



AP 4 – 32 Respect in the Workplace

Related Policies:	Initial Approval:
Related Procedures:	Last Amended: 2023 June 26
Exhibits: Occupational Health and Safety Act	Last Reviewed: 2023 June 26

PURPOSE

All employees, contractors, partners and volunteers have a right to a respectful work environment free of workplace harassment and workplace violence. Any act of workplace harassment or workplace violence shall be considered unacceptable conduct whether that conduct occurs at work, on Division grounds, or at Division sponsored activities. Accordingly, the Division will ensure that appropriate measures are taken to discourage and deal quickly and effectively with workplace harassment and workplace violence. Any failure to adhere to this Administrative Procedure may result in discipline up to, and including, termination.

SCOPE

This procedure only applies to Division staff, contractors, partners, and volunteers.

DEFINITIONS

Workplace Harassment - Workplace harassment is defined as a single or repeated incident of objectionable or unwelcome conduct, comment, bullying or action intended to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate a particular person or group. It's a serious issue and creates an unhealthy work environment resulting in psychological harm to workers. It does not include any reasonable conduct of an employer or supervisor related to the normal management of workers or a work site. Differences of opinion or minor disagreements between coworkers are also not generally considered to be workplace harassment if steps are taken to resolve the conflict.

Workplace Violence - Violence, whether at a worksite or work related, is defined as the threatened, attempted or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical or psychological injury or harm. It can include:

- physical attack or aggression
- threatening behaviour
- verbal or written threats
- domestic violence
- sexual violence

Domestic Violence - Domestic violence becomes a workplace hazard when it occurs or spills over into the workplace. It may put the targeted worker at risk and may pose a threat to coworkers. The Division will take reasonable precautions to protect affected workers if they are likely to be exposed to domestic violence at a work site.

Sexual Violence - Sexual violence as a workplace hazard refers to any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, or other act directed against a worker's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in a workplace or work-related setting. Sexual violence exists on a continuum from obscene name-calling to sexual assault and/or homicide. It includes online form of sexual violence, such as internet threats and harassment, and sexual exploitation.

Complainant - A person who believes s/he has been harassed or subjected to workplace violence and who seeks recourse pursuant to this Administrative Procedure.

Respondent - A person against whom an allegation of workplace harassment or violence has been made pursuant to this Administrative Procedure.

PROCEDURES

1. No individual will be penalized for making a complaint or giving evidence in an investigation of workplace harassment or workplace violence unless it is malicious and/or without foundation. In this circumstance, the District will take action as deemed appropriate. This could include disciplinary action.
2. The Associate Superintendent of People Services will provide support and assistance in accordance with Administrative Procedure 4-32 - Respect in the Workplace.
3. The complainant and respondent are to work constructively with each other and their supervisor to understand and resolve any issue of workplace harassment or violence prior to filing a complaint. While informal resolution is encouraged, it may not be appropriate to attempt to deal with a complaint related to workplace violence by informal means.
4. Informal Complaint - Complainants who believe they have been the subject of workplace harassment or violence are to make their objection clearly known to the respondent. Complainants are to seek support of their immediate supervisor as to how to proceed. Complaints made in the informal process must be done in a timely fashion. In the case of workplace violence complainants are only to engage in the informal resolution process if they feel safe and able to do so.
5. Formal Complaint - Formal complaints are to be submitted in writing to the Associate Superintendent of People Services. A formal complaint may proceed in the following instances:
 - 5.1 The complaint involves workplace violence and it is not appropriate to attempt to resolve it through informal means; or
 - 5.2 If the complaint has not been resolved at the informal level; or
 - 5.3 Should the harassment or workplace violence continue; or
 - 5.4 If the nature of the alleged harassment or violence is determined as serious by the immediate supervisor.
 - 5.5 The filing of the written formal complaint must be done in a timely fashion.
6. All complaints shall be filed and handled in accordance with the procedures set out in Administrative Procedure 4-32 - Respect in the Workplace.
7. Upon the filing of a workplace harassment or violence complaint (whether informal or formal), the complainant and respondent must be provided with a copy of the Administrative Procedure 4-32 - Respect in the Workplace and have access to any administrative procedures.

REFERENCE AND LINKS

[Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)

HISTORY

2019 Jan 17	Reviewed
2019 Dec 17	Reviewed
2023 June 26	Amended