

## Anti-Harassment Policy

### **Purpose**

The goal of this Policy is to create a climate of mutual respect where each person feels a part of the Ralph Thornton community and can contribute fully to the development and well-being of our neighbourhood.

The Ralph Thornton Community Centre (RTCC) will not tolerate, ignore, or condone any form of discrimination or harassment and is committed to always promoting appropriate standards of conduct. RTCC is committed to the preservation of dignity and creating a culture that supports an individual's physical, emotional, and social well-being.

This Policy is based upon and fully aligns with the City of Toronto Human Rights and Anti-Harassment Policy. In the event of a conflict between this policy and a policy of the City of Toronto, the City policy will always take precedence. Further details regarding definitions, application, roles and responsibilities and additional resources can be found at:

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-13239.pdf>

### **Definitions**

**Discrimination:** Discrimination is any practice or behaviour, whether intentional or not, which has a negative impact on an individual or group because of personal characteristics or circumstances unrelated to the person's abilities or the employment or service issue in question (e.g., disability, sex, race, sexual orientation). Discrimination may arise as a result of direct differential treatment or it may result from the unequal effect of treating individuals and groups in the same way. Either way, if the effect of the behaviour on the individual is to withhold or limit full, equal and meaningful access to goods, services, facilities, employment, housing accommodation or contracts available to other members of society, it is discrimination.

**Harassment:** Harassment means improper comment or conduct that a person knows or ought to know would be unwelcome, offensive, embarrassing or hurtful. It is a form of discrimination. Harassment may result from one incident or a series of incidents. Harassment can occur between co-workers, between management and employees, between employees and elected officials, between employees and vendors, between employees and recipients of municipal services, and between employees and members of the public.

## **Policy**

All employees and volunteers are responsible for respecting the dignity and rights of their co-workers and the public they serve. Discrimination and harassment are serious forms of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge or removal from office.

Any member of the public, including visitors to the Ralph Thornton Community Centre facilities, or individuals conducting business or accessing services of RTCC are expected to adhere to this policy, including refraining from harassment of employees, elected officials, and persons acting on behalf of RTCC.

If the Anti-harassment Policy is not adhered to, RTCC will take the necessary steps to ensure a respectful, harassment-free environment is restored and maintained, including barring the harasser from its facilities, where appropriate, or discontinuing business or services.

## **Process**

*Application:* Every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to RTCC employment, services and facilities, without discrimination or harassment because of the following prohibited grounds and any combination of these grounds: race, ancestry, place of origin, language, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex (including pregnancy, breast feeding and gender identity), sexual orientation, family status, marital status, disability, age, record of offences, political affiliation, level of literacy, and socio-economic status.

*Roles and Responsibilities:* This policy applies to all RTCC employees, volunteers, elected officials, and their staff and to all aspects of the employment or volunteer relationship. All persons are expected to abide by this policy and the Ontario Human Rights Code by refraining from any form of harassment and discrimination and by fully co-operating in any investigation of a harassment or discrimination complaint. Human rights are a shared responsibility.

Under the Ontario Human Rights Code management can be held personally liable for failing to take appropriate action. All management staff have the following general responsibilities with respect to human rights:

- not engaging in behaviour that would constitute discrimination or harassment under the policy,
- setting and enforcing standards of appropriate workplace conduct,
- having thorough knowledge of the policy,
- being able to clarify what constitutes harassment and discrimination,
- being able to advise staff, volunteers, service users, and community members of their rights and responsibilities under the policy,

- taking all reasonable steps to deal with alleged workplace discrimination and harassment that they are aware of or reasonably should have been aware of (even if a direct complaint has not been made), in a timely fashion while maintaining as much confidentiality as possible.

Management staff are encouraged to consult the City of Toronto's guideline dealing with complaints of Harassment and Discrimination and/or contact the Human Rights Office for guidance to address human rights complaints.

Management staff are responsible for:

- ensuring that their workplace is free from harassment and discrimination, being aware of what is happening in their workplace and taking appropriate action upon becoming aware of discriminatory and/or harassing conduct contrary to the policy,
- educating employees to ensure that they know that harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and that they know what their rights and responsibilities are under the policy including ways in which policy violations can be resolved,
- documenting details of human rights concerns, actions taken, outcomes or remedies implemented
- monitoring the situation after an occurrence and complaint to ensure the harassment or discrimination has stopped and implementing appropriate measures to prevent reoccurrence,
- consulting the Human Rights Office where there may be a perceived or real conflict of interest in addressing an alleged policy violation or for assistance with a human rights issue,
- cooperating in investigations ensuring policy and program development and implementation are consistent with the Human Rights and Anti-Harassment Policy,
- responding to and taking action to remedy complaints of personal (non-Code) harassment.

Employees and Volunteers are responsible for:

- being familiar with their rights and responsibilities under the policy and the Ontario Human Rights Code,
- not engaging in behaviour that would constitute discrimination or harassment under the policy,
- raising concerns as soon as possible if they have been discriminated against or harassed,
- documenting details of harassment and, or discrimination that are experienced or witnessed,
- co-operating in interventions and investigations to resolve human rights and harassment issues,
- maintaining confidentiality related to human rights investigations, and

- reporting any and all incidents of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation that they witness.

Complaints or concerns regarding harassment should follow the RTCC Complaints policy, which indicates mechanisms for addressing and, if need be, escalating concerns until a satisfactory resolution is achieved.

## **Resources**

RTCC is committed to providing training and education to ensure that all staff and volunteers have knowledge about their rights and responsibilities under the RTCC and City of Toronto's Human Rights and Anti- Harassment Policies. A variety of resources to educate employees about policy expectations are available. All staff are expected to be familiar with policy provisions.

For information about the City of Toronto Policy or if you have any questions or concerns contact the Confidential Human Rights Inquiry Line (392-8383) or e-mail: [humanrights@toronto.ca](mailto:humanrights@toronto.ca)