

WORKPLACE BULLYING AND HARRASSMENT

Background

Bullying and harassment is not acceptable or tolerated in this workplace. All workers will be treated in a fair and respectful manner.

Bullying and harassment includes any inappropriate conduct or comment by a person towards a worker that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause that worker to be humiliated or intimidated, but excludes any reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the place of employment. Examples of conduct or comments that might constitute bullying and harassment include verbal aggression or insults, calling someone derogatory names, harmful hazing or initiation practices, vandalizing personal belongings, and spreading malicious rumours.

This procedure applies to all workers, including permanent, temporary, casual, contract, and student workers. It applies to both interpersonal and electronic communications, such as email.

Workers must:

- not engage in the bullying and harassment of other workers
- report if bullying and harassment is observed or experienced
- apply and comply with the employer's policies and procedures on bullying and harassment

Procedures

1. Reporting

1.1. How to Report - Workers can report incidents or complaints of workplace bullying and harassment verbally or in writing. When submitting a written complaint, please use the workplace bullying and harassment complaint form. When reporting verbally, the reporting contact, along with the complainant, will fill out the complaint form.

1.2. When to Report - Incidents or complaints should be reported as soon as possible after experiencing or witnessing an incident. This allows the incident to be investigated and addressed promptly.

1.3. Reporting Contact – Report any incidents or complaints to the Director, Human Resources.

- 1.4. Alternate Reporting Contact – If the primary reporting contact is the person engaging in the bullying or harassing behaviour, complaints should be directed to the Assistant Superintendent.
- 1.5. What to include in a report - Provide as much information as possible, including the names of people involved, witnesses (if any) to the event(s), where the event(s) occurred, when it occurred, and what behaviour and/or words led to the complaint. Attach any supporting documents, such as emails, handwritten notes, or photographs. Physical evidence, such as vandalized personal belongings, can also be submitted.
- 1.6. An employee found to be making malicious and/or vexatious false complaints may be subject to discipline.

2. Investigation Procedures

2.1. How and when investigations will be conducted - Most investigations will be conducted internally. In complex or sensitive situations, an external investigator may be hired.

2.2. Investigations will:

- be undertaken promptly and diligently, and be as thorough as necessary, given the circumstances
- be fair and impartial, providing both the complainant and respondent equal treatment in evaluating the allegations
- be sensitive to the interests of all parties involved
- be confidential; information will not be disclosed except as required to investigate and conclude the matter and/or as otherwise required by law
- be focused on finding facts and evidence, including interviews of the complainant, respondent, and any witnesses
- incorporate, where appropriate, any need or request from the complainant or respondent for assistance during the investigation process

2.3. What will be included - Investigations will include interviews with the alleged target, the alleged bully, and any witnesses. If the alleged target and the alleged bully agree on what happened, then the West Vancouver School District will not investigate any further, and will determine what corrective action to take, if necessary. The investigator will also review any evidence, such as emails, handwritten notes, photographs, or physical evidence like vandalized objects.

2.4. Roles and responsibilities - The Superintendent is responsible for ensuring workplace investigation procedures are followed. Workers are expected to cooperate with investigators and provide any details of incidents they have experienced or witnessed. If external investigators are hired, they will conduct investigations and provide a written report with conclusions to the Superintendent or designate.

2.5. An employee who makes malicious and/or vexatious false complaints may be subject to discipline.

3. Follow-up

3.1. The alleged bully and alleged target will be advised of the investigation findings by the Superintendent or designate.

3.2. Following an investigation, the Superintendent or designate will review and revise workplace procedures, if necessary, to prevent any future bullying and harassment incidents of a similar nature in the workplace. Appropriate corrective actions will be taken within a reasonable time frame. In appropriate circumstances, workers may be referred to the Employee Assistance Program or be encouraged to seek medical advice.

4. Record-keeping requirements

4.1. The West Vancouver School District expects that workers will keep written accounts of incidents experienced or witnessed, and submit them to the reporting contact when making a complaint.

4.2. The West Vancouver School District will keep a record of any investigations, including the findings.