



# OSTA

Ottawa Student  
Transportation  
Authority

## Respectful Workplace

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**Policy Name: Respectful Workplace**

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### Cross Reference

OH&S Policy Statement;  
Bill 168 Amendment to the OH&S Act with respect to violence and harassment in the workplace and other matters

### Related Forms

H16 - Workplace Harassment;  
H17 - Health & Safety – Violence in the Workplace

## Policy Statement

1. The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority is committed to providing a workplace environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, and where workplace harassment and other inappropriate/disrespectful behaviour is not tolerated.
2. The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority is committed to the implementation of measures and procedures to report and deal with incidents and complaints of inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour, workplace harassment or other contraventions of this policy and associated procedures.
3. The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority expects and encourages appropriate behaviour of staff, characterized by the following:
  - a) working collegially with others (staff, parents/guardians, school staff, external agencies, etc.);
  - b) exhibiting the highest standard of professional behaviour in all activities;
  - c) creating an environment where all staff feel supported and empowered; and

- d) fostering a supportive work and learning culture that values diversity and inclusion, fosters respect, and does not tolerate prejudice, discrimination, harassment, and/or bullying.
- 4. This policy shall apply to all staff working within the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority and to members of the Board of Directors, parents, members of consultative committees, volunteers, facility users, contractors, and employees of other organizations who work on or are invited into Ottawa Student Transportation Authority premises in the course of their interactions with staff.
- 5. The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority expects all staff to be responsible for contributing to a respectful workplace.
- 6. The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority expects that all staff will attempt to resolve issues as a result of friction, conflict, or disagreement in a respectful and professional manner that contributes to a healthy and productive workplace.
- 7. Where a conflict arises between Ottawa Student Transportation Authority staff, opportunities for resolution should be sought, or may be presented, by the parties to the conflict in order to resolve the matter. As such, the parties are expected to be open to solutions to the conflict at any time throughout the process.

## Procedure

### 1. **DEFINITIONS:**

Workplace includes:

- a) The physical office where the individual is customarily employed.
- b) All other places which result from employment responsibilities or employment relationships, including Board or committee meetings, locations at work-related social functions, work assignments outside the office/school which includes attendance at school or public meetings, conducting route or school audits, operator facilities, work-related conference or training sessions, and work-related travel.
- c) The online or virtual workplace which includes social media such as email, text, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other social media forums.

**Appropriate Behaviour** means behaviour that supports and creates a respectful workplace such as, but not limited to:

- a) being polite and courteous;

- b) treating others equitably and fairly;
- c) accepting responsibility for actions, reactions, and behaviours that impact others;
- d) respecting the differences in people and their ideas and opinions;
- e) respecting the rights of others;
- f) showing proper care and regard for OSTA property and for the property of others; and
- g) demonstrating honesty and integrity.

**Inappropriate/Disrespectful Behaviour** among employees means behaviour that is or ought reasonably to be known to be objectionable and/or unwelcome to an individual, or group, which diminishes the dignity of any person(s) and can create a poisoned or hostile work environment. Examples of inappropriate/disrespectful behaviour include, but are not limited to:

- a) social bullying which includes spreading rumours, gossiping, excluding others or making others look foolish or unintelligent;
- b) verbal bullying includes yelling, shouting, screaming, swearing, name calling, put-downs, threats, teasing, or 'jokes' which would reasonably be perceived as unwelcome, humiliating, offensive, hurtful, belittling;
- c) cyberbullying which involves the use of communication technologies such as the internet, social networking sites, email, text or other messaging to intimidate or harass others. Cyberbullying may occur after hours, using personal devices and in personal forums. If the communication (including posting) ought reasonably to be known to be objectionable, and/or unwelcome and diminishes the dignity of any person(s), the employer will respond to allegations of harassment;
- d) abuse of authority;
- e) stereotyping or making inappropriate assumptions about an individual based on an individual's personal qualities, characteristics or role; and
- f) devaluing or trivializing a person's successes, contributions or concerns.

**Inappropriate/Disrespectful Behaviour** does not include:

- a) the reasonable and appropriate exercise of supervisory responsibilities, including training, direction, instruction, performance appraisal, and discipline; or
- b) acceptable and appropriate social interaction, good-natured and appropriate humour or joking in the workplace.

