



# North Peace Housing Foundation

6780 – 103<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Peace River, Alberta T8S 0B6

Tel: (780) 624-2055 Fax: (780) 624-2065

Email: tammy.menssa@nphf.ca

To: The Board of Directors

From: Tammy Menssa, Executive Director

Re: HR Policy 2.13 Respectful Workplace Policy

Date: June 29, 2023

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In December of 2017, the NPHF Board of Directors approved HR Policy 2.13 Respectful Workplace, through motion 12.12.17. Subsequently, in October of 2019, the Foundation introduced Health and Safety Policy 3.9 Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy to be compliant with OH&S legislation. The existing HR Policy was not rescinded at that time. Both policies have been included as attachments for your reference.

In 2022, the Foundation, in consultation with HR Professional Stacey Messner, investigated a serious allegation of Workplace Violence. Following the conclusion of the investigation, the Foundation made the decision to enlist the services of Mrs. Messner to review the existing policies, ensuring compliance with legislative requirements, and consolidating them to minimize redundancy.

Given the nature of its content, the Respectful Workplace policy is best suited as an HR policy. Therefore, the Health and Safety Policy 3.9 Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy will be rescinded, and HR Policy 2.13 Respectful Workplace will instead be referenced in our Health and Safety Manual, emphasizing its significance in promoting a respectful work environment.

Recommendation:

Approve the updated HR policy 2.13 Respectful Workplace as presented, and direct Administration to rescind Health and Safety policy 3.9 Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tammy Menssa', written in a cursive style.

Tammy Menssa  
Executive Director



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**POLICY** North Peace Housing Foundation (“the Foundation”) is committed to providing a safe and respectful work environment in which all individuals are free of inappropriate behavior of discrimination, harassment, and violence.

The Foundation will make every reasonable and practical effort to ensure that employees are not subject to acts of discrimination, harassment, or violence. It will therefore not tolerate any incidents of harassment, violence, and discrimination. Corrective action which includes discipline up to and including termination of employment for just cause will be taken to address breaches of this policy.

The Foundation is committed to evaluate this policy annually or whenever necessary to ensure the success of this program. This policy forms part of the Foundation’s workplace violence and harassment prevention plan for all departments.

**PURPOSE** The purpose of this policy is to make all employees aware that acts of discrimination, harassment, and violence are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It is also intended to communicate the process in place to report any form of discrimination, harassment, or violence without fear of retaliation.

**SCOPE** This policy applies to all Foundation employees, and other individuals acting on behalf of the Foundation under contract for service or services with the Foundation at the workplace, or using the organizations property, referenced collectively in this policy as the Employees. This includes but is not limited to all staff, volunteers, board members, and contractors, regardless of seniority, positional authority, or employment classification (full-time, part-time, casual, permanent, temporary, seasonal, or casual).

The Foundation recognizes that employees may be subject to inappropriate behavior by residents, visitors, or others who conduct business with the Foundation. Under these circumstances the Foundation acknowledges our responsibility to take all reasonable steps to support and assist individuals affected. The Foundation encourages reporting of all incidents of discrimination, harassment, and violence regardless of who the offender may be.

This policy applies to behavior that occurs in the workplace or outside the workplace while representing yourself as an employee of the Foundation or in a manner that impacts the Foundation.

For the purposes of this policy, the “Workplace” is defined and is not limited to:

- the work carried out either during regular working hours, day or night shifts and overtime, either in the office, on site, or through a remote work arrangement, and
- any location and situation where the interactions may be reasonably viewed as having an impact on the work environment and relationships, including but not limited to email, telephone, video conference, business travel, conferences, training sessions, and work-related social gatherings or events.

**DEFINITIONS** Workplace Harassment is a single or repeated incident of unwelcome conduct, comment, bullying, or action intended to intimidate, offend, degrade, or humiliate a particular person or group.



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Workplace Harassment does not include actions taken in good faith by performing managerial and supervisory roles and responsibilities such as constructive criticism regarding job performance or conducting a performance review.

