

TOWN OF THREE RIVERS

**Respectful Workplace Policy**

Policy Number: TRHR-23

Date of Approval: November 14, 2023

Approved by: Council

Date of Review: every two years

---

**Policy Statement**

Three Rivers believes that all our employees have the right to be treated with fairness, dignity, and respect. We are committed to building and preserving a safe, productive, and healthy working environment and do not tolerate or condone any degree of disrespectful behavior. Disrespectful behavior undermines an individual's self-respect and adversely affects work performance and well-being. It also reduces productivity and effectiveness in the workplace.

**Definitions**

*Employee* – A person who undertakes work on behalf of Three Rivers. This includes permanent, temporary, full-time, part-time, casual, and contract employees.

*Discrimination* – a practice or standard that is not reasonably necessary, that has the effect, intended or not, of putting certain persons or groups at a disadvantage because of shared personal characteristics such as race, sex or religion, and that is based on stereotypes about them or perpetuates the view that they are less capable or less worthy of recognition or value.

*Disrespectful behaviour* – Actions or comments that are inappropriate, demeaning or otherwise offensive and which create an uncomfortable, hostile and/or intimidating work environment. Types of behaviours considered disrespectful include: discrimination, harassment, abuse of authority and workplace violence.

*Harassment* - means any inappropriate conduct, comment, display, action or gesture or any bullying that the person responsible for the conduct, comment, display, action or gesture or the bullying knows, or ought reasonably to know, could have a harmful effect on a worker's psychological or physical health or safety, and includes conduct that is based on any personal characteristic such as, but not limited to, race, creed, religion, colour, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability, physical size or weight, age, nationality, ancestry or place of origin, gender identity or pregnancy.

*Sexual harassment* - Inappropriate sexual conduct that is known, or ought reasonably to be known, to the person responsible for the conduct to be unwelcome, including, but not limited to, sexual solicitations or advances, sexually suggestive remarks, jokes or

gestures, circulating or sharing inappropriate images, or unwanted physical contact. It also includes conduct of a sexual nature that detrimentally affects the work environment or leads to adverse job-related consequences for the victim. Sexual harassment may occur in situations where there is unequal power between the parties involved and an attempt by one person to assert power over the other.

*For greater clarity, harassment and sexual harassment as defined above includes both:*  
*(a) repeated inappropriate conduct, comments, displays, actions or gestures or incidents of bullying that have a harmful effect on the worker's psychological or physical health or safety; and*

*(b) a single occurrence of inappropriate conduct, comment, display, action or gesture or bullying that has a harmful effect on the worker's psychological or physical health or safety*

**Bullying** - is persistent, unwelcome behavior related to performance and workplace situations that undermines a person's ability, or leaves the person feeling hurt, frightened, angry, or powerless, and prevents the targeted person from accomplishing their work. Features of bullying include, but are not limited to: sadistic or aggressive behavior over time; exclusion from meetings; humiliation or ridiculing; criticism in public that is designed to humiliate; persistent, unwarranted criticism in private; treating colleagues as children, not as adults; undermining staff by replacing their areas of responsibility unreasonably, or without justification; withholding information to deliberately affect a colleague's performance; constantly changing work deadlines or work guidelines.

**Violence:** in a place of employment, means the attempted or actual use of physical force against an employee, or any threatening statement or behaviour that gives an employee reasonable cause to believe that physical force will be used against the employee, and includes sexual violence, intimate partner violence and domestic violence.

## **Purpose**

Three Rivers has developed this policy to:

- Promote, establish, and maintain a respectful workplace;
- Establish and recognize the roles and responsibilities of the employer and employees in the development and maintenance of a respectful workplace; and
- Meet Three Rivers' ethical and legal obligations to provide a respectful workplace.

## **Application**

This policy applies to all Three Rivers employees (part-time, full-time, temporary, permanent, casual and contract employees) and the Council.

## **Guidelines**

Disrespectful behaviour is offensive, insulting, intimidating, and hurtful. It creates an uncomfortable work environment and has no place in or outside the workplace. Below are the guidelines Three Rivers has adopted to ensure a respectful work environment.

- All employees are treated equitably under this policy, and all matters arising under this policy are dealt with in a fair, unbiased, confidential, and timely manner.
- All employees are advised of the provisions of this policy and of the resolution processes available to them.
- Three Rivers management will take immediate action to report or deal with incidents of disrespectful behaviour that come to their attention, whether a formal complaint has been made.
- All parties named in a complaint under this policy are given a reasonable opportunity to present evidence in support of their position.
- There shall be no retaliation against employees for exercising their rights under this policy.
- Nothing in this policy restricts Three Rivers management the authority and obligation to manage the performance of employees or take appropriate disciplinary action where appropriate.

