



**SUBJECT: EMPLOYMENT - RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE, HARASSMENT & VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY**

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## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish and maintain a respectful workplace at the Innisfil Public Library, which includes a commitment by the Innisfil Public Library Board and Management to the prevention of workplace violence. Library Management is ultimately responsible for worker health and safety and will take whatever steps are reasonable to protect Staff from any form of workplace harassment or violence.

## **POLICY**

### **Application**

This policy applies to all persons who are members of the Innisfil Public Library workplace community and persons who interact with members of the Innisfil Public Library workplace community. This includes, but is not limited to, all Staff, Board Members, volunteers, consultants and contractors.

For the purposes of this policy, workplace includes any place where business or work related activities are pursued. Workplace includes, but is not limited to the physical work premises, work-related social functions, such as holiday parties, golf games, etc., work assignments outside of the office, work-related travel, work-related conferences or training activities and all work-related communication, regardless of timing (within/outside of regular work hours) or format (telephone, email, etc.)

This policy also applies to situations in which employees are harassed or subjected to violence in the workplace from individuals who are not employed by the Library Board, such as customers, vendors and suppliers.

## **General**

In our workplace, there is no place for harassment, discrimination, violence or abuses of power.

The Innisfil Public Library Board (hereinafter referred to as the “Board”) is committed to establishing and maintaining a working environment:

- Conducive to personal and professional growth, dignity and self-esteem;
- Where all members of the Library’s workplace community are treated with dignity and respect in the course of their workplace interactions;
- Where all members of the Library’s workplace community experience equality of treatment and equality of opportunity;
- Where awareness of and sensitivity to the issues is promoted;
- Where acceptable standards of conduct are encouraged, reinforced and enforced through the provision of knowledge to and the empowerment of Staff;
- Where procedures are in place to support the early detection and internal, impartial and efficient resolution of workplace harassment, discrimination and violence (including domestic violence) issues;
- That is free from favouritism, bullying or any abuses of power; and
- That is free from any form of harassment, discrimination or violence.

## **Definitions**

### ***Discrimination***

*Discrimination* may involve differential treatment in employment or denial of employment opportunities based on any protected ground of the Ontario *Human Rights Code (The Code)*. *Discrimination* does not have to be intentional to be unlawful and it may result from practices or policies that appear to be neutral but have a negative impact on certain groups or individuals because of their membership in one of the groups protected under the Code.

*The Code* guarantees every person a right to equal treatment in employment without *discrimination* based on the following grounds:

- Race, ancestry, colour, place of origin, ethnic origin, citizenship;
- Creed, religion/beliefs;
- Sex (including pregnancy, breast feeding, gender identity and gender expression);
- Sexual orientation;
- Age;
- Record of offences (for which a pardon was granted);
- Marital status;
- Family status;
- Physical or mental disabilities.

## **Harassment**

*Harassment* includes unwelcome, unwanted, offensive or objectionable comments or conduct which may have the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, interfering with an individual's work performance; or adversely affecting an individual's employment relationships.

The *Ontario Human Rights Code (The Code)* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)* guarantee every employee a right to freedom from harassment in the workplace by the employer, an agent of the employer, another employee, or anyone with whom Staff interacts in connection with work-related activity.

*Harassment* is defined in *The Code* as “vexatious comments or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome” and it includes practices and behaviour prohibited under *The Code* which threaten an individual's basic human rights. The definition of *Harassment* in the *OHSA* is similar, except that under the *OHSA*, *Harassment* is prohibited even if it does not relate to one of the human rights protected grounds outlined on page 2.

*Harassment* may occur as a single encounter or a series of incidents, persistent innuendoes or threats. Tolerance for what is considered acceptable behaviour may vary widely among individuals. It may be directed at specific individuals or groups. Harassment includes comments or conduct which creates an environment that is hostile, intimidating or offensive. *Harassment* includes unwanted actions, derogatory comments, jokes, slurs, derogatory or demeaning posters, cartoons, graffiti, drawings, emails, innuendoes or taunting about or motivated by a person's race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, record of offences, marital status, family status, disability or any other prohibited ground of discrimination. *Harassment* also includes unwanted actions, derogatory or demeaning comments or bullying which is unrelated to these grounds.

