

Canadian Association for Equality

Sexual Harassment Policy

Date of issue: October 23, 2014

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Board of Directors Approval Date: October 23, 2014

The Canadian Association for Equality's position is that sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the employment and volunteer relationship. All employees and volunteers have the right to work in an environment free from all forms of discrimination and conduct which can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive, including sexual harassment. Anyone engaging in harassing conduct will be subject to discipline, ranging from a warning to termination.

1. What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwanted physical, verbal or visual sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other sexually oriented conduct which is offensive or objectionable to the recipient, including, but not limited to: epithets, derogatory or suggestive comments, slurs or gestures, and offensive posters, cartoons, pictures, or drawings.

The Canadian Association for Equality has adopted, and its policy is based on, the definition of sexual harassment set forth by the Ontario Human Rights Code. The Ontario Human Rights Code defines sexual harassment as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is either an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment or volunteering
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for making employment or volunteering decisions (hiring, promotion, termination)
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work or volunteer performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or volunteer environment

Sexual harassment also includes any employee or volunteer conduct unreasonably interfering with another's work or volunteer performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or volunteer environment. Sexual harassment consists of a variety of behaviors by employees or volunteers directed to other employees or volunteers including, but not limited to, subtle pressure for sexual activity, inappropriate touching, inappropriate language, demands for sexual favors, and physical assault.

2. What is not sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior that is not welcome, that is personally offensive, that debilitates morale, and that, therefore, interferes with work or volunteer effectiveness.

3. Harassment by Non-employees

We will endeavor to protect employees and volunteers, to the extent possible, from reported harassment by non-employees/volunteers such as from clients, vendors and other parties who have workplace contact with our employees and volunteers.

4. Complaint Procedure

If you feel that you have been the recipient of sexually harassing behavior, report it immediately to the President. It is preferable to make a complaint in writing, but you can accompany or follow up your written complaint with a verbal complaint. All allegations of sexual harassment will be quickly investigated. To the extent possible, your confidentiality and that of any witnesses and the alleged harasser will be protected against unnecessary disclosure. When the investigation is completed, you will be informed of the outcome of that investigation.

If your supervisor or the President is the source of the harassing conduct, report the behavior to a director on the Board of Directors whom you trust.

5. Discipline

Any employee or volunteer found to have harassed another employee or volunteer, or applicant for employment or volunteering, will be subject to appropriate disciplinary procedure action, including reprimands, suspension or termination of his/her employment or volunteer relationship.

A person committing sexual harassment may also be held legally liable for his or her actions under applicable law.

6. Reprisal Prohibited

The Canadian Association for Equality will permit no retaliation against anyone who brings a complaint of sexual harassment or who speaks as a witness in the investigation of a complaint of sexual harassment.