

**Public Service Commission**

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**Respectful Workplace Policy**

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**Why a Respectful Workplace Policy?**

This policy will be a key component of the government's overall Healthy Workplace initiative and will help fulfill the third corporate HR goal - to be a safe and supportive workplace. It will reinforce the importance of living out the public service values of respect and diversity in the daily activities of government employees across the province.

**Does this policy replace the "Sexual Harassment and No Discrimination Policy?"**

Yes, the provincial government has had a Sexual Harassment and No Discrimination policy in place since 2000. The intent of the proposed Respectful Workplace policy is to expand the scope of the previous policy to include personal harassment.

**Who provided input into the policy review?**

Recent societal and legal developments have necessitated a policy review that is part of an ongoing review of corporate HR policies. The development of this policy included consultation with focus groups of employees throughout the province, Human Resources specialists, Occupational Health and Safety consultants, the Healthy Workplace Committee and the Deputy Ministers HR Subcommittee. Each of these groups have endorsed the establishment of this policy.

**What is different about the new Respectful Workplace Policy?**

The addition of the term harassment is a new feature of this policy. Harassment includes behaviour like bullying, threats and intimidation. A new Respectful Workplace Coordinator, who is responsible for policy implementation, a mediation program that provides alternate ways to resolve workplace conflicts, and confidential advice on options provided through the EAP program.

**Does the Policy apply to all employees, departments and offices?**

Yes, this policy applies to all civil servants whose terms and conditions are set out in accordance with the *Civil Service Act* and regulations and other direct employees of the provincial government, including all bargaining unit employees.

**How will the Policy affect me?**

If you are a manager or supervisor you are now responsible for:

- setting a positive example;
- taking action to protect employees and others from offensive behaviour;
- responding to allegations of offensive behaviour.

All employees of the Nova Scotia Public Service are responsible for:

- attending respectful workplace training;
- treating all persons with respect and dignity.

**Will training be offered for all employees?**

A one day session called "Leading a Respectful Workplace" for managers, and a half day session called "Respectful Workplace" for other employees will be required training.

**How is the Policy monitored?**

The Public Service Commission will monitor the effectiveness and consistent application of this policy and, may periodically conduct audits of department practices.

**How will we measure our progress?**

The Employee Survey (How's Work Going?) will be a tool to monitor and evaluate results to determine the incidence of offensive behaviour in the workplace and the effectiveness of the interventions used to deal with it. Usage statistics for the services described in the policy will be gathered and analysed. This will include mediation, advisory services, written complaints and investigations. The Public Service Commission will track training activity and provide compiled statistics to Departments on a regular basis.

**Where can I get more information on the Policy?**

Policy Guidelines have been developed to provide guidance to the implementation of the Policy. The Guidelines can be viewed at [www.gov.ns.ca/psc/respectfulworkplace](http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/respectfulworkplace). If you have additional questions you can contact Joseph Fraser at 1-888-465-2444 toll-free/Halifax 424-2741 or [fraserej@gov.ns.ca](mailto:fraserej@gov.ns.ca).