Some examples of *harassment* include, but are not limited to the following:

- Racial, homophobic, sexist or ethnic slurs;
- Unwelcome remarks, jokes, taunts, suggestions about a person's body, attire, traits related to age, marital status, ethnic or racial origin, religion, sexual orientation, etc.;
- Written or verbal abuse or threats;
- Displays of pornographic, homophobic, sexist, racist, ageist, or other offensive or derogatory material (such as graffiti or pictures);
- Practical jokes which result in embarrassment or insult;
- Unnecessary physical contact such as patting, touching, pinching or hitting;
- Patronizing or condescending remarks or behaviour;
- Abuse of authority which undermines performance or threatens career;
- Social exclusion, including persistent exclusion of a particular person from workplace-related social gatherings;
- Deliberately making false allegations about someone;

- Cyber-bullying, including insulting or demeaning postings on social media sites or rumours or gossip about someone spread through social media;
- Physical or sexual assault.

### ***Poisoned or Hostile Work Environment***

A poisoned or hostile work environment is a situation in which inappropriate, derogatory or demeaning behaviour intrudes upon a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive atmosphere for a person even though they are not directly targeted.

Jokes, offensive literature (such as 'pin-ups'), derogatory comments or other activities based on sexual, racial or other protected characteristics, can constitute a *poisoned or hostile work environment* for members of a certain sex or gender, or a certain racial or religious group, even without any individual member of the groups being targeted. A *poisoned or hostile environment* is a form of *harassment* prohibited by law.

### ***Workplace Harassment and Bullying***

*Workplace harassment* is a health and safety issue that is covered under the OHSA. The OHSA defines *workplace harassment* as: 'engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome'. Bill 132 (September 2016) expanded the definition of *Workplace Harassment* to include 'workplace sexual harassment'.

*Workplace harassment may have some or all of the following components:*

- It is generally repetitive, although a single serious incident may constitute workplace harassment if it undermines the recipient's psychological or physical integrity and has a lasting harmful effect;
- It is hostile, abusive or inappropriate;
- It affects the person's dignity or psychological integrity; and
- It results in a poisoned work environment.

In addition, behaviour that intimidates, isolates or discriminates against the recipient may also be included.

Some examples of *workplace harassment* are:

- Verbally abusive behaviour such as yelling, insults, profanity, ridicule and name calling including remarks, jokes or innuendos that demean, ridicule, intimidate or offend;
- Workplace pranks, vandalism, bullying and hazing;
- Gossiping or spreading malicious rumours;
- Excluding or ignoring someone, including persistent exclusion of a particular person from workplace-related social gatherings;
- Undermining someone else's efforts by setting impossible goals, with short deadlines and deliberately withholding information that would enable a person to do their job;
- Providing only demeaning or trivial tasks in place of normal job duties;
- Humiliating someone;
- Sabotaging someone else's work;

- Displaying or circulating offensive pictures or materials;
- Offensive or intimidating phone calls or emails;
- Impeding an individual's efforts at promotions or transfers for reasons that are not legitimate;
- Making false allegations about someone in memos, emails or other work related documents;
- Misuse of supervisory authority, including favouring one or more employees to the exclusion of others.

### ***Workplace Sexual Harassment***

Bill 132 and The *Occupational Health & Safety Act* has defined *Workplace Sexual Harassment* as '(a) engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, where the course of comment or conduct is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, or (b) making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the worker and the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome'.

*Sexual Harassment* includes unsolicited conduct, comments or physical contact of a sexual nature that the recipient does not welcome or deems to be offensive. It also includes sexual advances (oral, written or physical) or sexual demands which are not wanted by the recipient, sexual and sexist jokes and the display of degrading or offensive material, when:

- a) Such conduct might reasonably be expected to cause insecurity, discomfort, offence or humiliation to another person;
- b) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with a person's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment;
- c) Submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a condition of employment;
- d) Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for any employment decision (including but not limited to, job security, promotion, change in salary and benefits).

Both men and women can be victims of harassment, and someone of the same or opposite sex can be deemed to be the harasser.

