



Respectful Workplace Policy

Purpose:

The intent of this policy is to outline expectations for a respectful workplace where employees are treated fairly, diversity is acknowledged and valued, resources and training to resolve disputes are provided, and conflict is addressed early. This policy applies to sworn and civilian employees, contractors, and volunteers.

Statement of Principle:

It is the shared responsibility of all employees and supervisors to conduct themselves in accordance with the standards and principles established by this policy, even in the absence of a respectful workplace complaint. This policy is developed in accordance with the broader legislative and labour requirements that recognizes employee rights under the collective bargaining agreements and is aligned with requirements set out in relevant legislation such as the *Alberta Humans Rights Act*, and *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. This policy is not intended to discourage employees from exercising their rights pursuant to applicable legislation, including the *Alberta Human Rights Act*.

Definitions:

Definitions listed in this section apply to this document only with no implied or intended organization-wide or EPS Policy and Procedure Manual wide use.

Bullying – Hostile or demeaning behaviour where the behaviour is intended to cause harm, fear, or distress to one or more other individuals within the workplace, including psychological harm or harm to an employee's reputation.

Discrimination – Is an action, practice, system, or policy that has an adverse impact on an individual or group, for reasons related to a protected ground as set out in the *Alberta Human Rights Act*. Discrimination may be intentional or unintentional. Discrimination may be present even if it is only one of many factors affecting a decision or action.

Harassment can be a form of discrimination when it relates to actions taken based upon the protected grounds set out in the *Alberta Human Rights Act*:

- race
- religious belief
- color



- age
- sexual orientation
- gender
- gender identity
- gender expression
- source of income
- marital status
- family status
- physical disability
- mental disability
- place of origin
- ancestry

Frivolous – Describes a complaint or concern that has no serious purpose or value, and is readily recognizable as being trivial, insignificant and devoid of merit or legal basis. Making a frivolous complaint against another employee is a serious offence, which could be deemed a violation of this policy and may be subject to further investigation.

Good Faith – Describes the nature of complaints that are made honestly and with positive intention. All complaints made under this policy must be made in good faith. Submitting a complaint in good faith, even when the complaint cannot be substantiated, is not a violation of this policy.

Retaliation – Is any action that does or would adversely impact an individual that is taken in response to that individual raising a respectful workplace concern or participating in any process under the Respectful Workplace Policy. Retaliation may include but is not limited to dismissal, demotion, unwarranted transfer, denial of opportunities or exclusion from activities within the organization, or harassment of an individual because of their having raised a concern or having participated in any process associated with the Respectful Workplace Policy.

Vexatious – Describes a complaint or concern that is submitted without reasonable or probable cause; is not submitted in good faith and has the intention to cause harm. Making a vexatious complaint against another employee is a serious offence, which could be deemed a violation of this policy and may be subject to further investigation.

Work – Any work that is assigned by the employer, carried out during regular working hours, including overtime and any other time where an employee is expected to be performing their employment duties. In addition, and for purposes of this policy, work also means activities or events that take place outside of regular business hours but have a connection to the workplace. This includes interactions and communications that



occur online, through text or email, or via social media forums inclusive but not limited to the utilization of EPS equipment and assets.

Workplace – A work site as defined in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*; a location where an employee is, or is likely to be, engaged in their duties, and includes any vehicle or mobile equipment used by an employee for the purpose of their job.

Workplace Harassment – Is defined on a spectrum of a single or repeated incident of inappropriate conduct, comment, bullying or action that a reasonable person would find unwelcome, cannot be objectively justified as reasonable conduct, and

1. would be considered demeaning, offensive, degrading, threatening or abusive by a reasonable person,
2. has been demonstrated to contribute to a toxic or offensive work environment, or
3. has adversely or negatively impacted the individual.

Attitudes and actions that were once considered acceptable in the workplace may no longer be appropriate.

Workplace Violence – The use or attempt to use physical force in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury. This includes physical attacks or aggression, as well as verbal or written statements or behaviour that would reasonably be interpreted as a threat to use physical force in a workplace, that could cause physical injury.

Policy Statement:

A. General Considerations:

1. The EPS is committed to providing a respectful, inclusive, and positive work environment that is free from harassment, bullying or discrimination.
2. EPS employees, contractors, and volunteers must not engage in workplace harassment, bullying or discrimination.
3. Allegations of workplace harassment, bullying, discrimination, and inappropriate conduct will be reviewed, and appropriate action taken in accordance with this policy and the Respectful Workplace Procedure.
4. Retaliation is strictly prohibited against a person who invokes any process under this policy and the Respectful Workplace Procedure, or who cooperates



or assists with a process in accordance with this policy or the Respectful Workplace Procedure.

5. Any employee, contractor, or volunteer who engages in workplace harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, if an employee, the termination of contract if a contractor, and the termination of services if a volunteer.
6. Submitting a complaint or allegations that are frivolous or vexatious could be deemed a violation of this policy and may be subject to further investigation, which may result in discipline. If, at any time before or during a formal harassment investigation into a complaint, it is determined that the complaint is frivolous or vexatious, the complaint may be dismissed.
7. This policy applies to conduct and behaviour at all EPS facilities, workplaces, online/social media forums, communication on electronic devices, places visited by employees travelling on EPS-related business including conferences, meetings, projects, events, and sites of work related to social gatherings.
8. Supervisors, employees, contractors, and volunteers are encouraged to address conflict and concerns that would not amount to workplace harassment, early and directly with the person involved in a respectful manner. When this fails or is not appropriate given the nature of the concern, employees can bring workplace concerns to a supervisor or contact the Respectful Workplace Section.
9. Respectful disagreements and differences of opinion are not considered workplace harassment.
10. Reasonable and legitimate workplace practices, as well as appropriate and respectful management oversight are not considered workplace harassment. Management retains the right to respectfully provide constructive feedback and exercise legitimate supervisory responsibilities, in accordance with the expectations and responsibilities set out in this policy.
11. When a supervisor or person in a position of authority becomes aware of a harassment related concern or complaint, they shall ensure that parties impacted by concern are provided with a copy of the policy and procedure, and are made aware of their option to consult with Respectful Workplace Section. The supervisor shall also contact Respectful Workplace Section upon becoming aware of any discrimination concerns, including concerns related to sexual harassment.