



RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE POLICY (NO BULLYING / HARASSMENT)

The Sooke Region Historical Society (the “SRHS”) is committed to providing a respectful, safe, and healthy workplace. Workplace bullying and harassment is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in any circumstances.

The intention of this policy and its procedures is to educate and prevent harassment and discrimination in the workplace. The SRHS will act promptly and confidentially to address: workplace conflict, disrespectful conduct and harassment/bullying, including sexual and discriminatory harassment. In doing so, the SRHS expects cooperation from all staff.

Application: this policy applies to all staff: i.e., employees, contractors and subcontractors, whether on a permanent, temporary, casual, contract or student basis. It applies to volunteers and to all interpersonal and electronic communications such as texting, emails, social media activity and applies wherever staff/volunteers are engaged in work-related activities.

DEFINITIONS

Harassment (also known as bullying): includes any inappropriate conduct or comment by a person towards SRHS’s staff and/or volunteers that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause that person to be humiliated or intimidated. **Examples** include: verbal aggression or insults, aggressive body positioning/posturing, making derogatory comments or swearing at the person, interfering with a person’s work space or personal belongings, spreading rumours or jokes about the person, constant teasing, alienating, ostracizing or isolating an individual, giving the person the silent treatment, or encouraging others (through words or actions) to behave in any of these ways.

Workplace harassment does not include: any reasonable action taken by a manager or supervisor relating to the management and direction of the workplace such as:

- decisions about job duties, workloads, transfers, layoffs, restructuring, work instructions, provision of training;
- constructive criticism and performance evaluations;
- requiring satisfactory medical documentation and/or putting other conditions in place to manage performance/attendance; and,
- disciplinary or other forms of corrective action.

Workplace harassment also does not include normal workplace conflict or differences of opinion. However, rude or disrespectful behaviour, interpersonal conflict, speaking less than tactfully are not acceptable. Collectively and over time these behaviours may constitute harassment or create a toxic work environment.

Discriminatory harassment: includes conduct or comments that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would be unwelcome and which are based on race, colour, gender, ancestry, place of origin, religion, culture, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age.



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Sexual harassment: is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature in the workplace. In this context, the term sex also refers to gender, gender identity and one's expression of gender. Negative comments or sweeping generalizations about gender (stereotyping), or gender-based harassment of anyone that identifies or expresses as another gender, can also be considered sexual harassment. Sexual harassment can occur among people of the same gender.

Sexual harassment comes in many forms, such as staring, the "lingering gaze", following (physically or with one's eyes), persistently putting oneself into another's workspace or personal space, unwelcome touching or hugging, asking questions or making comments about a person's gender, gender presentation, sexual orientation or sex life, or persistently complimenting or commenting on one's appearance or clothing. If a person is uncertain whether their conduct or behaviour is welcome, watch for reactions which may be subtle or not so subtle (looking away, body stiffening, or leaving the area).

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities: Staff must not engage in disrespectful or bullying/harassing behaviours. All staff must report if they observe or experience bullying and harassment. All staff must apply and comply with the Employer's Respectful Workplace Policy and all policies and procedures addressing bullying/harassment.

Confidentiality: Incidents, complaints and investigations of workplace conflict, harassment and/or bullying involve sensitive disclosures. All persons are responsible for respecting confidentiality so that the matter can be properly and fairly addressed. Confidentiality, however, must be distinguished from anonymity. Anonymous complaints cannot be investigated and those involved cannot be kept anonymous from each other. Gossiping, and spreading rumours, whether inside or outside of the workplace and/or confronting those involved, is never acceptable.