Some examples of *workplace sexual harassment* include:

- Threats, punishment or denial of a benefit for refusing a sexual advance;
- Offering a benefit in exchange for a sexual favour;
- Leering (suggestive staring);
- Displaying sexually offensive material such as posters, pictures, calendars, cartoons, screen savers, pornographic or erotic websites or other electronic material;
- Distributing sexually explicit email messages or attachments such as pictures or video files;
- Sexually suggestive or obscene comments or gestures;

- Unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendoes, propositions or taunting about a person's body, clothing or sex;
- Persistent, unwanted attention after a consensual relationship ends;
- Physical contact of a sexual nature, such as touching or caressing;
- Sexual assault;
- Negative or inappropriate conduct or comments that are not necessarily sexual in nature, but which are directed at an individual because of his or her gender.

### What Is Not Harassment

The *Occupational Health & Safety Act* states:

A reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the workplace is not workplace harassment.

Workplace harassment should not be confused with legitimate, reasonable management actions that are part of the normal function, including:

- Measures to correct performance deficiencies, such as placing someone on a performance improvement plan;
- Imposing discipline for workplace infractions;
- Requesting medical documents in support of an absence from work; or
- Enforcement of workplace rules and policies.

It also excludes normal workplace conflict that may occur between individuals or differences of opinion between co-workers.

### The Test of Harassment

Regardless of intention, the test of harassment is whether the harasser knew or should have known that comments or conduct were unwelcome to the other individual. For example, if an employee makes it clear through their conduct or body language that the behaviour is unwelcome, that behaviour must cease.

Although it is commonly the case, the harasser does not necessarily have to have power or authority over the victim. Harassment can occur from co-worker to co-worker, supervisor to employee and employee to supervisor.

**Workplace Gossip** refers to negative or derogatory comments or insinuations about an individual. Malicious or excessive gossip disrupts productivity, lowers morale, destroys relationships and inhibits trust. Gossip and negative comments are embarrassing and humiliating to the subject of the gossip and can hurt their feelings or damage their reputation.

Gossip can easily cross the line into harassment, and can become a health and safety or human rights issue. As such, employees must refrain from gossiping at work.

### ***Violence (under the Occupational Health and Safety Act)***

Any *violence*, both workplace and domestic, that may occur in the workplace is a health and safety issue, which is covered under the *Occupational Health & Safety Act*. It includes practices and behavior prohibited under the *OHS Act* which threaten an individual's health, safety and overall well-being.

#### ***Workplace Violence***

*Workplace violence* is defined under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* as:

- The exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker;
- An attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker;
- A statement or behaviour that is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker.

It is defined broadly enough to include acts that may be considered criminal.

*Workplace violence* includes:

- Physically threatening behaviour such as shaking a fist at someone, finger pointing, destroying property, throwing objects;
- Verbal or written threats to physically attack a worker;
- Leaving threatening notes or sending threatening emails;
- Wielding a weapon at work;
- Stalking someone;
- Physically aggressive behaviours including hitting, shoving, standing excessively close to someone in an aggressive manner, pushing kicking, throwing an object at someone, physically restraining someone or any other form of physical or sexual assault.

Violence that occurs outside the workplace, as defined in this policy, but which has an impact on the working environment, including working relationships, may also be considered *workplace violence*.

#### ***Domestic Violence***

Where a worker is experiencing *domestic violence* that would likely expose them, or other workers to physical injury that may occur in the workplace, Library Management and The Library Board will take appropriate precautions to provide reasonable protection to the worker and their co-workers.

This may include any one or all of the following:

- Creating a safety plan for the worker(s) involved;
- Contacting the police;
- Establishing enhanced security measures such as restricted door access, wireless panic buttons, code word(s);
- Screening telephone calls and blocking certain email addresses;
- Provision of preferred parking arrangements or escorts to vehicle;

- Adjustment of a worker's hours and work location so that they are not predictable;
- Facilitating access to counselling through the *Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)* or other similar community programmes.

## **Guidelines**

### **1. *Prevention of Harassment and Violence - Responsibilities***

All members of the Library's workplace community are entitled to workplace interactions and a workplace environment consistent with the employee's well-being.

