

Practice Name:	Respectful Workplace Policy		
Last Updated:	April 3, 2017	Version:	

SECTION 1 - ACCOUNTABILITY

- 1.1 The City of Surrey is committed to providing an environment where Employees, Elected Officials, Volunteers, Customers, Contractors and Visitors are treated with respect and dignity and can contribute to a productive, inclusive and professional atmosphere.
- 1.2 This Policy reflects the City's commitment to ensure that all those who work at the City of Surrey do so in a Respectful Workplace, in alignment with its values of integrity, innovation, service, teamwork and community.
- 1.3 The City of Surrey is committed to providing communication, education and training to all Employees, Volunteers and Elected Officials about the Policy, and to ensuring the procedures for complaint investigation and resolution are implemented and followed.
- 1.4 All individuals are accountable for creating and sustaining a Respectful Workplace. Management Employees and Supervisors have additional accountability for ensuring a Respectful Workplace.

SECTION 2 - PURPOSES

- 2.1 To formalize the responsibility and commitment of the City of Surrey to ensure that all Employees, Elected Officials, Volunteers, Customers, Contractors and Visitors enjoy a workplace and service environment that is respectful.
- 2.2 To establish that the City of Surrey promotes a workplace and service environment for Employees, Elected Officials, Volunteers, Customers, Contractors and Visitors that is respectful.
- 2.3 To ensure that all Employees, Elected Officials and Volunteers understand what is meant by providing a respectful workplace and service environment, and know their responsibilities to ensure that such an environment is provided and sustained at the City of Surrey. Under this Policy, it is understood that employees who witness disrespectful behaviours in the workplace should report these incidents.
- 2.4 To provide appropriate processes and procedures to deal with complaints in an effective and timely matter and to remedy situations when Respectful Workplace principles are not being honoured.
- 2.5 Nothing in this Policy should be construed as depriving Union Employees covered under the collective agreements of CUPE Local 402, CUPE Local 402-02 and IAFF Local 1271 of their rights under those collective agreements.

SECTION 3 – DEFINITION OF RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE

3.1 **What is a Respectful Workplace?**

A Respectful Workplace and service environment honours the entitlement of everyone to have a respectful experience and honours the pride and dignity of each person. In a Respectful Workplace, the principles of promoting cooperative and collaborative behaviours, including healthy group dynamics and proactive problem solving are honoured. A Respectful Workplace includes conduct which is respectful and inclusive of others.

A Respectful Workplace does not include aggressive or demeaning behaviours, negative or inappropriate communication, or bullying that is directed toward a specific person or persons and that results in an individual feeling humiliated, lessened in his/her personal well-being or intimidated.

Disrespectful conduct does not include legitimate job related actions performed in good faith by supervisors and management employees, such as work direction or assignment, performance appraisals, attendance monitoring and implementation of disciplinary and other corrective actions.

3.2 **What is disrespectful workplace behaviour?**

Disrespect occurs where individuals do not honour the entitlement of everyone to be respected in the workplace. Disrespectful workplace behaviour is distinct from Discrimination or Harassment that are prohibited by the BC Human Rights Code; that conduct is covered under the City of Surrey's Human Rights Policy.

3.3 **How to avoid disrespectful workplace behaviour?**

Foundational to this Policy is the concept that each person covered by this Policy considers how he/she would like to be respected and will work with others as he/she wishes to be respected, in alignment with the City's values.

Getting along with others by working in a respectful, inclusive manner is required at the City of Surrey. Each individual covered by this Policy will make every effort to work cooperatively with other Employees, Elected Officials, Volunteers, Customers, Contractors and Visitors. This means:

- Bullying or other aggressive or demeaning behaviours towards others is not tolerated.
- It is respected that everyone is different and there are different approaches or ways of doing things.
- Self-awareness of how individual actions impact others in the workplace.
- Not talking negatively, gossiping or judging others.
- Including everyone in the workplace.
- If an individual is not sure how his/her behaviour is impacting others in the workplace, he/she asks for clarification.

An individual is bullying or harassing when he/she takes an action that he or she knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause another individual to feel humiliated, excluded or intimidated.

