

# Harassment & Workplace Violence

The Company's Harassment and Workplace Violence Policy is accessible to all Team Members via the Company **PORTAL**.

This policy can be found under **Resource Center / Team Member Guide / Section 800 - CODE OF CONDUCT / 801 HARASSMENT AND WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**.



# Our Commitment

The Company is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace free from harassment and actual, attempted or threatened workplace violence.

All individuals will be free from harassment on the basis of age, sex, race, colour, religion, creed, national origin, citizenship, language, marital status, family status, pregnancy/childbirth, sexual orientation, disability/handicap, social condition, civil status, political belief or any other prohibited ground of discrimination.

This also includes the right to freedom from sexual and psychological harassment.



# Harassment

Harassment is objectionable conduct that may have the effect of:

- creating an intimidating work environment;
- creating an offensive work environment;
- interfering with an individual's work performance;
- adversely affecting an individual's employment relationship;  
and/or
- denying an individual dignity and respect.

It includes deliberate or intentional gestures, words, comments, slurs, acts, questions, representations or other behaviour that ought to reasonably be known to be unwelcome.



# Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is any unsolicited conduct, comment, gesture, or physical contact of a sexual nature that is unwelcome to the recipient.

It includes, but is not limited to:

- any unwelcome sexual advances (oral, written or physical);
- requests for sexual favors;
- sexual and/or sexist jokes; and/or
- display of degrading or offensive material when:
- such conduct might reasonably be expected to cause insecurity, discomfort, offense or humiliation to another person;
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with a person's work performance or creating an intimidating or offensive work environment;
- submissions to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a condition of employment;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for any employment decision (including, but not limited to, job security, promotion or change in salary and benefits).



# Psychological Harassment

Psychological Harassment is objectionable conduct manifested by words, acts, or gestures of a sexual nature that must have the effect of:

- being harassing and repeated or harassing and serious;
- being hostile and unwanted;
- affecting the dignity, physical or psychological integrity of the Team Member; and
- creating a harmful work environment.

In order for the conduct to indicate the possible existence of psychological harassment, all above criteria's must be met.



# Workplace Violence

Violence is defined as more than just physically assaulting a person. It is the attempted, threatened or actual conduct of a person that causes (or is likely to cause) injury to another person. It includes, but is not limited to:

- actual physical assaults or attacks;
- threats and intimidation;
- harassment;
- abuse;
- bullying;
- gestures of violence; or
- any other conduct that might reasonably give a Team Member cause for fear, offend their dignity or create a hostile or poisonous work environment.



# What isn't harassment?

The following are **not** forms of harassment:

- managing and/or coaching in the form of:
- counseling,
- performance appraisal,
- work assignment,
- the implementation of corrective action;
- interpersonal conflicts;
- work-related stress;
- difficult professional constraints (for example: time-sensitive deadlines, etc.).



# Identifying Risk (Harassment)

Different factors can increase the risk of harassment in the workplace. Such factors include (but are not limited to):

- lack of respect;
- large organizational changes;
- lack of communication; • competitive work environments; • interpersonal conflict, etc.

Identifying the risk of harassment is the first step to prevention. **Be attentive to the workplace.** Look for:

- changes in individual behaviour;
- tensions between people, etc.



# Identifying Risk (Harassment) Cont.

**Team Members:** If you identify a risk of harassment, report your concern to your supervisor/manager.

**Supervisors/Managers:** Monitor information that provides insight into the work climate, such as:

- absenteeism;
- incidents and accidents;
- complaints;
- conflicts;
- comments/suggestions from workers;
- *consult your workers on their perceptive of the work climate.*



# Identifying Risk (Violence)

It is difficult to know when a person is going to be violent. Not all people will show warning signs/behaviours.

The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) advises warning signs can include (but are not limited to):

- threatening/intimidating behaviour;
- history of violence;
- increase in personal stress;
- negative personality characteristics (suspicious of others, entitled, etc.);
- marked changes in mood or behaviour;
- socially isolated.

**If you are concerned about a person becoming violent, report your concern to your supervisor/manager.**



# Identifying Risk (Violence) Cont.

**Supervisors/Managers:** If you feel imminent threat of violence, call security.

**If the situation escalates, call emergency services.**

If you have been notified a Team Member is showing signs of worrying behaviour and you believe they may require support, contact the HR Department.

The HR Department can provide the Team Member with details on how to access support resources (paramedical, etc.) in their area.



# Incident Response

When faced with harassment and / or workplace violence Team Members are to take immediate action to ensure the safety of themselves and other Team Members.

Action can include (but is not limited to):

- calling a supervisor/manager for assistance;
- leaving the area;
- securing the building / sheltering in place; • calling security / emergency services, etc.

*The action taken is dependent on the nature and severity of the situation (harassment, workplace violence, etc.)*



# Responding to Aggression

Not all aggressive interactions meet the criteria of harassment and / or workplace violence. **For example:** an angry customer yells at a worker for a minute about the quality of service they received before leaving the store.