In this policy, the following types of conduct or comments, whether written, verbal, or visual including electronic communication are considered Workplace Harassment and are unacceptable:

A) Discrimination, B) Sexual Harassment, C) Personal Harassment, Bullying, and Incivility, D) Violence, and E) Retaliation.

#### **A) Discrimination**

Discrimination means any act, omission or threat, or any policy, practice or term of employment, which directly or indirectly causes differential treatment of, or otherwise adversely affects, an employee or prospective employee in the course of employment or applying for employment, and the act or practice is based on a statutorily protected or prohibited ground under the human rights legislation applicable to the Workplace of the employees involved, including race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation of that person or of any other person.

Examples of discrimination include and are not limited to:

- derogatory or demeaning comments, jokes, slurs, posters, cartoons, etc. on the basis of the protected grounds;
- innuendo, taunting or ostracizing an employee on the basis of the protected grounds; and,
- an employment decision based on a protected ground that adversely affects an employee.

#### **B) Sexual Harassment**

Sexual Harassment means any inappropriate conduct, comment, display, action, gesture or contact of a sexual nature that is likely to cause offence or humiliation to the employee or that might, on reasonable grounds, be perceived by that employee as a condition of employment or of an opportunity for training or promotion.

Examples of sexual harassment include but are not limited to:

- unwelcome flirtation, suggestive remarks, advances, propositions, or gestures;
- unwelcome invitations or requests, whether indirect or explicit;
- unwelcome questions or discussions about sexual activities or preferences;
- drawing attention to a person's gender;
- unwelcome comments, including compliments, jokes, nicknames or pet names, innuendos or taunting about a person's body, attire, sex, or sexual orientation;
- leering or whistling;
- displays of pornographic or sexually suggestive signs, calendars, pictures, images, or material;
- demands for sexual favours, whether or not in return for work-related favours;
- unwelcome physical contact such as touching, hugging, patting, or pinching of a sexual nature; and
- sexual assault.



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### C) Personal Harassment, Bullying, and Incivility

Personal harassment, bullying, and incivility in the workplace means any single or repeated inappropriate conduct, comment, display, action, or gesture by a person that:

- is based on a statutory protected or prohibited ground under the human rights, health and safety legislation;
- is a breach of the implied term of the employment relationship that an employer will provide its employees with an environment that is civil and respectful;
- a reasonable person would consider unwelcome;
- results in the recipient feeling intimidated, humiliated, or embarrassed;
- adversely affects the employee's psychological or physical well-being;
- negatively affects work performance; or,
- creates a hostile work environment.

Example of personal harassment, bullying, and incivility include but are not limited to:

- written or verbal abuse;
- yelling, or screaming;
- threats of unwarranted discipline or loss of job;
- intimidating gestures such as slamming doors or throwing objects;
- derogatory remarks;
- cutting the employee out of the communication loop or withholding information they require to perform their job;
- jokes and practical jokes that result in embarrassment or awkwardness;
- innuendo or taunts;
- silent treatment;
- spreading rumours or gossip;
- displays of racist or offensive signs, images, or material at or about work or your coworkers;
- communications or displays intended to mock someone;
- patronizing or condescending behaviour;
- isolating another;
- persistently criticizing another;
- tampering with another's belongings or workstation;
- excluding, cornering, or confining another person through body language or physical barriers;
- repeatedly assigning unreasonable duties or tasks;



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**D) Violence**

Violence means any action, conduct, threat, or gesture that could reasonably cause physical or psychological harm, injury, or illness, and includes sexual and domestic violence. Discrimination and harassment may also constitute violence.

Examples of violence include but are not limited to:

- physical acts, including hitting, shoving, pushing, kicking, and sexual assault;
- threatening, verbally or in writing, to harm someone;
- adopting threatening behaviour toward someone including gestures, clenching fists, throwing objects;
- intentionally causing or threatening to cause material damage;
- possessing, showing, or using a weapon; and
- intimidating or threatening an individual by adopting aggressive behaviour

Domestic Violence consists of a pattern of behaviour used by one person to gain power and control over another with whom that person has or has had a personal relationship. This can range from subtle, coercive forms to violent acts that result in physical harm or death.

