



THE PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS
L'ASSOCIATION PROFESSIONNELLE
DES AGENTS DU SERVICE EXTÉRIEUR

PAFSO's Violence and Harassment Prevention Policy

1. **Purpose:**

PAFSO is committed to providing a safe and respectful workplace for all employees. This policy aims to prevent and address incidents of violence, harassment, discrimination, and bullying in any form within our organization.

2. **Scope:**

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, vendors, members, and visitors to PAFSO's premises or engaged in business-related activities.

3. **Policy Statement:**

PAFSO has a zero-tolerance approach towards violence, harassment, bullying, discrimination, misuse of authority and threatening behavior in any form.

At PAFSO, both management and employees are committed to providing a safe and respectful work environment for all staff, volunteers, members, and visitors (individual). We are also committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity.

Workplace violence, harassment and bullying will not be tolerated from any person while conducting PAFSO's business. Everyone participating in PAFSO's business must be dedicated to preventing workplace violence, harassment, discrimination, bullying or misuse of authority.

All individuals are required to act in good faith and must work in compliance with this Policy and the supporting program, free from fear of reprisal. All individuals are encouraged to raise any concerns about workplace violence, discrimination, harassment, bullying, misuse of authority and to report any incidents or threats they may be subject to and/or witness. Our pro-active approach to prevention enhances the health and safety of all persons involved in PAFSO's service delivery model.

Management pledges to investigate and deal with all concerns, complaints, or incidents of workplace violence, discrimination, harassment, bullying and misuse of authority in a fair and objective manner while respecting the privacy of all concerned as much as possible.

The grievance process and the Ontario Human Rights Act provides protection from harassment that is related to race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, marital status, family status, disability, pardoned conviction, or sexual orientation. This internal Policy is not intended to prevent or discourage an individual from filing either a grievance and/or an application with the Human Rights Tribunal on a matter related to Ontario's Human Rights Code within one year of the last alleged incident. We further acknowledge that an individual also retains the right to exercise any other legal avenues that may be available.

4. Definition:

Workplace Violence: is defined by Occupational Health and Safety Act as; the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker. An attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, which could cause physical injury to the worker or; a statement or behavior that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker.

Harassment: refers to any unwelcome or unwanted behaviour that creates an uncomfortable, hostile, or intimidating environment for an individual or a group of individuals in a professional setting. It also includes, any action, conduct or comment, including of a sexual nature,

that can reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or other physical or psychological injury or illness to an employee, including any prescribed action, conduct or comment.

Sexual Harassment: for the purpose of the Health and Safety program, this is defined as 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;

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.

Bullying: is usually seen as acts or verbal comments that could hurt or isolate a person in the workplace. Sometimes, bullying can involve negative physical contact as well. Bullying usually involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behaviour that is intended to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate a particular person or group of people. It has also been described as the assertion of power through aggression.

Misuse of authority: refers to situations where someone in a position of power or influence abuses or exploits their authority for personal gain, to control others, or to act in ways that are unethical, illegal, or against the best interests of those they are supposed to serve. It involves an improper or wrongful exercise of power that disregards the responsibilities and ethical boundaries associated with that authority.

Workplace: includes, but is not limited to, PAFSO's office. The workplace is extended to any location where staff and/or volunteers are required to be because of work demands, including off-site functions and/or remote work location.

Delegated manager: for the purpose of this policy and its resolution procedure, the delegated manager is the General Manager when a complaint is filed against the President and/or a member of the Executive Committee. The President of the Association will be the designated delegated manager if the complaint is filed against the General Manager.

5. Responsibilities:

Both management and employees share the responsibility for occupational health and safety and for taking every reasonable precaution to ensure the workplace is safe.

Management:

- i. Ensuring that PAFSO's policy, practices and conduct comply with the provisions of the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Ontario Health and Safety Act (OHSA).
- ii. Making sure that all those protected by the policy are fully aware of the policy, their rights and protections under this policy, the Code and the OHSA.
- iii. Creating an environment that encourages prospective complainants to report all incidents of discrimination and harassment.
- iv. Ensuring that all discrimination and harassment complaints can be resolved quickly, fairly, objectively and in a sensitive manner.
- v. Ensuring that all known incidents of workplace violence and harassment are properly investigated.
- vi. Implementing the recommendations and/or corrective measures identified in the investigator's report.
- vii. Conducting a review of this policy one year after its implementation to be compliant with the statutory regulations.

Employees:

- i. Working together with management to improve the safety of the workplace.
- ii. Participating in Workplace Violence and Harassment prevention training as required.
- iii. Participating in assessments, Workplace Violence and Harassment surveys and other measures designed to reduce the risk of violence in the workplace.
- iv. Notifying management of all incidents of Harassment, violence, or potential violence in the workplace.
- v. Providing sufficient details in the allegation statement to allow the respond to offer an appropriate response.
- vi. Cooperating in the investigation process and/or the mediation process if applicable.

6. Time limit to file a complaint:

A complaint of harassment must be filed within **twelve months** of the last event of alleged harassment leading to the complaint unless there are extenuating circumstances. The information provided must be as precise and concise as possible.

Allegations can go back further in time to describe incidents or events if you can demonstrate that they are directly related to the last event of alleged harassment that led to your complaint. This is especially necessary in cases where you intend to demonstrate a pattern of events.

7. Monitoring and Review:

This Policy will be reviewed annually. The Executive Director is responsible to monitor and review this Policy.

8. Relevant Legislation:

Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, c O.1, as amended
The Ontario Human Rights Code R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c F.

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