All members of the Library's workplace community share the responsibility of securing and maintaining a respectful workplace where the **following conduct is considered unacceptable**:

- Yelling or screaming;
- Bullying;
- Volatile displays of temper or anger;
- Rude, demeaning or belittling remarks;
- Directing foul and abusive language to anyone in the workplace;
- Criticism of an employee or employee's work in an angry, volatile, hostile or public manner;
- Threatening an employee either verbally or in writing;
- Attempting to undermine the reputation or relationship of the employee with co-workers by disparaging remarks.

### **The Library Board's Commitment**

The Innisfil Public Library Board will not tolerate or condone discrimination, harassment or violence in the workplace. The Board shall provide all Staff with the knowledge of what is appropriate behaviour; shall assess the risk of workplace violence; shall hold all members of the workplace community accountable to conducting themselves according to the required standards; shall investigate complaints; and shall impose suitable corrective measures, in a fair and timely manner, while respecting the privacy of all concerned as much as is possible.

### **Management Responsibilities**

All Senior Staff Members are responsible for providing a work environment consistent with the objectives stated in this policy. This responsibility includes actively promoting a positive work environment and intervening whenever conduct below the standards set out in this policy occurs. Senior Staff are responsible for their own actions and for dealing with inappropriate conduct of Staff that comes to their attention.



If a Manager fails to act in a situation where a reasonable person ought to have known that harassment was taking place, he or she could be held personally liable.

Managers must also take every reasonable precaution to protect employees from workplace violence, including evaluating a person's history of violent behaviour to determine whether and to whom this employee poses a risk.

In making this evaluation, supervisors should consider:

- Whether the person's history of violence was associated with the workplace or work;
- Whether the history of violence was directed at a particular employee or employees in general; and
- How long ago the incidence of violence occurred.

In certain circumstances, Managers may have a duty to provide information about a risk of workplace violence from a person with a history of violent behaviour if an employee can be expected to encounter that person during the course of his or her work, and the risk of workplace violence is likely to expose the employee to physical injury. Managers will only release as much personal information about the person with a history of violent behaviour as is reasonably necessary to protect the employee(s) from physical injury.

The responsibilities of the Senior Staff, under this policy, include the following:

- a) Understanding and upholding the principles of this policy by setting a good example through:
  - Communicating to Staff that the issues of workplace conduct, workplace human rights and workplace violence are taken seriously;
  - Neither participating in nor ignoring discrimination, harassment workplace violence issues;
  - Ensuring that all dealings with employees are conducted in a civil and respectful manner.
- b) Taking the necessary steps to ensure that employees conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the commitments under this policy.
- c) Ensuring that employees are informed of the Board's policy and procedures for dealing with concerns of harassment, discrimination or personal harassment and workplace violence.
- d) Responding effectively to any concerns or issues of behaviour contrary to this policy that come to the attention of Senior Staff; treating all issues as a serious matter and supporting a resolution.
- e) Conferring with the appropriate external consultants (including the Town's Human Resources Department), as required, regarding effective processes for handling any concerns raised under this policy.
- f) Not allowing or condoning any behaviour contrary to this policy.

- g) Discussing the concerns raised with the alleged harasser as she or he may be unaware that their behaviour is offensive.
- h) Keeping a record – Senior Staff should keep a personal record of all discussions with Staff Members who raise concerns under this policy, including all dates, times and responses.
- i) Respecting the privacy of all concerned as much as is possible.

*The Chief Librarian/CEO and Deputy Chief Librarian must ensure that:*

- a) This policy is reviewed annually;
- b) An effective *Workplace Violence Prevention Programme* is developed, implemented and regularly evaluated;
- c) Measures and procedures identified in the *Workplace Violence Prevention Programme* are carried out and that Management is held accountable for responding to and resolving complaints of violence;
- d) All persons who have a relationship with the Library such as employees, Board Members and councilors, contractors, consultants, volunteers, etc. comply with the *Workplace Violence Prevention Programme*;
- e) All Staff are informed of the nature and extent of the risks of violence;
- f) Corrective action is taken as required and the effectiveness of that action is monitored;
- g) Training and education is established and delivered to all employees;
- h) All critical injuries or deaths are reported to the Ministry of Labour inspector, the police, the JHSC and investigated with the JHSC;
- i) All required WSIB reports are submitted;
- j) *Risk Assessments* are completed and safe work procedures are developed to address existing or potential risks for each assignment under their supervision, in consultation with the JHSC.
- k) Appropriate communication is provided to the media when necessary.

