection from bullying and harassment.

WorkSafeBC's Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) policies use the phrase "bullying and harassment" as a single term. Bullying and harassment is a form of discrimination. The BC Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religious belief, family or marital status, physical or mental disability, gender, sexual orientation or age.

Bullying and harassment is defined as any improper behavior directed at or offensive to another that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause the other to be humiliated or intimidated. It includes any inappropriate conduct, comments, materials or display made on either a one time or continuous basis that demeans, belittles, intimidates or humiliates another person. It excludes any reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the place of employment.

Bullying and harassment in the workplace violates the fundamental rights, dignity and integrity of the individual and will not be tolerated at any level. It is the responsibility of all to foster a working environment where bullying and harassment in any form is not tolerated.

Not every unpleasant interaction or workplace conflict is considered bullying and harassment. Examples of behaviors that may not be bullying and harassment, if undertaken in an appropriate manner, include:

- expressing differences of opinion
- offering constructive feedback, guidance or advice about work-related behavior and performance
- making a legitimate complaint through established procedures about someone's conduct

Bullying and harassment should not be confused with exercising managerial authority. Examples of reasonable management action might include decisions relating to:

- job duties or the work to be performed
- workloads and deadlines
- layoffs, transfers, promotions and reorganizations
- work instructions, supervision or feedback
- work evaluation
- performance management
- discipline suspensions or terminations

When it is provided in a respectful manner, appropriate feedback to help staff improve performance or behavior is not bullying and harassment. However, supervisors should ensure performance problems are identified and addressed in a constructive, objective way that does not humiliate or intimidate.

Intent does not determine whether the behavior is bullying and harassment. A person cannot excuse their behavior by saying he or she did not mean it to be offensive, humiliating or intimidating.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as any comment, look, suggestion, physical contact or a real or implied action of a sexual nature which creates an uncomfortable working environment for the recipient. It includes any circulation or display of visual material of a sexual nature that has the effect of creating an uncomfortable working environment. An action or behavior constitutes sexual harassment when:

- it is made by a person who knows, or ought reasonably to know, that the conduct or comment is unwanted or unwelcome
- it has the effect of creating an intimidating, humiliating, hostile or offensive workplace environment and may include the expression of sexist attitudes, language or behavior
- it is accompanied by a reward or the expressed or implied promise of reward for compliance
- it is accompanied by reprisal or an expressed or implied threat of reprisal for refusal to comply
- it is accompanied by denial of opportunity or expressed or implied threat of the denial of opportunity

Resolution Procedure:

Step 1

- The complainant, if comfortable with that approach, may choose to speak to or correspond directly with the alleged bully/harasser to express his/her feelings about the situation
- Before proceeding to Step 2, the complainant may approach his/her supervisor to discuss potential means of resolving the complaint and to request assistance in resolving the matter. If the matter is resolved to the complainant's satisfaction the matter is deemed to be resolved.

Step 2

- If a complainant chooses not to meet with the alleged bully/harasser, or no agreement for resolution of the complaint has been reached, or an agreement for resolution has been breached by the alleged bully/harasser, a complaint may be filed with the Bishop or his designate.
- The Bishop or his designate shall notify in writing the alleged bully/harasser of the complaint and provide notice of investigation.

Step 3

- The Bishop or his designate shall initiate an investigation of the complaint by a person who has training and/or experience in investigating complaints of bullying and harassment. The complainant may request that the investigator shall be of the same gender as the complainant and where practicable the request will not be denied.
- The investigation shall be conducted as soon as is reasonably possible and shall be completed in ten (10) working days from the date of notice to the alleged bully/harasser unless otherwise agreed to by the parties.

Step 4

- Where the investigator concludes that bullying, harassment or sexual harassment has taken place, corrective action shall be taken against the person(s) who breached this policy.
- Action may include education or training, denying access to Diocesan facilities and activities and/or, in the case of Diocesan employees, discipline up to and including termination of employment

Step 5

- The complainant shall be informed in writing that disciplinary action was or was not taken.

Retaliation

It is considered to be a breach of this policy to take retaliatory action against a person who raises a concern or files a complaint under this policy.

Appendix A: Harassment Complaint Form

WORKPLACE BULLYING & HARASSMENT COMPLAINT FORM

The Diocese is committed to maintaining an environment that recognizes the dignity of the individual and is free from bullying and harassment. It encourages individuals to take responsibility for resolving interpersonal conflicts, **but when efforts to resolve bullying and harassment at the local level fail**, this form is completed and submitted to the Chancellor in an envelope marked "CONFIDENTIAL".

Complainant Information

I am (choose one): the alleged victim a witness

Name: _____

Home Telephone Number: _____ Cell Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Place of Employment: _____

Alleged Victim Information (if complainant is a witness)

Name: _____

Home Telephone Number: _____ Cell Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Place of Employment: _____

Name(s) of alleged Bully/Harasser: _____

Personal Statement (Describe in as much detail as possible the bullying and/or harassment incident(s))

Date and Time of Incident(s): _____

Location(s): _____

Names of Parties Involved: _____

Details about the incident(s) (behavior and/or words used): _____

Any additional details that would help with an investigation: _____

Attach any supporting documents such as emails, handwritten notes or photographs. Physical evidence, such as vandalized personal belongings, can also be submitted.

Signature of Complainant: _____ Date: _____