## **Procedure**

Three Rivers believes in the prevention of disrespectful behaviour and promotes a safe and healthy environment in which all employees respect one another and work together to achieve a common goal.

### **Informal Resolution:**

If an individual(s) believes they have been subject to disrespectful behaviour, they should:

1. Immediately make the individual(s) aware that the behaviour is unwelcome and ask them to stop.
2. If step 1 is unsuccessful, the employee can report the incident to the supervisor for assistance in addressing the behaviour.
3. The supervisor may lead a facilitated discussion or arrange for mediation between the parties.
4. The Supervisor/Manager will gather pertinent information from the staff member.

Employees are encouraged to keep a record of the incidents in question, which may include:

- name(s) of the individual(s) in question;
- the date, place, and time the incident(s) occurred;
- name(s) of any witnesses;
- the event(s) that led up to the incident(s) in question;
- the actual incident that led to a complaint.

## **Formal Resolution:**

If the behavior is not resolved informally, or if the behavior warrants a formal complaint, a formal written complaint should be completed and submitted to management at Three Rivers. Three Rivers will complete a thorough investigation.

1. Report the incident to the supervisor and the Supervisor/Manager will gather pertinent information from the Staff member. The Supervisor/Manager will consult with the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) before proceeding further.
2. In situations where it is not appropriate for the Staff Member to follow the steps above, they may report the matter directly to the **CAO**.

Investigations will be completed within 60 days of receiving a formal complaint.

Investigations will include the following:

- Informing the respondent of the complaint including providing the respondent a summary of the complaint, detailing the allegations;
- Informing the complainant of the investigation;
- Interviewing the complainant, any person(s) directly involved in the incident and any identified witnesses;
- Information from all parties involved will be considered and a decision will be reached regarding if this policy has been violated;
- A written report will be provided to the CAO.
- Both the respondent and complainant(s) will be notified of the investigation findings.

If necessary, Three Rivers may employ outside assistance or request the use of legal counsel.

If it is determined by Three Rivers that any employee has been involved in the disrespectful behaviour of another employee, immediate disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Fraudulent or Malicious Complaints**

Frivolous or fraudulent allegations of disrespectful behaviour cause both the accused person and the organization severe damage.

If it is determined by the organization that any employee has knowingly made false statements regarding an allegation of disrespectful behaviour, immediate disciplinary action will be taken.

## **Confidentiality**

Three Rivers will do everything it can to protect the privacy of the individuals involved and to ensure that complainants and respondents are treated fairly and respectfully. Three Rivers will protect this privacy so long as doing so remains consistent with the enforcement of this policy and adherence to the law.

Neither the name of the person reporting the facts nor the circumstances surrounding them will be disclosed to anyone whatsoever unless such disclosure is necessary for an investigation.

Three Rivers shall provide appropriate assistance to any employee who is victim of disrespectful behaviour.

## **Roles & Responsibilities**

We trust that our employees will help us prevent disrespectful behaviour from our workplace, and as such, employees of Three Rivers are required to comply with the following responsibilities:

### Employees

Shall not cause or participate in disrespectful behaviour;

Create and support a work environment free of disrespectful behaviour by complying with this policy and ensuring their behaviour meets or exceeds acceptable standards;

Safely take reasonable action to stop disrespectful behaviour when observed;

Report any incident(s) of disrespectful behaviour observed or experienced to the employer.

### Employer

Ensure employees are aware of this policy;

Foster a work environment free of disrespectful behaviour;

Ensure employees are not exposed to disrespectful behaviour in the workplace and address potential problems when they become aware of them;

Where behaviour of a criminal nature has occurred, or is thought to have occurred, the employer aware of this behaviour must advance the complaint to the police for investigation.

## **Monitoring**

Three Rivers management will review this policy every two years.

# Harassment Complaint Report Form

Please attach additional pages if you require more space to complete this form.

<b>Complainant Information</b>	
Name:	_____
Position Title:	_____
Contact Information:	_____
<b>Description of the Alleged Harassment</b>	
Please describe, in as much detail as possible, the incident(s) of alleged harassment. You may attach additional sheets if required. Please include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who was involved</li><li>• What was specifically said or done (words, tone, actions, etc.)</li><li>• When it happened (dates and time)</li><li>• Where it happened</li><li>• Any witnesses to the incident(s) (name and contact information, if possible)</li><li>• How it impacted you</li><li>• If it was reported to management with the following details:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Name of manager</li><li>○ Actions taken</li><li>○ Other relevant details</li></ul></li></ul>	

Employee Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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