Examples of domestic violence include, but are not limited to:

- physical violence, sexual abuse, verbal abuse;
- emotional or psychological intimidation;
- stalking, use of electronic devices; and
- financial control.

Where an employee is at risk of domestic violence in the workplace, poses a threat to other employees, or becomes a workplace hazard, the Foundation shall ensure the hazard is eliminated or if that is not reasonably practicable, controlled and addressed pursuant to this policy in accordance with the procedures established.

**E) Retaliation**

Retaliation is any action taken in response to a complaint or investigation under this policy by an individual that adversely affects the employment relationship of the individual who experiences the retaliation. Retaliation is unacceptable behavior that will not be tolerated and is a breach of this policy where the employee will be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment for just cause.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

**Manager/Supervisors**

Managers and Supervisor have the following responsibilities for maintaining a healthy, safe, and respectful workplace:

- Ensuring compliance with relevant occupational health and safety laws



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- Modelling healthy professional relationships between colleagues including conflict resolution
- Providing guidance to employees who ask for assistance
- Supporting all parties involved in a complaint
- Maintaining the confidentiality of the individuals concerned, except where disclosure is necessary for the purposes of investigating the complaint or taking disciplinary measures in relation to the alleged complaint if discipline is being imposed
- Addressing inappropriate comments and actions
- Ensuring there is no retaliation against anyone involved in a complaint
- Ensuring that all employees are trained in recognizing and responding to situations involving discrimination, harassment, and violence
- Escalate concerns pertaining to discrimination, harassment, or violence to the Executive Director
- Ensuring that every reported incident within this policy is properly followed up with either an informal resolution or formal investigation process, in an objective and timely manner.

### Employees

All employees have the following responsibilities for maintaining a healthy, safe, and respectful workplace:

- Treat each other with dignity, civility, and respect
- Modelling healthy professional relationships between colleagues including conflict resolution
- Refuse to participate in any form of discrimination, harassment, or violence
- Addressing and reporting all violations of this policy when experiencing or witnessing any form of discrimination, harassment, or violence
- Participate when called upon as a witness in the investigation of complaints within this policy and maintain confidentiality.

### Witness/Bystander

Employees who witness acts of discrimination, harassment, and violence have a responsibility to act. If an employee witnesses other employees acting disrespectfully, there is an expectation that this information will be brought forward for resolution.

The following steps can be taken if an employee witness's inappropriate behavior:

- Inform the individual what you witnessed as inappropriate behavior and tell them what you found unacceptable.
- Encourage the individual who experienced the inappropriate behavior to report the incident through the informal or formal complaint resolution process.
- If you are comfortable to do so, speak to the individual who demonstrated the unacceptable behavior and inform them what you have witnessed.
- File a complaint with your supervisor or manager through the Informal or Formal Issue Resolution process in this policy.



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PROCEDURE

**Informal Resolution Process**

- Employees are encouraged to first clearly and firmly make the offender aware that their behavior is unwelcome, objectionable, and must stop.
- If speaking to the individual does not informally resolve the issue or it is not possible, or appropriate depending on the circumstance for the employee is to approach the individual, employees can speak to their supervisor or manager.
- Employees are encouraged to work with their supervisor or manager to develop a plan for how the issue can be addressed moving forward.
- Depending on the nature of the issue, and whether mediation is an appropriate conflict resolution method, the supervisor, manager, or Executive Director may assist to facilitate discussions between parties or engage the services of a third-party mediator.
- If the matter involves an employee's supervisor, an employee may bring concerns to their manager or Executive Director to find a solution prior to filing a formal complaint.
- Failing to identify a successful informal resolution process, an employee may consider pursuing a Formal Issue Resolution process.