**Poisoned work environment** means a work environment or atmosphere where inappropriate/disrespectful behaviour has an adverse impact on an individual or a group, that may include psychological or physiological harm, feelings of intimidation, impaired job performance, reduced job satisfaction, increased absenteeism and/or turnover. The offending behaviour does not need to be directed at an individual. A poisoned work environment may result from a series of events or a serious, single remark or action.

2. The General Manager/CAO is responsible for ensuring that all staff, members of the Board of Directors, parents, members of consultative committees, volunteers, contractors, and employees of other organizations who work on or are invited into Ottawa Student Transportation Authority premises are made aware of:
  - a) the existence of this policy and the issues addressed herein;
  - b) the existence of supporting procedures issued under this policy; and
  - c) the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority's support for ongoing training and awareness initiatives for staff which are designed to promote awareness of and sensitivity to potential inappropriate/disrespectful behaviour and to promote a respectful work and learning environment.

**Reporting an Incident or Complaint of inappropriate/disrespectful behaviour:**

1. It is understood that all employees making a complaint of inappropriate/disrespectful behaviour as outlined under the following redress procedure will do so without fear of reprisal.
2. Although employees are encouraged to use the following redress procedure, all employees have the right to file a complaint with their immediate Supervisor, the Assistant General Manager, or the General Manager/CAO at any time.
3. The General Manager/CAO, Assistant General Manager, or Supervisor will immediately investigate the alleged incident and take any necessary appropriate action to protect the health and safety of the employee.
4. Employees also have the right to file a complaint with the Human Rights Commissioner or seek redress through any other legal means at any time.
5. The General Manager/CAO and/or designate will assist and advise all concerned parties throughout the redress procedure.
6. Both the complainant and the alleged offender have the right to ask a person of their choice to be with them throughout the redress procedure.
7. Where a complaint of inappropriate or disrespectful behaviour may result in disciplinary measures, the complainant should seek advice from her/his union/association representative.
8. Movement from one step in the redress procedure to the next will occur at the request of the complainant if he/she is not satisfied that all concerns have been addressed.

9. The complainant may be subject to disciplinary action if the complaint is found to be trivial, frivolous, vexatious, or made in bad faith.

### **Redress Procedure**

#### **Step 1 - Informal Discussion and Counselling**

10. Informal measures may include: i) where possible, making the objection, disapproval and/or unease known to the alleged offender in a clear manner, and politely but firmly requesting that it stop; ii) discussing the case and how it might be resolved with the complainant's supervisor, or with the next higher level of management, if the alleged offender is the complainant's supervisor; and iii) requesting that the supervisor convene and preside over a meeting of the complainant and the alleged offender to discuss and resolve the matter informally.

#### **Step 2 - Immediate Supervisor Intervention / General Manager/CAO Decision**

11. If the complainant is not satisfied that all concerns have been addressed at Step I, the complainant will submit a written report of concern to the General Manager/CAO. The report will include the name of the complainant, the name of the alleged offender, place, date, time, witnesses (if any), and details of the offensive behaviour. The General Manager/CAO will immediately forward the complainant's report of concern to the immediate supervisor.
12. The immediate supervisor, receiving the report of concern, will immediately: i) notify in writing the alleged offender of the report of concern; ii) advise the alleged offender of the right to submit a written statement regarding the case and of the right to representation as per applicable collective agreements; iii) conduct a thorough and balanced documented investigation of the complaint, including a summary of efforts to resolve the situation, interviewing the complainant, alleged offender, and any witnesses, and investigating all aspects of the case; and iv) prepare a written report including findings and, where appropriate, recommendations for disciplinary action, to the General Manager/CAO.
13. The General Manager/CAO reviews the information, renders a decision, and advises all parties involved.

#### **Step 3 - Appeals Process**

14. If the complainant is not satisfied that all concerns have been addressed at Step 2, the complainant may submit a written letter of appeal to the Board of Directors.

15. The Board of Directors will appoint an Administrative Team to review all related documentation in an attempt to resolve any outstanding issues.
16. The decision of the Administrative Team will be considered final and binding.