Reporting and Investigation Procedures:

Staff and/or volunteers who feel subjected to harassment or bullying, or to disrespectful behaviours which they are concerned if not addressed, could escalate to harassment or bullying, should take the following steps, if possible:

1. Tell the person to stop. Do this as soon as you receive any unwelcome conduct or comments. If it is inappropriate to say something in the moment, approach the person privately as soon as you are able. Although this may be difficult and uncomfortable, telling the person what made you feel uncomfortable is often enough to stop the behavior. Try the following:
 - Communicate how you want to be treated using "I" statements (such as "I don't want you to do that" or "I don't like that type of language");
 - Express your feelings in a way that assumes good intentions (for example "I know that hugs are your way to show appreciation, but they make me feel uncomfortable"); and/or,
 - Suggest that the focus be on the work, not the personalities or persons ("I'd like to stay away from observations about me and focus on this project").



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2. If the unwelcome behaviour continues, you may want to provide the person with a written note explaining how their behaviour is making you feel and repeating the request that it stop. Often seeing it in writing makes people take it more seriously.

If the above strategies do not cause the unwelcome behaviour to stop, or you do not feel safe confronting the person directly, speak to a manager whom you feel comfortable approaching, or the Executive Director. The situation will be discussed with you and may move forward to an informal or formal resolution.

A. Informal Resolution

An informal resolution involves the Executive Director and/or a member of the Board's Human Resources Committee speaking to the people involved (typically separately) with the goal of reaching a mutually agreeable resolution. Potential resolutions at this stage are only limited by the parties' commitment and willingness and may include:

- Recognition of responsibility/accountability;
- Entering into commitments (verbally or in writing as appropriate), apologizing or making amends (e.g.: "making it right");
- Coaching, mentoring, peer support and/or feedback;
- Participation in counseling and/or training (internal or external); and
- Participation in conflict resolution/mediation/facilitation.

If the situation is escalating, or determined inappropriate for informal resolution, a formal investigation/resolution process will apply.

B. Formal Resolution

The person affected would provide a written complaint to either the Executive Director or a member of the Board's Human Resources Committee, identifying the individual(s) involved, describing the unwelcome behaviours, incidents, events, providing date(s) and time(s) as accurately as possible, and the names of any people who may have witnessed the incident(s) (the "Complaint").

The person will also be asked to describe the steps he/she has taken, if any, to address the concern directly with the individual(s). If there is other relevant information or records, that information should be included with the Complaint.

The Complaint will be reviewed to determine whether this policy or other policies may have been breached and whether an investigation is appropriate. Informal resolution, if not already considered, will also be discussed. At its discretion, the SRHS may choose to investigate potential incidents of harassment without a formal complaint.

INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

1. The SRHS will investigate and address incidents and complaints of harassment in a fair and timely manner.



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2. The investigation will be fair and sensitive to all persons involved. Confidentiality will be maintained. External investigators may be used for complex or highly sensitive situations.
3. If it is appropriate, the SRHS may place those affected on a leave of absence with pay, or make schedule changes, and/or changes to reporting relationships.
4. The typical steps to an investigation are:
 - interviewing the persons involved to gather information (what happened, when and where did it happen, was anyone else present). The investigator may also ask what each of them wants in order to resolve the situation;
 - interviewing persons who directly witnessed events or have relevant information;
 - reviewing any related documents; and,
 - making detailed notes of the investigation (which are maintained in a confidential file).
5. Once the investigation is complete, the investigator will prepare a report. The SRHS will determine what actions should be taken as a result of the investigation.

CORRECTIVE ACTION

If it is determined this policy and/or other policies have been violated, an unacceptable level of workplace conflict exists, confidentiality regarding the Complaint has not been respected, or any individual has engaged in retaliatory or unacceptable behaviours, corrective action will be taken, such as:

- Updating of policies and procedures;
- Coaching, provision of information;
- Participation in training and education (internal or external);
- Participation in conflict resolution/mediation/facilitation sessions;
- Performance management;
- Recommendations or requirements to undertake counseling;
- Discipline (as appropriate – formal warnings, suspensions, transfers or demotions, or dismissal); and,
- Other actions and/or combination of actions determined appropriate.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have read, understand and agree to abide by the terms and conditions of the RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE POLICY (NO BULLYING / HARASSMENT).

Date

Name (printed)

Signature



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NOTE: Copy to be given to employee and placed in the personnel file.

APPROVED By the Board Nov 13, 2019