



COWICHAN BAY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

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CBID Policies

Bullying and Harassment

CBID is committed to maintaining a positive and supportive workplace. We are also committed to supporting the right of every individual to work in a professional environment that is equitable, respectful, and free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination. CBID does not tolerate or condone any degree of bullying, harassment or discrimination by any individuals including, but not limited to, trustees, volunteers, employees, contractors (all included in the term “workers”) or anyone who represents CBID in any capacity.

Purpose and Acknowledgement

The motivation for CBID’s policy for promoting a respectful workplace is to:

- promote respect for everyone working for CBID;
- set out the types of behavior that may be considered offensive; and
- provide a process for addressing and resolving concerns about workplace behavior.

CBID acknowledges its responsibility to support and assist any person subjected to workplace bullying, harassment, or discrimination by anyone, including coworkers, volunteers, clients, and others who conduct business with CBID. Furthermore, CBID commits to respect the rights of all parties to a fair and equitable process, while maintaining confidentiality to the extent possible.

Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace

Workplace Conduct:

Bullying and harassment includes any inappropriate conduct and unwelcome actions by any person, whether verbal, either in person or by way of electronic communication, or physical, which humiliates, insults, degrades or makes the individual feel compromised or unsafe.

Such behavior includes comments or conduct that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause that worker to be humiliated or intimidated.

Some examples of conduct that may constitute bullying and harassment include but are not limited to:

- **Verbal Harassment** which includes demeaning, aggressive, foul or obscene conduct or language, derogatory comments, terms and names, jokes, innuendos or taunts, hazing and/or initiation practices, insults, unwanted sexual comments, the spreading of malicious rumors, implied or expressed promises of reward for supporting acts of verbal harassment towards another, or threats of reprisal for not supporting it.
- **Physical Harassment** which includes any unwanted touching, actions or conduct, pushing, shoving or any type of aggressive behavior. Physical harassment can also include conduct such as vandalizing, damaging or removing personal belongings.
- **Sexual Harassment** which may include, but are not limited to, touching, hugging, confining another's personal space, pinching, patting, rubbing, leering, dirty jokes, pictures or pornographic materials, comments, suggestions, innuendos, requests or demands of a sexual nature or any unwanted physical contact.
- **Discriminatory Harassment** includes adverse differential treatment on the basis of a prohibited ground of discrimination, as set out in the British Columbia Human Rights Code. Prohibited grounds of discrimination are race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex (including gender identity), sexual orientation, age or conviction for a criminal offence that is unrelated to the employment or intended employment.
- **Psychological Harassment** which is also known as "Bullying" is troubling behavior that manifests itself in the form of conduct, verbal comments, actions or gestures that are hostile and unwanted that affect a person's dignity or psychological integrity.
- **Visual Harassment** is obscene gestures, demeaning posters, cartoons, graffiti or drawings which are shown to an individual or a group or displayed in plain view. Where these have a sexual orientation, this will constitute sexual harassment.

All our workers will be treated in a fair and respectful manner, and we expect that all of our workers will act respectfully and fairly toward each other.

Bullying and harassment are not acceptable, nor will either type of conduct be tolerated in our workplace. To be clear, workers must not engage in the bullying and harassment of others.

Workers must report any and all bullying and harassment to their immediate superior officer, whether or not the worker is the victim of such treatment or simply observed such treatment.

Workers must use and comply with CBID policies and procedures on bullying and harassment at all times.

Actions that are not Bullying and Harassment

Actions that are not bullying or harassment include reasonable action taken by CBID or a superior relating to the management and direction of workers or the place of employment, as well as mutually acceptable social interaction.

Making a Complaint

CBID will investigate all instances of bullying and harassment brought to its attention through formal complaint even if it is not disclosed by the worker bullied and harassed. The behaviour need not be intentional to be considered harassment or discrimination, but may be offensive, intimidating and/or prohibitive. Such action may also provoke fear or mistrust, and thereby compromise an individual's dignity or sense of self-worth. Any act of harassment committed by or against any worker is unacceptable conduct and will not be tolerated.

If a worker believes that they are a victim of harassment or are a witness to harassment, the worker is instructed to notify their superior immediately. If the worker's superior is the cause of the problem, the situation should be discussed with the next level of management, up to the level of Fire Chief. If the complaint is about the Fire Chief, the matter should be directed to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. The worker is encouraged to discuss the problem before deciding whether to submit a formal or written complaint. In the event there is an incident of bullying, harassment or discrimination, the worker should take the following steps:

- **Document what happened:** It is important that the worker create a written record of incidents of bullying, harassment, or discrimination. *Please refer to the Reporting Procedures and fill out the Complaint Form.* Workplace Bullying and Harassment Reporting Procedures can be found as Appendix A or here <https://files.cbvfr.com/s/cZL23ZpdTndozqH>. The Workplace Bullying and Harassment Complaint Form can be found in Appendix B or linked here <https://files.cbvfr.com/s/rLaT8J6gA2cmZxs>.
- **Approach the person responsible:** The worker is strongly encouraged but not required to bring the matter to the attention of the person responsible for the conduct (the "respondent").
- **Discuss with superior:** If the worker is not comfortable bringing the matter directly to the attention of the respondent, or if an attempt to do so isn't satisfactory, the worker should approach their superior officer.

At this time, the worker may choose to initiate an informal or formal complaint.

- **Discuss with senior officer:** If the worker is not comfortable with the above measures or they don't produce a satisfactory result, a more senior officer (Captain, Deputy Chief, or Fire Chief) will be available to help clarify options, answer questions, and explain the policy.
- **Informal Complaint:** The worker may, with the assistance of a senior officer or an outside third party, meet with the respondent to resolve the situation. If both parties are satisfied that they have achieved an appropriate resolution, the senior officer, with input from the outside party where appropriate, will make a confidential written record to be signed by both parties. The senior officer will follow up to ensure that the solution is working.
- **Formal Complaint:** If the worker is not satisfied with the results of the informal procedure, or chooses not to utilize the informal procedure, the complainant may request a formal investigation following submission of a formal written complaint to the worker's superior officer, or a more senior officer if the immediate superior is the cause of the complaint. The investigation will include the issues and items raised in the attached Workplace Bullying and Harassment Complaint Form (see Appendix B or linked here <https://files.cbvfr.com/s/rLaT8J6gA2cmZxs>) and Investigation Form (see Appendix C or linked here <https://files.cbvfr.com/s/S3tEqALNnaTAim8>).

Application

This Policy applies to all workers including permanent, temporary, casual, contract, or trainee. This Policy also applies to all interpersonal and electronic communications, such as email, text or otherwise.

Record Keeping Requirements

A written record of the details of each investigation must be maintained as a requirement of the Employment Standards Act for WorkSafeBC. Copies of the information gathered as part of each investigation will be retained by the administration department and kept for a minimum of 5 years.

If the investigation proves that the complaint was deliberately made for frivolous or vindictive reasons, the worker making the false allegation will be subject to discipline. This does not apply to complaints made in good faith, but which are not proven. The CBID requires that all workers sign an agreement on expectations around respectful conduct in the workplace as a condition of work.

Worker Sign-Off

Declaration: I have reviewed and understand CBID's Workplace Bullying and Harassment Policy & Procedures.

Worker Name: _____

Worker Signature: _____