**Formal Issue Resolution**

- Complaints may be made anytime in writing and include as much detail as possible with dates, times, witnesses, a detailed description of events and nature of the behavior, acts or conduct complained of and your attempts (if any and if not then why not) to deal with the situation directly by submitting the Respectful Workplace Complaint Form to their Supervising Manager.
- If the Supervising Manager is the subject of that complaint or is not available, the complaint should be directed to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is the subject of the complaint, the complaint should be directed to the Chairperson of the Foundation Board.
- The Supervising Manager and the Executive Director will determine if an investigation is required. In the case of the Executive Director, the Chairperson of the Board and responsible committee will determine the same. After the complaint is reviewed, it may proceed to investigation during which all individuals with relevant information will be notified and interviewed.
- Employees are strongly encouraged to come forward in a timely manner as delays in making a complaint could result in challenges at the investigation and evidence-gathering stages of the process.
- While employees may make anonymous complaints, the ability to address such complaints may be limited if there is not enough information to determine the appropriate next steps. Employees are encouraged to identify themselves when making complaints to ensure that the necessary details are obtained to appropriately address their complaint.
- If an employee, in good faith, brings a complaint that is not supported by evidence gathered during an investigation, that complaint will be dismissed and no record of it will be put in the respondent's file. As long as the complaint was made in good faith, there will be no penalty to the person who complained and no record in their personnel file.
- The Supervising Manager and Executive Director will also determine whether the investigation will be conducted by an internal or external investigator.



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**INVESTIGATION  
PROCESS**

- If an investigation is recommended, the Supervising Manager and Executive Director will assign an investigator to the complaint, where the investigator will:
  - Advise the respondent, in writing the nature and specifics of the complaint, their rights to representation and of the investigation.
  - Advise the complainant of the investigation.
  - Advise the responsible position if the complainant and/or the respondent should be placed on a temporary paid leave of absence, work in a different department, or provide with an alternate reporting relationship during the investigation. This decision will be made on a case-by-case basis.
- The investigator will make a written report with the findings of the investigation to the Supervising Manager and Executive Director within 30 working days from the day notice was given to the respondent and complainant. Extensions may be granted by the Executive Director in appropriate circumstances.
- The Supervising Manager and the Executive Director must review the report and determine a plan of action within 10 working days of receiving the investigator's report.
- The Supervising Manager and Executive Director must advise the complainant and the respondent, in writing, of the finding (substantiated or unsubstantiated) of the investigation.
- Where discrimination or harassment has been substantiated, corrective and disciplinary action will be taken up to and including termination of employment for just cause, depending on the circumstances. Specific details of the corrective action or discipline may not be shared with the complainant or others to respect privacy and confidentiality.
- If it is determined that an employee made a false complaint knowingly or in a malicious manner, this is a breach of this policy, and the employee will be subject to corrective action or discipline up to and including termination of employment for just cause.
- To comply with statutory obligations to prevent and investigate discrimination, harassment and violence, the Supervising Manager and Executive Director must follow the above procedure even when:
  - a complaint has been made anonymously or by someone who asks to remain anonymous; or
  - there is no specific complaint, but there is a pattern of inquiries or concerns raised over time which suggest the existence of a specific problem not already addressed, or there is reason to believe that a systemic problem exists in the Workplace.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

All details regarding complaints and investigations under this policy are strictly confidential to the greatest extent possible. Employees who are interviewed in relation to a complaint and investigation must not discuss the allegations, evidence, or other information they learn during the complaint and investigation process with anyone, including other parties or witnesses involved in the complaint, unless the disclosure is otherwise permitted by law.

The Foundation will not disclose the circumstances related to an allegation of discrimination, harassment, or violence; the name of the complainant, respondent, or witnesses involved in a complaint, unless it is necessary to do so to investigate the complaint, to take corrective action, or to inform the parties about the investigation outcome.





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Where it is necessary for the employer to inform employees about a specific or general threat of violence or potential violence, the employer will only disclose the minimum amount of personal information that is necessary for that purpose.