*Managers must ensure:*

- a) Compliance with all aspects of the *Workplace Violence Prevention Programme*;
- b) That all reporting, investigations and documenting of incidents of violence are in accordance with WSIB, Ministry of Labour and the Library's reporting policies and procedures;
- c) That all members of the Library's workplace community are held accountable to work in compliance with this policy and the supporting programme(s);
- d) That appropriate training and education regarding violence prevention and response procedures are provided to Staff;
- e) That input is provided for *Risk Assessments*;
- f) Compliance with reporting, investigation and documenting procedures and that all employees are encouraged to report violent incidents;
- g) That complainants are protected from retaliation;
- h) That discussions of workplace violence issues are ongoing;

- i) That employees are advised of available EAP (*Employee Assistance Programmes*) or other medical services.

### **Responsibilities of Staff Functioning in the Role of Lead Hand for Various Shifts**

*Staff Functioning in the Role of Lead Hand for Various Shifts must ensure:*

- a) Compliance with all aspects of the *Workplace Violence Prevention Programme*;
- b) That all incidents of violence are reported, in accordance with WSIB, Ministry of Labour and the Library's reporting policies and procedures;
- c) That appropriate measures are taken for the health and safety of all in the event of any incidents of violence.

### **Responsibilities of All Employees**

- a) Every employee is responsible for adhering to the spirit and intent of this policy and the supporting programme(s), and as such is to refrain from any conduct that constitutes or that could be interpreted as workplace violence, attempts to commit workplace violence or threats of workplace violence.
- b) Employees are responsible for understanding and avoiding any offensive, unwelcome comments, conduct or interactions that would constitute harassment, discrimination or personal harassment under this policy.
- c) Employees are encouraged to communicate to co-workers that their conduct or comments are unwanted and objectionable whenever they are exposed to conduct representing harassment as defined under this policy.
- d) Employees are encouraged to discourage co-workers from persisting with comments, discussions or conduct which are inconsistent with the spirit of the policy.
- e) Employees should advise Senior Staff of any issues that may arise or become apparent.
- f) Employees are to report any violent incidents or threats to Senior Management.
- g) Employees are to provide input into *Risk Assessments* and into the development of local *Workplace Violence Prevention Programmes*.
- h) Employees are to attend education and training sessions.
- i) Employees are to follow established procedures for the prevention and reporting of incidents of violence.
- j) Employees are to report incidents of violence and provide input into incident investigations.

### **Responsibilities of Joint Health & Safety Committee (JHSC)**

- a) The Library is currently part of the Town's *JHSC*. As such, the Library will communicate and consult with the *JHSC* as appropriate, regarding harassment and violence prevention measures, procedures and programmes.

- b) The JHSC shall make recommendations to the employer to develop, establish and provide training in violence measures and procedures.
- c) A worker designate of the *JHSC* should investigate all critical injuries related to violence.
- d) The *JHSC* shall receive and review reports of any critical injury or death immediately.

**Responsibilities of Non-Employees**

Any individual who interacts with library employees is required to ensure their interactions are consistent with the standards of this policy. Such persons include, but are not limited to Board Members, volunteers, vendors, contractors, and members of the community accessing the Library’s services.

**2. *Procedures for Raising and Resolving Workplace Harassment & Discrimination Concerns***

Members of the Library’s workplace community experiencing any concerns or interactions inconsistent with this policy have three options to consider for resolution support:

**Option #1 – Informal Resolution by Employees**

Any employee who believes they have been subjected to conduct inconsistent with this policy is encouraged to pursue the following steps to resolve the issue:

- 1. Communicate your disapproval to the individual whose conduct or comments are offensive - ask them to stop.
- 2. Employees who are advised that their comments or conduct are unwanted and offensive are expected to cease such behaviour immediately.
- 3. If the conduct persists, seek the assistance of a member of the Senior Staff.
- 4. If the conduct persists, keep a written record of the date, times and details of the conduct and your efforts to stop it.

