

THE CRIDGE CENTRE FOR THE FAMILY POLICY MANUAL



SECTION: EMPLOYEE CONDUCT
NUMBER: 6.9 – Bullying and Harassment
DATE APPROVED: October 2013 **LAST REVISED DATE:** December 2024
RELATES TO: Worksafe BC

POLICY STATEMENT

The Cridge Centre for the Family, in cooperation with the BCGEU, promotes a work environment that is characterized by professionalism, collegiality, and harmony. This policy prohibits conduct defined below as either bullying or harassment. The Cridge Centre for the Family will not tolerate bullying or harassment in any of the forms outlined in this policy in any interactions connected to work with The Cridge Centre for the Family. Where such conduct is found to have occurred, The Cridge Centre for the Family will take corrective and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

This policy is not intended to constrain normal social interactions.

Bullying and harassment excludes any reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the place of employment.

The Cridge Centre for the Family also considers false allegations of bullying and harassment to be serious workplace misconduct subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The Cridge Centre for the Family has mandatory video training on bullying and harassment for all employees including those in a supervisory position. It is required that every employee will complete the training as part of orientation and will be given a brief written exam upon completion of the training.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to assist all employees in identifying and preventing personal and sexual harassment and bullying in the workplace, and to provide procedures for handling and resolving complaints. It is intended to promote the well-being of everyone in the workplace and to foster the values of integrity, trust, and harmony that are essential for a sound organization.

This policy is intended to address WorkSafeBC requirements prescribed by Bill 14.

APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This policy applies to all regular and casual bargaining unit staff, exempt employees, and management. This policy applies to all situations where activities are connected to work with The Cridge Centre for the Family and could impact on employment during and outside of regular business hours at the workplace and away from the workplace. This includes:

- Activities on the premises of The Cridge Centre for the Family;
- Work assignments outside of the premises of The Cridge Centre for the Family;
- Work-related training sessions, education seminars, and conferences;
- Work-related travel; or,
- Work-related social functions that are sponsored or organized by The Cridge Centre for the Family.

Employees are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the requirements of the collective agreement in addition to those Bill 14, which prohibit workplace bullying and harassment.

Employees should take these requirements seriously. Failure to meet the appropriate standards of workplace conduct and/or to meet the requirements of the collective agreement and the new Bill 14 requirements may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

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DEFINITIONS

What is Bullying? Bullying is “when someone takes an action that [he/she/they] knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause [a person] to be humiliated or intimidated;”ⁱ behavior (conduct or comments) that can “mentally” hurt or isolate a person; however, it can involve negative physical contact as well.

What is Harassment? Harassment in the workplace is “comment or conduct that one knows or ought reasonably to know is unwelcome, that creates negative impact for the recipient,”ⁱⁱ or “any vexatious behavior in the form of repeated and hostile or unwanted conduct, verbal comments, actions or gestures, that affects an employee’s dignity or psychological or physical integrity [psychological or physical well-being] and that results in a harmful work environment for the employee”ⁱⁱⁱ.

Bullying and harassment can take many forms, including but not limited to sexual harassment, racial harassment or workplace bullying. Although bullying and harassment usually involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behavior, a single serious incident can also constitute bullying or harassment. Any person, regardless of his or her position of authority, may be responsible for committing an act of harassment. While harassment usually involves repeated acts or a course of conduct, a single incident of harassment could be serious enough to constitute a breach of this policy.

PROCEDURES

Employees with bullying or harassment complaints should direct them to their immediate supervisor, manager or, alternatively, the CEO. Bullying complaints should be submitted in writing and include the names of possible witnesses.

Reported complaints are measured against the Bullying and Harassment Policy. If an investigation is warranted, the investigator appointed must determine a fair and unbiased process to follow, which may require the implementation of interim workplace measures. For example, it may be necessary to place the complainant and/or alleged harasser on investigative leave with pay, or to arrange temporary transfer or reassignment, if possible. Ideally, investigators shall have independence from the area or department in which the complainant works.

Confidentiality

It is essential that the complainant, respondent and all of those involved in an investigation of a complaint maintain confidentiality throughout the complaint procedure, the investigation and subsequent to the investigation. Information will only be provided to those who have a “need to know”, or as required during the course of the investigation. It is the responsibility of all covered persons to cooperate with the investigation and to maintain strict confidentiality of all information related to the allegations and investigations.

Investigations shall be conducted as quickly as possible, and the complainant will be informed of the outcomes of the complaint process in writing within 30 days of the complaint, regardless of whether any action is taken against the alleged harasser. Full complaint procedures can be found in the General Services Collective Agreement 29.4.

The following is provided for information purposes only. Additional information is available online at the WorkSafeBC website (<http://www.worksafebc.com>).