Any unauthorized disclosure of confidential information relating to the complaint may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment for just cause.

**RECORDS  
RETENTION**

Investigation reports must be retained for at least two years after an incident of discrimination, harassment, or violence and stored in a secure location with confidential access to the position or committee responsible for making the decision related to the complaint.

Once the investigation is completed:

- The complainant will receive a letter indicating the finding of the complaint to be substantiated or unsubstantiated which will be retained with the investigation report for at least two years.
- If a complaint was determined to have been made in bad faith, further disciplinary or other action taken against the complainant will be placed in the complainant's personnel file for permanent retention.
- The respondent will receive a letter indicating whether the complaint was substantiated or unsubstantiated. If the complaint was substantiated, a copy of the letter will be placed in the respondent's personnel file for permanent retention.
- If any further disciplinary or other action is taken against the respondent, it will be documented and placed in the respondent's personnel file for permanent retention.

**SUPPORT**

The Foundation shall offer support to an employee who is affected by an incident of discrimination, harassment, and violence. If an employee reports an injury or experiences adverse symptom resulting from an incident that requires treatment, with the support of a medical certificate from a physician, employees will have access to the group benefits including the Employee Assistance Program, and wage replacement they are eligible to receive for approved leaves in accordance with the Foundation's policies.

If an incident of discrimination, harassment, or violence has an adverse impact on the workplace, the Foundation may implement restorative workplace practices to repair the work environment by offering further resources, support, or training.

**COMPLIANCE**

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action being taken, up to and including termination of employment for just cause.

**EMPLOYEE  
ACKNOWLEDGE-  
MENT**

All employees shall be required to review and sign the Respectful Workplace Policy (Schedule "A" attached) to acknowledge their understanding of the policy, the content of the policy and the consequences of contravening the policy.

**LEGISLATION**

- Alberta Human Rights Act
- Alberta Occupational Health & Safety Act
- Alberta Privacy Act – FOIP



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RELATED  
POLICIES/FORMS

- Respectful Workplace Complaint Form
- Respectful Workplace Acknowledgement Form
- Health & Safety Policy

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Approved:

  
Tammy Menssa, Executive Director

Date: October 16, 2019



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#### SCOPE

North Peace Housing Foundation is committed to Human Rights as legislated in Alberta and to the principle of Human Rights, providing every employee/volunteer with a work environment which is respectful and free of violence and harassment.

Any acts of violence or harassment are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We are committed to:

- investigate reported incidents of violence and harassment in an objective and timely manner
- take the necessary action and
- provide appropriate support for victims

#### DEFINED

Violence and harassment include behaviours such as:

- Physical assault or aggression
- Unsolicited and unwelcome conduct, comment, gesture or contact which causes offence, humiliation, or intimidation
- Physical harm to any individual which creates fear or mistrust, or which compromises and devalues the individual

Violence and harassment can come from anyone in the workplace and be directed at anyone. It can be subtle or overt. Abuse may be deliberate or unintended. The test is whether a reasonable person knows, or ought to know, that the behaviour would be considered unwelcome or inappropriate by the recipient.

It may be a single event or may involve a continuing series of incidents. It may involve the abuse of authority or position, or it may involve relations among co-workers and affiliated personnel. Abuse can victimize both men and women, and may be directed by or towards workers, clients and members of the public.

#### PERSONAL HARASSMENT

The Canadian Human Rights Commission considers personal harassment to include:

- Verbal abuse or threats
- Unwelcome remarks, jokes or innuendoes or taunting about a person's body, attire, age, marital status, ethnic or national origin, religion, etc.
- Unnecessary physical contact such as touching, patting or pinching or punching
- Physical assault



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**PSYCHOLOGICAL HARASSMENT**

Psychological harassment is defined as a course of conduct or pattern of degrading, disrespectful, rude and unwelcome conduct that psychologically hurts or isolates a person in the workplace. This may be verbal, physical, deliberate, unsolicited and unwelcome. It may be one incident or a series of incidents. While the following is not an exhaustive list, harassment may include any of these matters if a reasonable person ought to have known the behaviour would be unwelcome or offensive:

- Verbal abuse or threats
- Derogatory remarks, jokes, innuendoes or taunting
- Insults, put-downs or malicious lies
- Relentless criticism or belittling
- Yelling, screaming, raging
- Sending inappropriate messages via voice mail, electronic mail or written correspondence
- Practical jokes which cause embarrassment
- Condescension or paternalism which undermines self-respect

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The Alberta Human Rights Commission defines sexual harassment as unwanted sexual advances, unwanted requests for sexual favors and other unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment occurs when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or a condition of an individual's employment
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual affects that individual's employment

Sexual harassment can include such things as pinching, patting, rubbing or leering; dirty jokes, pictures or pornographic materials, comments, suggestions, innuendoes, requests or demands of a sexual nature.

This behaviour need not be intentional in order to be considered sexual harassment. It is offensive and in many cases intimidates others.

**REPORTING**

If an employee or volunteer feels they have been harassed at the workplace, they shall report the incident according to the procedure identified within the Grievance Policy.

Employees are advised that harassment complaints may be filed under the Canadian Human Rights or Individual's Rights Protection Act as revised from time to time.

No action shall be taken against an individual for making a complaint unless the complaint is found to be made maliciously or without reasonable and probably grounds.



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**CONFIDENTIALITY** During the period of the investigation, there is a need to maintain strict confidentiality. It is the responsibility of any individual who becomes aware of an incident of violence or harassment not to disclose details of the incident to any third party without prior consultation with the alleged victim.

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY** Whether reported or observed, management is responsible for taking immediate and appropriate action. Harassment will be treated with extreme seriousness. All proven cases of harassment will result in disciplinary action up to and/or including suspension and/or termination of employment of the offending employee.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Richard Walisser, Executive Director

Date: December 6, 2017



<b>Element</b>  3.0 HAZARD CONTROL	<b>Subject</b>  <i>3.9 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT POLICY</i>	
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**NORTH PEACE HOUSING FOUNDATION**

North Peace Housing Foundation is committed to building and preserving a safe, productive, and healthy working environment for its workers based on mutual respect. In pursuit of this goal, the organization neither condones nor tolerates acts of violence or harassment against or by any worker.

The Foundation's Violence and Harassment policy is not intended to discourage a worker from exercising rights pursuant to any other law including the *Alberta Human Rights Act*.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Violence:** Whether at a work site or work-related, means the threatened, attempted, or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical or psychological injury or harm, and includes domestic or sexual violence.

**Harassment:** Means any single incident or repeated incidents of objectionable or unwelcome conduct, comment, bullying, or action by a person which the person knows or ought reasonably to know will or would cause offence or humiliation to a worker, or adversely affect the worker's health and safety.

Harassment includes a sexual solicitation or advance, as well as conduct, comment, bullying, or action because of race, religious beliefs, colour, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation.

Harassment does not include any reasonable conduct of an employer or supervisor in respect to the management of workers or a work site.

**Work site:** Means a location where a worker is or is likely to be engaged in any occupation and includes any vehicle or mobile equipment used by a worker in an occupation.

**TRAINING AND EDUCATION**

North Peace Housing Foundation will ensure that all workers are trained and educated on violence and harassment in the workplace and that they are clear about the roles and responsibilities, as well as this policy and procedures. The training will cover, at minimum, the following topics:

- How to recognize workplace violence and harassment.
- The policy, procedures, and workplace arrangements that effectively minimize or eliminate workplace violence and harassment;
- The appropriate response to workplace violence and harassment, including how to obtain assistance; and
- Procedures for reporting, investigating, and documenting incidents of workplace violence and harassment.

**HAZARD ASSESSMENT**

North Peace Housing Foundation will conduct a hazard assessment in the workplace that identifies situations where risks of physical violence and harassment exist. The hazard assessment will include the following factors:

- Hiring procedures;
- Potential work or work-related sources of violence and harassment;
- Work processes; and
- The physical environment.