3.4 **The Consequences of Disrespectful Behaviours**

Disrespectful behaviours may hurt the victim and others, reflect poorly on the City, and are not in keeping with its Values.

Individuals found to be bullying, intimidating, disrespecting or otherwise tormenting others, either physically or mentally, will be subject to discipline

SECTION 4 – RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

4.1 If an Employee is behaving in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable at work, or if you are having a conflict with an Employee at work, there are steps you can take to resolve the conflict.

4.1.1 If you are comfortable discussing the issue directly with the other Employee, you are encouraged to do so to try to resolve the issue. If you are uncomfortable approaching the other Employee, or if the issue is not resolved, inform your Supervisor about the conflict.

4.1.2 The Supervisor will assist you in resolving the conflict and, if it is resolved to your satisfaction, the issue is considered to be resolved. If the conflict is not resolved, you or your Supervisor should refer the conflict to a Designated Management Employee, as outlined in Section 4.1.3. If you do not feel comfortable approaching your Supervisor directly, or if the Supervisor is part of the conflict, refer to Section 4.1.3.

4.1.3 If you are unable or uncomfortable in resolving the conflict using the steps indicated above, you should speak to one of the following Designated Management Employees who will assist you in resolving the conflict:

General Manager, Finance;
Director, Human Resources; or
Senior Manager, Human Resources.

These Designated Management Employees may be amended from time to time by the City Manager.

4.1.4 If the disrespectful behaviour involves an Elected Official, a Senior City Manager, or a conflict of interest, the Designated Management Employee in consultation with the City Solicitor, may implement an appropriate resolution process, which may include the appointment of an external Investigator to investigate the complaint brought under the Policy.

4.2 If a Customer, Visitor, Contractor, Volunteer or Elected Official is behaving in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable at work, or if you are having a conflict with a Customer, Visitor, Contractor, Volunteer or Elected Official while at work, you should try to resolve the issue. If you are not comfortable attempting to resolve the issue, or, if the issue is not resolved, inform your Supervisor about the conflict. The Supervisor will assist you to resolve the conflict and, if it is resolved to your satisfaction, the issue is considered to be resolved. If the conflict is not resolved, you or your Supervisor should refer the conflict to a Designated Management Employee as outlined in Section 4.1.3.

4.3 If you see others behaving in a way that is inappropriate or disrespectful or experiencing a Disrespectful Workplace, you should encourage them to follow the steps shown above to assist them in resolving the conflict. If the behaviour continues, you should report it to your supervisor.

4.4 Retaliation for speaking out, bringing a complaint or participating in the investigation of a complaint under the Respectful Workplace Policy is prohibited by this Policy. A separate complaint can be made if an individual has been the subject of retaliatory behaviour for bringing a complaint.

Retaliation may include, but it is not limited to, penalizing an individual or subjecting them to adverse job consequences.

- 4.5 An allegation of a violation of the Respectful Workplace is an extremely serious matter. Complaints that are investigated and determined to be false and malicious may lead to discipline or other negative consequences for the individual who files the complaint. A false and malicious complaint is a complaint brought forward in bad faith and for improper reasons. A good faith complaint brought forward for proper reasons which is found to not have merit is not a false and malicious complaint.

APPENDIX I - DEFINITIONS

The following terms are used in this Policy and are defined as follows:

- (a) **City of Surrey** for the purposes of this Policy also includes the Surrey Libraries.
- (b) **Complainant** is any individual who seeks recourse pursuant to this Policy as someone who believes he/she has experienced disrespect in the Workplace. The City of Surrey may also be a Complainant.
- (c) **Contractor** includes all individuals who access the Workplace, as defined in this Policy, for the purpose of providing services or supplies to the City of Surrey.
- (d) **Customer** includes all individuals who access the Workplace as defined in this Policy for the purposes of obtaining City services or information and may include residents, taxpayers, business agents and contractors.
- (e) **Designated Management Employee** is defined in Section 4.1.3.
- (f) **Elected Official** means those individuals elected to Council and includes the Mayor and Councillors of the City of Surrey.
- (g) **Employee** includes any individual paid a salary or wages by the City of Surrey and may be a Union Employee or Management Employee of the City of Surrey.
- (h) **Investigator** is an internal or external individual who will investigate a complaint brought under this Policy.
- (i) **Management Employee** means an Employee of the City of Surrey who is exempt from Union membership for the purposes of the City of Surrey's collective agreement(s).
- (j) **Respectful Workplace** is defined in Section 3.1.
- (k) **Respondent** is a person or group of persons, against whom allegation(s) of disrespectful behaviours have been made pursuant to the terms of this Policy.
- (l) **Senior City Manager** includes City Manager, Director Human Resources, General Manager Finance, General Manager Corporate Services, General Manager Engineering, General Manager Planning and Development; General Manager Parks, Recreation and Culture, Chief Librarian, the Fire Chief, City Solicitor, General Manager, Investment and Intergovernmental Relations, and such Senior City Managers as may be added by the City Manager from time to time.

