



## Policy 103 WORKPLACE HARASSMENT

### 1. Purpose

Town of Kentville is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and respectful workplace for all employees, volunteers, contractors, and members of the public.

Workplace harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. This policy outlines the Town's commitment to preventing, identifying, and addressing workplace harassment and ensuring a culture of dignity and mutual respect.

### 2. Policy Statement

Town of Kentville will take all reasonable steps to:

- a. Create a safe work environment for all employees and prevent harassment in the workplace.
- b. Address incidents of harassment promptly and effectively.
- c. Protect individuals from retaliation for reporting harassment or participating in an investigation.
- d. Promote awareness, education, and understanding of workplace respect and professional conduct.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- a. All Town of Kentville employees - full-time, part-time, casual, seasonal, or contract.
- b. Members of Town Council.
- c. Volunteers, students, and contractors performing work on behalf of the Town.
- d. All work-related settings and activities, including Town facilities, vehicles, off-site meetings, community events, and online communications.

## 4. Definitions

4.1 "Workplace Harassment" means any inappropriate conduct, comment, display, action, or gesture by a person that:

- (i) Adversely affects another person's dignity, psychological, or physical well-being, and
- (ii) Is known or reasonably expected to be unwelcome.

Harassment can be a single serious incident or repeated behavior over time.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal abuse, name-calling, or threats.
- Insults, jokes, or comments that demean or humiliate.
- Displaying or circulating offensive materials (in print or online).
- Intimidation, bullying, or exclusionary behavior.
- Unwelcome physical contact or advances.
- Abuse of authority or position.

4.2 "Sexual Harassment" means any unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. This includes:

- Unwanted touching or physical contact.
- Sexually suggestive remarks, jokes, or gestures.
- Inappropriate inquiries or comments about appearance or relationships.
- Requests for sexual favours, or implied rewards or consequences related to such requests.

4.3 "Discriminatory Harassment" may also be based on protected characteristics under the *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act*, such as:

- Age
- Race, colour, or ethnic origin
- Gender identity or expression
- Sexual orientation

- Disability
- Religion or creed
- Family or marital status

## **5. Responsibilities**

### **5.1 Town of Kentville shall:**

- Maintain a harassment-free workplace.
- Provide training and awareness for all staff.
- Ensure all complaints are taken seriously and investigated promptly.
- Protect confidentiality to the extent possible.
- Take corrective or disciplinary action when harassment is substantiated.

### **5.2 Managers and Supervisors**

- Model respectful behavior at all times.
- Address inappropriate conduct immediately.
- Report and document any complaints or observed incidents.
- Support and protect employees involved in a complaint or investigation.

### **5.3 Employees**

- Treat others with respect and professionalism.
- Refrain from engaging in harassment.
- Report incidents of harassment to a supervisor or other designated contact.
- Participate honestly and respectfully in investigations when required.

## **6. Reporting Harassment**

### **How to Report**

Employees who experience or witness harassment are encouraged to report the matter as soon as possible. Reports may be made to:

- The employee's immediate supervisor, or
- If the complaint involves a senior manager or elected official, to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or Mayor.

Reports can be made verbally or in writing and should include:

- A description of the incident(s),
- The date(s), time(s), and location(s), and
- The names of anyone involved or who witnessed the behavior.

Anonymous reports will be reviewed to the extent possible, recognizing that anonymity may limit investigation outcomes.

## **7. Investigation Process**

Upon receiving a complaint:

- a. The Town will acknowledge receipt promptly and ensure safety and confidentiality.
- b. A qualified investigator (internal or external) will be assigned to conduct a fair and impartial investigation.
- c. Both the complainant and respondent will have the opportunity to provide information and identify witnesses.
- d. Findings will be documented in a written report.
- e. The Town will determine appropriate actions based on the findings.

All parties will be informed of the outcome, within the limits of privacy legislation.

## **8. Corrective Action**

If harassment is substantiated, the Town may take disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, removal from volunteer roles, or exclusion from Town facilities or programs.

## **9. Protection from Retaliation**

The Town strictly prohibits retaliation against anyone who:

- Reports harassment in good faith, or
- Participates in an investigation.

Any act of reprisal will itself be treated as a serious violation of this policy.

## 10. Confidentiality

All reports, investigations, and records will be handled with discretion and confidentiality, consistent with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPOP) and related municipal policies.

## 11. Training and Awareness

The Town will provide ongoing education for all staff and Council members on workplace respect, harassment prevention, and reporting procedures.

## 12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or as required by legislative changes.

Seven Day Notice of Policy: November 10, 2025

Council Approval: November 24, 2025

In Effect: November 24, 2025

This is to certify that Policy 103, Workplace Harassment, was approved by Town Council on the 24th day of November, 2025



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Mayor



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Clerk

## **“APPENDIX A”**

### **Town of Kentville – Workplace Harassment Incident Report Form**

#### **Confidential Document**

This form is to be used by any employee, volunteer, or contractor who wishes to report a concern or incident of workplace harassment.

All information will be handled confidentially in accordance with Town policy and privacy legislation.

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#### **Section 1: Reporter Information**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Job Title/Role:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Department:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

- I am reporting on my own behalf
  - I am reporting as a witness to harassment
  - I am reporting on behalf of another individual (with their consent)
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#### **Section 2: Details of the Incident**

**Date(s) of Incident:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Person(s) alleged to have engaged in harassment:**

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Relationship to you (e.g., coworker, supervisor, member of the public):**

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## Section 6: Supporting Documentation

Please list any documents, emails, screenshots, or other evidence you are submitting with this report:

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## Section 7: Declaration

I confirm that the information provided above is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

I understand that submitting this report may initiate an investigation under the Town of Kentville's Workplace Harassment Policy.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