<b>Element</b>  3.0 HAZARD CONTROL	<b>Subject</b>  <i>3.9 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT POLICY</i>	
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Once the hazard assessment is completed, the company will have identified:

- Whether there are any aspects of the workplace that could increase the potential for violence or harassment;
- Which individuals are at the highest risk; and,
- Where there is a need for controls.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

**Reporting Violence and Harassment**

Any worker who is directly affected by or a witness to any incident of violence and harassment in the workplace should report the incident immediately to management, or the human resources department.

Alternate reporting mechanisms will be made available to workers in circumstances where the designated recipients of harassment complaints are the alleged harasser.

North Peace Housing Foundation will investigate all incidents of violence or harassment and take actions to address the incident and prevent it from reoccurring. The company will prepare a report that outlines the circumstances of the incident and retain this record for two years. In addition, the company will ensure that the report is available upon request to an occupational health and safety officer.

Appropriate assistance will be provided to any worker who is the victim of violence or harassment. If a worker reports an injury or adverse symptom resulting from workplace violence or harassment, or is exposed to workplace violence or harassment, the company will advise the worker to consult a health professional of their choice for treatment or referral. A worker who is likely to be exposed to domestic violence at the worksite is encouraged to advise their Manager. The company is committed to ensuring the protection and safety of the worker and will take reasonable precautions to do so.

**Informal Procedure**

Any worker who has been the subject of violence and harassment can take the following actions:

- Confront the alleged offender personally, or in writing, clearly stating what the unwelcome behaviour or action was and requesting that it stop immediately; or
- Discuss the situation with the alleged offender's supervisor, the alleged victim's supervisor, or any other supervisor.

Any worker who is the victim of violence and harassment can and should, in all confidence and without fear of reprisal, personally report the occurrence to their supervisor or a manager.

**Formal Procedure**

A worker who is the subject of violence and harassment can make a written complaint to the management team. The written complaint must be delivered to the Manager, or Human Resources if a conflict of interest exists. It must include the following information:





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- The date and time of each incident being reported;
- The nature of the violence or harassment;
- The name of any persons involved in the incident;
- The name of any persons who witnessed the incident; and
- A full description of what occurred.

Once a written complaint has been received, the company will complete a thorough investigation. Workers will not be demoted, dismissed, disciplined, or denied a promotion, advancement, or employment opportunity because they lodged a complaint when they honestly believed they were the subject of violence and harassment or the threat of violence in the workplace.

**INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES**

The investigation will include:

- Informing the respondent of the complaint;
- Interviewing the complainant, any persons involved in the incident, and any identified witnesses; and
- Interviewing any other persons who may have knowledge of the incident.

Statements from all parties involved will be taken and a decision will be made. If necessary, the organization may employ outside assistance or request the use of legal counsel. Where North Peace Housing Foundation determines that violence and harassment has occurred, a written report of the remedial action will be given to the workers concerned, as appropriate.

A copy of the complaint detailing the complainant's allegations will be provided to the respondent and will explain that:

- The respondent may reply to the complainant's allegations in writing;
- The reply will be made known to the complainant before the case proceeds; and
- The organization will take all measures to prevent any unnecessary disclosure of the incident and the identities of the parties.

North Peace Housing Foundation will:

- Carefully and fully document the investigation, the discipline imposed, and any remedial or preventative steps taken;
- Conduct follow-up interviews with the parties to inform them of the actions taken;
- retain investigation reports for a minimum of two years after the incident.

If the complainant decides not to lay a formal complaint, senior management may decide that a formal complaint is required, which will be based on the investigation of the incident and will file such documents with the persons against whom the complaint is laid.

**FRAUDULENT OR MALICIOUS COMPLAINTS**

Unfounded, frivolous, or fraudulent allegations of violence and harassment may cause both the respondent and the company significant damage.