However, it is important to recognize that **aggressive behaviour can be a precursor to harassment and / or workplace violence**. When faced with an aggressive individual the following actions should be implemented (provided it is safe to do so):

1. De-Escalate
2. Disconnect

*There can be circumstances in which certain steps should be skipped. Ensure you are familiar with the steps involved in both of the above and use your judgement on how best to proceed for your situation.*

**Supervisors/Managers:** if you become aware that one of your Team Members is struggling to manage an interaction with a hostile individual it is your responsibility to step in and take over.



# De-Escalate

## 1. Stay Calm

- Raised voices and argumentative behaviour **will not** help the situation;
- Take deep breaths;
- Lower the tone of your voice;
- Speak as you would like to be spoken to.

## 2. Listen

- Look at the person who is talking (**do not** look away as if you are disinterested);
- Summarize what they have said in your own words – this will demonstrate that you are hearing them;
- If appropriate, ask if you can take notes on their issue.

**Moments of silence are ok!** You can take your time to form a response. Silence gives the person time to elaborate on their issue, respond to what has been said, and calm down.



# De-Escalate Cont.

## 3. Use Positive Language

- For example:
- “Please help me understand what happened here.” • Instead of saying “I can’t” say “Let me see what I can do,” etc.
- Ask questions to get more information.

**Do not** use gestures that could be interpreted as challenging to the other person (example: hands on hips, pointing your finger, waving your arms, crossing your arms, etc.)

**Do not** tell the person to relax or calm down

## 4. Be Honest

## 5. Keep Your Distance (about three feet)

- **Do not** physically engage with someone who is behaving aggressively.



# De-Escalate Cont.

6. Take A Break (if appropriate) • Validate the person before leaving. For example: “I’m going to have to step away. You have given me a lot to think about, I will see what I can do to help you.”

**If you take a break know that the situation remains unresolved.** You will need to take steps to ensure the situation continues to de-escalate.

If at any point during the de-escalation process you feel you require assistance, **call for your supervisor/manager.** You can advise the person of this. For example: “I’m going to get in touch with someone who can help you.”



# Disconnect

If de-escalation is not working you will need to end the interaction. If you feel you require assistance, **call for your supervisor/manager**. You can advise the person you are calling for assistance on their issue.

**Note:** If the interaction begins to improve you can resume de-escalation if you choose / if it would be suitable to resolve the situation.

1. Interrupt the conversation firmly, **but politely**
2. Tell the person that you:
  - Will not accept abusive treatment or language
  - Will end the conversation if necessary
3. Tell the person that if their behaviour continues, you will ask them to leave (or that you will leave)
4. If the behaviour continues, ask the person to leave (*or leave yourself*)
5. If the person does not agree to leave, remove yourself and inform management of the situation
- 6. Do not return if you believe the person may be a physical threat**
7. Tell other staff and have them leave the immediate area as well
8. If applicable, call security
9. If applicable, call emergency services



# De-Escalate / Disconnect – Next Steps

Interactions that require you to de-escalate (or disconnect) are to be recorded by management to:

- Ensure a pattern of behaviour can be recognized;
- Allow additional steps to be taken, if necessary, to ensure the safety of all workers.

**As a Team Member:** it is your responsibility to report all such interactions to your supervisor/manager.

**As a Supervisor/Manager:** it is your responsibility to record all such interactions and inform upper management (OM/GM, etc.) and the HR Department when necessary.

*For more information on reporting please refer to the Company's Harassment and Workplace Violence Policy.*



# Responsibility - Company

It is the responsibility of the **Company**:

- to take reasonable preventative measures to protect Team Members and others in Company workplaces from harassment and/or workplace violence; and
- to ensure all Team Members are made aware of and trained in the Harassment and Workplace Violence policy; and
- to post the policy in an obvious location in the workplace; and
- to establish a process for reporting and responding to incidents of harassment and/or workplace violence; and
- to ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.



# Supervisors/Managers

It is the responsibility of **Supervisors and Managers**:

- to understand and abide by the requirements of the Harassment and Workplace Violence policy; and
- to communicate and review the policy with the Team Members they supervise or manage; and
- post the revised policy annually in an obvious location in the workplace; and
- to encourage Team Members to report complaints or incidents of harassment and/or workplace violence; and
- to promptly report all complaints or incidents of harassment and/or workplace violence they receive or witness to the HR Department; and
- to ensure that Team Members are aware of emergency procedures.



# Team Members

It is the responsibility of **Team Members** (including **Supervisors and Managers**):

- to comply with the Harassment and Workplace Violence policy at all times in order to protect themselves and others in the workplace from harassment and/or workplace violence; and
- to immediately notify the HR Department in writing of any incident of harassment and/or workplace violence (whether the notifying Team Member was involved or not). In the case of an extreme or imminent threat of physical harm to themselves (or any person), the Team Member should contact emergency services; and
- to fully cooperate in any investigation of complaints or incidents of harassment and/or workplace violence or breaches of the policy.



# Prevention Starts With You

All Team Members should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times.

You are expected to refrain from fighting, "horseplay", profanity, rudeness or any other conduct that may be dangerous or may be offensive to others.

You are also expected to contribute in maintaining a harassment free workplace by respecting the Company's Team Core Values.