**Option #2 - Management Informal Support and Intervention: Advisory Support**

- 1. Senior Staff has a responsibility to assist employees experiencing conduct inconsistent with the standards of this policy.
- 2. Senior Staff has been provided with training to support them in facilitating early informal resolution of harassment and discrimination concerns.
- 3. Where an employee is uncomfortable with communicating directly with the person who is engaging in the objectionable conduct, or where such communication has failed to stop the conduct of concern, employees are encouraged to access support and intervention of a Senior Staff Member.
- 4. Where an employee is not comfortable with raising the issue with their direct manager or supervisor, they should seek the assistance of any Senior Staff Member.

5. Senior Staff will review resolution options with the employee and assist the employee in identifying and pursuing either an informal resolution strategy or formal complaint where appropriate.
6. Senior Staff as an advisor will provide informal resolution support confidentially and as collaboratively as possible.

### **Option #3 - Internal Complaint Process**

Where informal efforts to resolve concerns of behaviour contrary to this policy are ineffective or inappropriate, a formal complaint and investigation may be requested or initiated. The Board is committed to providing efficient, effective, objective and inclusive internal complaint processes. The complaint processes include the following:

#### *The Right to Complain:*

All members of the Library's workplace community have the right to file a formal complaint about situations they believe to be harassment, discrimination or inappropriate conduct under this policy.

#### *Initiating a Complaint under the Complaint Process:*

An employee can initiate a formal, internal complaint by pursuing the following steps:

1. Provide a letter of complaint that contains a brief account of the offensive incident(s) (i.e. when it occurred, the persons involved, names of any witnesses). The letter should also include the remedy sought and be signed and dated by the person complaining.
2. Sign and file the complaint with the CEO.
3. Cooperate with those responsible for investigating the complaint.

#### *Overview of Complaint Investigation Procedure:*

Where a complaint is filed, the Board will ensure that the following occurs:

1. That an objective investigation is initiated, conducted by knowledgeable Senior Staff, who are removed from the alleged harasser, and completed in a timely manner; in most cases, within 30 days, and in all cases, less than 90 days;
2. That necessary steps to ascertain the facts and circumstances, relevant to each complaint are taken, which will include:
  - a. that both the complainant and the alleged harasser are interviewed;
  - b. that the alleged harasser is provided with an opportunity to respond to specific allegations and the worker is provided with the opportunity to reply;
  - c. that other individuals who have relevant information with respect to the alleged complaint are interviewed separately;
  - d. that relevant documents are collected and reviewed; and
  - e. that appropriate notes are kept, and statements are taken, reviewed and signed.

3. That both parties are informed of confidentiality requirements, and every effort is made to ensure confidentiality to the extent possible within an investigation process;
4. That a written report of findings is prepared at the conclusion of the investigation by the investigator and that such findings are reviewed and discussed individually with the parties;
5. Where conduct contrary to this policy is substantiated, effective remedial action will be identified and implemented. Within ten days after the conclusion of the investigation, the parties will be notified as to the remedial action the Library has taken or will take to prevent similar conduct from occurring in the future. The Library will determine the appropriate amount of information to be shared with the involved parties.
6. That in extenuating circumstances, if necessary, investigations may be conducted by a Third Party.

### ***3. Investigation of and Resolution of Violent Situations***

#### **Workplace Violence**

All workers have the right to refuse work if workplace violence is likely to render the work unsafe. The Staff Member in charge of the workplace at that time must be contacted immediately and appropriate measures will be taken to protect the employee and investigate the situation. The police or other emergency responders may be contacted as appropriate to assist, intervene or investigate workplace violence. Details about the measures in place for summoning immediate assistance will be provided including lists of emergency telephone numbers and/or email addresses and procedures.

#### *Investigation Procedure:*

All employees are required to report the existence of any workplace violence or threat of workplace violence to their supervisor. An investigation will be commenced as soon as possible and may be conducted by either an internal or external investigator, depending on the nature of the incident.

The investigation will include:

- Conducting interviews to ascertain all of the facts and circumstances relevant to the complaint, including dates and locations;
- Reviewing any related documentation;
- Making detailed notes of the investigation and maintaining them in a confidential file.
- The creation of a detailed report of the findings.

#### *Corrective Action:*

The Chief Librarian in conjunction with the Deputy Chief Librarian or designate, will determine what action should be taken as a result of the investigation.

