

Suggested contents of an

ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

1. A vision statement setting out the organization's commitment to maintaining a fair and equitable environment free of sexual and gender-based harassment, and stating that the organization will not tolerate sexual and gender-based harassment.
2. A statement of rights and obligations under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.
3. A list of the prohibited grounds of discrimination listed in the *Code*.
4. The *Code* definition of "sexual harassment" and a definition of "gender-based harassment."
5. An explanation of the concept of a "poisoned environment" as a violation of the *Code*, and examples of a poisoned environment that are meaningful in that organization's context.
6. A description of unacceptable behaviour, such as examples of sexual harassment as listed in the OHRC's *Policy on preventing sexual and gender-based harassment*.
7. A description of who the policy applies to (such as employers, employees, third party service providers, etc.).
8. How internal complaints will be handled with details on:
 - who to complain to
 - an assurance that the person handling complaint should be independent, expert, etc.
 - confidentiality
 - reassurance that the person making the complaint will be protected from reprisal, or threat of reprisal
 - help that is available for parties to a complaint
 - the availability of Alternative Dispute Resolution, such as mediation, to resolve a complaint
 - how the complaint will be investigated
 - how long the process will take
 - steps that will be taken if it is not appropriate for the person making the complaint to continue working with the person/people being complained about
 - how the organization will deal with the complaint when the harasser is unknown (e.g. cyber harassment).



9. Remedies that will be available if the claim of sexual harassment is proven, such as:
 - disciplinary measures to be applied (for example, in employment, measures could range from a verbal warning or a letter of reprimand to termination)
 - compensation to the person who made the complaint.

10. A statement reinforcing the right of individuals to file other types of complaints, such as:
 - a human rights application with the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario at any time during the internal process, as well as an explanation of the one-year time limit in the *Code*
 - a complaint under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, if applicable
 - a grievance under a collective agreement, if applicable
 - criminal charges, if applicable.

Source:

From the OHRC Policy on preventing sexual and gender-based harassment



**Ontario
Human Rights Commission
Commission ontarienne des
droits de la personne**