If the company determines that any worker has knowingly made false statements regarding an allegation of workplace violence or harassment, immediate disciplinary action will be taken and may include immediate dismissal without further notice.



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**CONFIDENTIALITY** All records of violence or harassment and subsequent investigations are considered confidential and are strictly prohibited from being disclosed to anyone except to the extent required by law.

In cases where criminal proceedings are forthcoming, the organization will assist police agencies, lawyers, insurance companies, and courts to the fullest extent. North Peace Housing Foundation will do everything it can to protect the privacy of the individuals involved and to ensure that complainants and respondents are treated fairly and respectfully. The organization will protect this privacy so long as doing so remains consistent with the enforcement of this policy and adherence to the law.

Neither the name of the person reporting the facts nor the circumstances surrounding them will be disclosed to anyone whatsoever unless such disclosure is necessary for an investigation or disciplinary action.

**REPRISAL** This policy prohibits reprisals against individuals, acting in good faith, who report incidents of workplace violence and harassment or act as witnesses. Management will take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent reprisals, threats of reprisal, or further violence and harassment. Reprisal is defined as any act of retaliation, either direct or indirect.

**DISCIPLINARY MEASURES** If the company determines that any worker has been involved in a violent behaviour or unacceptable conduct related to another worker, immediate disciplinary action will be taken. Such disciplinary action may involve counselling, a formal warning, and other disciplinary measures, and could result in immediate dismissal without further notice.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES** Workers must assist in eliminating violence and harassment from the workplace and must comply with the following responsibilities.

**All Workers**  
All workers are personally accountable and responsible for complying with this policy. Workers must make every effort to prevent and eliminate violence and harassment in the work environment and to intervene immediately by advising a member of management if they observe a problem or if a problem is reported to them.

Any workers who have been a victim of or are at potential risk of domestic violence are encouraged to advise human resources if they think that the aggressor may attempt to contact them at work. North Peace Housing Foundation will take all reasonable precautions to protect the worker from domestic violence that has followed them into the workplace.

**Colleagues**  
A worker who witnesses violence or harassment in the workplace to a colleague should:

- Inform the victim that you have witnessed what you believe to be violence or harassment and that you find it unacceptable. Support is often welcome. If that person does not feel that they have been the victim of violence and harassment, then normally the incident should be considered closed.
- If you feel comfortable doing so, inform the alleged offender that you have witnessed the act and find it unacceptable.
- Encourage the victim to report the incident to their supervisor or manager.



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**Management**

- Management has a legal responsibility for creating and maintaining a violence- and harassment-free workplace.
- Management will enforce this policy and ensure its application in the day-to-day operations of the company by its workers.
- Managers must be sensitive to the climate in the workplace and address potential problems before those problems become serious.
- If a manager becomes aware of violence and harassment in the workplace and chooses to ignore it, that manager and the company risk being named co-respondents in a complaint and may be found liable in legal proceedings brought about by the victim.

When a worker has asked their manager to deal with a violent incident, the manager must:

- Support the worker without prejudice.
- Work with the worker and document the offensive action and have the worker sign a complaint.
- Contact their superior or senior management and provide details of the incident on behalf of the worker.

**REVIEW**

This policy and training procedures will be reviewed and, if necessary, updated when an incident of violence or harassment occurs, upon recommendation from the joint work site health and safety committee or representative or at very least every three years.

**SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

If an worker has a legal court order (for example, a restraining order or “no-contact” order) against another individual, the worker is encouraged to notify their supervisor, and to supply a copy of that order to the human resources department. This will likely be required in instances where the worker strongly feels that the aggressor might attempt to contact that worker while at the workplace, in direct violation of the court order. Such information will be kept confidential.

If any visitor at the workplace is seen with a weapon, or is known to possess one, or makes a verbal threat or assault against a worker or another individual, worker witnesses must immediately contact the police, emergency response services, their immediate supervisor, and the human resources department.

Approved:   
Tammy Menssa, Executive Director

Date: October 16, 2019