



## **Harassment Prevention Policy**

Reviewed on April 4, 2024

### **Harassment Prevention Policy** for the Archdiocese of Toronto.

#### **Our Commitment**

The Archdiocese of Toronto is committed to providing a safe and respectful work environment for all staff, volunteers and visitors. No one may be harassed and no one has the right to harass anyone else, at work or in any situation related to employment with our organization.

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers, clergy, Pastors and Supervisors (henceforth referred to as “workers”) working for the Archdiocese of Toronto, including the Catholic Pastoral Centre, all parishes and other work locations. This policy is designed to ensure the workplace is a respectful and safe place for everyone, and to prevent acts of harassment from occurring on our premises or where we conduct activities.

#### **Workplace harassment means:**

- (a) 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, or
- (b) workplace sexual harassment.

It can occur in many forms; verbal, written, through gestures and may be physical. It may be implicit or explicit and may be directed at someone based on ethnicity, race, sex, religion or another protected ground.

Workplace harassment may include bullying, intimidating or offensive jokes, displaying or circulating offensive pictures or materials, ostracising or aggressive behaviour, offensive or intimidating phone calls or emails or any behaviour that creates an intimidating and offensive work environment for the victim.

Some examples of psychological harassment include discrediting or spreading rumours about an individual or belittling or trivializing someone’s ideas.

### **Workplace sexual harassment means:**

- (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.

### **What is not harassment?**

Reasonable actions by Pastors or Supervisors to help manage, guide or direct workers does not constitute harassment. Appropriate worker performance reviews, counselling or discipline by a Pastor or Supervisor is not harassment.

### **Workers' Rights and Responsibilities**

Workers have the responsibility to treat each other with respect. We ask that any worker who experiences harassment or sees another person harassed reports it to their Pastor, Supervisor or to the Director of Human Resources of the Archdiocese of Toronto.

Workers are expected to co-operate in the investigation of a harassment complaint. Anyone who investigates or gives evidence in a complaint investigation is required to keep details confidential to respect the privacy of the affected individuals.

Any employee who experiences harassment in the workplace should consult "Harassment in the Workplace – Procedures following an incident" – Appendix 1 in this document.

This policy in no way discourages or prevents anyone from potentially taking legal action to address their situation.

### **Employer Responsibilities**

Supervisory personnel must ensure, as much as possible, that no worker is harassed in the workplace.

The employer will take corrective action with anyone under their direction who harasses another person. Depending on the severity of the situation, the employer will determine if the local police should be notified.

Pastors or Supervisors who ignore harassment leave their Parish, the Archdiocese and themselves, vulnerable to legal consequences.

## **Investigative Process**

1. Once a harassment complaint is received by a Supervisor or Human Resources, an investigation will be launched within five business days.
2. The person receiving the complaint (i.e., Pastor, Supervisor or Director of Human Resources) will determine the severity of the allegations based on the initial information provided. Serious allegations, including all instances of physical violence, sexual violence and sexual harassment, must be immediately reported to the Director of Human Resources before the investigation commences and the local police will be notified in the event of an assault or serious threat. The Archbishop's Delegate will be notified of any sexual harassment complaints before an investigation commences.
3. The investigation will be objective. All investigations will be completed by trained Human Resources personnel, a qualified third party investigator or the local Pastor or Supervisor if that individual is not the alleged harasser or not under the direct control of the alleged harasser.
4. Relevant parties will be interviewed and any necessary corrective action will be determined in consultation with Human Resources and the Archbishop's Delegate in cases of sexual harassment.
5. The alleged harasser will be given an opportunity to respond to specific allegations and the worker will have an opportunity to reply. Any witnesses will be interviewed separately. Notes will be taken during interviews and the interviewee will be asked to sign off on a summary of the interview to ensure accuracy.
6. The complainant and alleged harasser will be informed in writing of the results of the investigation and any corrective action that follows.

## **Confidentiality**

The Archdiocese of Toronto and its supervisory personnel will not identify a complainant, an alleged harasser or any circumstances about a complaint, to anyone, except:

- when it is necessary in investigating the complaint;
- if it is part of disciplinary action; or
- where required by law.

## **Corrective Action for Harassers**

Workers who harass another person will be subject to corrective action by the employer which may include termination of employment. The harasser may be required to attend workplace behaviour training.

If the investigation does not find evidence to support the complaint, no record will be kept in the employment record of the alleged harasser. When the investigation finds that harassment has occurred, the incident and the corrective action will be recorded in the harasser's employment record.

Anyone who knowingly makes a false allegation against another worker in an attempt to embarrass, demean or intimidate another individual is subject to disciplinary action.

### **Retaliation**

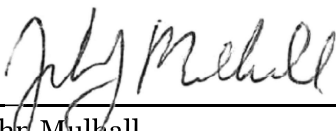
Anyone who retaliates in any way against a person who has complained of harassment, given evidence in a harassment investigation or been found guilty of harassment, will be considered to have committed harassment and will be subject to corrective actions described previously.

### **Education**

The Archdiocese of Toronto commits to making sure all of its workers, Pastors and Supervisors learn about harassment and the Archdiocesan Harassment Prevention Policy upon hire and at reasonable intervals thereafter.

### **Monitoring**

The Archdiocese of Toronto will monitor this policy and make adjustments whenever necessary. This includes a detailed review of the policy on an annual basis. If you have any concerns with this policy, please bring them to the attention of the Human Resources Department.

  
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John Mulhall  
Chancellor of Temporal Affairs

April 17, 2024  
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Date

## **Appendix 1**

### **Harassment in the Workplace – Procedures following an incident**

If a worker feels that she or he has been harassed in the workplace, the following procedures are in place. They apply to all Archdiocesan workplaces.

Complainants are encouraged to file a complaint immediately after an alleged incident of harassment.

The Pastor/Supervisor will take immediate action to resolve any situation involving harassment in the workplace.

For harassment cases:

- Speak to the individual and ask them, in person or in writing, to stop harassing you if you feel comfortable doing so.
- Inform your Pastor or Supervisor of the situation, or a trusted colleague, should you not feel comfortable telling your superiors directly.
- Ask your Pastor or Supervisor to inform the Director of Human Resources.
- The Director of Human Resources will investigate or will ensure that an investigation takes place as outlined in the Investigative Procedures section of the Harassment Prevention policy.
- The investigator will report on the findings within twenty business days of the beginning of the investigation.
- Depending on the severity of the matter, appropriate disciplinary measures will be applied and the incident will be recorded in the harasser's employment record in consultation with the Director of Human Resources.

### **Additional Resources:**

Understanding the laws surrounding Workplace Violence and Harassment:

<http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/wpvh/index.php>