If an incident of *workplace violence* is confirmed, then appropriate corrective measures will be taken and may include one or more of the following:

- Discipline, such as a verbal warning, written warning or suspension without pay;
- Termination with or without cause;
- Referral for counselling (sensitivity training), anger management training, supervisory skills training or attendance at educational programmes on workplace respect;
- A demotion or denial of a promotion;
- Reassignment or transfer;
- Financial penalties such as the performance related salary increase;
- Any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

If you make a complaint in good faith and without malice, regardless of the outcome of the investigation, you will not be subject to any form of discipline. However, discipline or termination is a potential consequence for anyone who knowingly brings forward a false or malicious complaint.

### **Domestic Violence**

If an employee is experiencing *domestic violence* that would expose her/him to physical injury in the workplace, it must be reported immediately. The Innisfil Public Library appreciates the sensitivity of these issues and will assist an employee as discreetly as possible in order to maintain his/her privacy.

#### **4. Complaints Against the CEO or the Board**

For complaints of harassment or workplace violence against the CEO or members of the Innisfil Public Library Board, an investigation will be conducted by the following personnel or their external designates:

<b>CEO</b>	Board Chair and Vice Chair
<b>Board Chair</b>	Vice Chair and CEO
<b>Board Vice Chair</b>	Board Chair and CEO
<b>Board Members</b>	Board Chair and Vice Chair

#### **5. Confidentiality of Complaints and Investigations**

All complaints received under this policy shall be treated confidentially to the fullest extent possible, subject to the obligation and commitment to conduct internal investigations. No record of any informal complaint or resolution of concerns under this policy will be maintained on any employee's file. In the context of formal complaints, no record of the complaint will be maintained on the employee file of the complainant or respondent, subject to the following exception – if there is a finding contrary to this policy that results in disciplinary action, the disciplinary action will be reflected on the file of the respondent to the complaint.

**6. Protection from Retaliation**

The Board will not tolerate retaliation, taunts or threats against anyone who files any complaints about harassment, violence or takes part in any investigation. Any person, who taunts, retaliates against or threatens anyone in relation to a harassment or violence complaint may be disciplined and such discipline could lead to termination of employment.

**7. Remedial Action**

The objective of remedial or corrective action is to change behaviour, eliminate harassment, discrimination or reprisal and remedy the impact of harassment on the individual and the work environment. Remedial action can include addressing any relevant issues in the work environment, addressing individuals who engaged in conduct contrary to this policy, and addressing individuals who failed to meet their responsibilities under this policy. Such action may include educational initiatives, counselling, disciplinary action and remediation of a victim's interests.

**8. Risk Assessment**

The Library will ensure *Risk Assessments* are conducted and that such assessments are utilized to develop and implement a *Workplace Violence Prevention Programme* that is appropriate for both physical and verbal violence risks contemplated by this policy.

Education and training will be provided to employees with respect to the risks identified and the prevention initiatives to be implemented.

**9. Education and Training**

All employees shall receive training with respect to respectful workplace and violence prevention. Such training will include measures and procedures:

- To review and control the risks of workplace violence identified in the *Risk Assessment*;
- For summoning immediate assistance;
- To report incidents of workplace violence to Management;
- That identify how the Employer will investigate and deal with incidents or complaints of workplace violence.

**10. Programme Evaluation**

The effectiveness of the *Workplace Violence Prevention Programme* will be evaluated annually by Management and reviewed by the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee.



**Related Policies:**

*Health & Safety Policy*

*Working Alone Policy*

**Related Programme:**

*Respectful Workplace, Harassment & Violence Prevention Programme*

Approved by the Innisfil Public Library Board, Monday, April 16, 2018

Motion Number: 2018.33

Supersedes Policy #E-2016-25, approved November 21, 2016, Motion #2016.97; & Policy #E-2016-10, approved May 16, 2016, Motion #2016.46; & Policy #E-2014-21, approved November 17, 2014, Motion #2014.83; & Combines and Supersedes **Employment-Respectful Workplace Policy** Number E-2011-07, approved March 21, 2011, Motion Number 2011.22, and **Employment-Workplace Violence Prevention Policy** Number #-2010-14, approved June 14, 2010, Motion #2010.47; & Supersedes **Respectful Workplace Policy** #2007-02, approved September 17, 2007, Motion #2007.39