- (m) **Supervisor** means any Employee of the City of Surrey responsible for the directing and supervision of other Employees and may include both Union and Management Employees.
- (n) **Union Employee** means a member of CUPE Local 402-02, CUPE Local 402 or IAFF Local 1271.
- (o) **Visitor** includes all individuals who access the Workplace, as defined in this Policy, who are not Employees, Elected Officials, Volunteers, Contractors or Customers.
- (p) **Volunteer** means a person serving the City of Surrey who is not an Employee, as defined in this Policy, and includes those individuals serving on any board(s), commission(s) or committee(s) established by the City of Surrey.
- (q) **Witness** is any individual(s) determined to have pertinent information with relation to a complaint filed under this Policy.
- (r) **Workplace** is considered to be anywhere where activities directly related to the business of the City of Surrey occur.

APPENDIX 2 – RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE POLICY: FORMAL INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

1. How investigations are conducted:

Most formal Respectful Workplace investigations are conducted internally by a Designated Management Employee. In certain situations, the City may choose to engage an external Investigator.

The City will make reasonable efforts to ensure that investigations are:

- undertaken promptly and diligently and are as thorough as necessary given the circumstances;
- fair and impartial, providing both the complainant and respondent equal treatment in evaluating the allegations;
- sensitive to the interests of all parties involved, and conducted with appropriate confidentiality; and
- focused on finding facts and evidence.

2. What is included:

The Complainant will be required to provide a statement (written or oral) to the Designated Management Employee, including a description of the allegations, names, dates, locations, witnesses, incidents, and any other relevant information.

Investigations may include interviews with the Complainant, the Respondent, and Witnesses. The Respondent will be made aware of the Complainant's identity and will have an opportunity to respond to all allegations made.

Investigation and related meetings include the Designated Management Employee, Management, as well as Human Resources Department and Union representatives when appropriate.

The Designated Management Employee or Investigator may require the production of, and review, relevant evidence such as emails, handwritten notes, photographs and employment

records.

3. Follow-up:

The Complainant is advised of whether his/her complaint is deemed to be “founded” or “unfounded”.

The Respondent is advised of whether the complaint is deemed to be “founded” or “unfounded”.

Witnesses are not advised of the investigation findings.

In appropriate circumstances, the City may provide the Complainant, Respondent, or other, additional information relating to the investigation and its conclusions.

Participants in an investigation are required to maintain strict confidentiality with respect to meetings, discussions and outcomes related to the investigation process. Failure to do so may result in discipline.

4. Record-keeping requirements:

Human Resources keeps investigation records in accordance with applicable legislation.

City of Surrey Values

An Innovative Team Serving the Community with Integrity.

The City of Surrey's values serve to guide how we do our work and are fundamental to the relationships we have with each other and with those we serve.

Community

We care about and contribute to the broader well-being of the community; we strive to make Surrey a great place for our citizens to live, work, invest, recreate and raise a family.

Innovation

We welcome change; we actively look for leading edge initiatives and welcome new approaches and original thinking; we are committed to continuous improvement; we recognize all experiences as important learning opportunities.

Integrity

We are honest; we are accountable for our decisions; we meet our commitments; we are forthright in our communications; we understand and comply with all laws, regulations and policies.

Service

Customers are important to us; we want to help our customers; we seek to understand our customers' needs and actively work to achieve responsive, balanced solutions.

Teamwork

We support each other; we trust each other; we respect each other; we take a Citywide view of the challenges we face; we value everyone's ideas.

