

## Workplace Harassment & Violence Free Environment Policy

### SCOPE AND PURPOSE

About Staffing Ltd. is committed to providing a safe work environment that is free from harassment, violence, threats of violence, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior from fellow employees, or other About Staffing personnel, or people with whom About Staffing does business. All those referenced above are expected to conduct themselves accordingly. About Staffing Ltd. will promote a workplace whereby employees are able to concentrate on their assigned duties without being distracted by unwelcome or offensive behaviour from others.

### APPLICABLE LEGISLATION

The *Occupational Health and Safety Code* defines “violence” as follows:

*“‘violence’ whether at a work site or work related, means the threatened, attempted, or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical injury.”*

Part 27 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Code* sets out the following requirements:

- 389 *Workplace violence is considered a hazard for the purposes of Part 2.*
- 390 *An employer must develop a policy and procedures respecting potential workplace violence.*
- 391 *An employer must ensure that workers are trained in:*
  - (a) *the recognition of violence and harassment,*
  - (b) *the policies, procedures, and workplace arrangements that the employer has developed and implemented to eliminate or control the hazards of violence and harassment*
  - (c) *the appropriate response to violence and harassment, including procedures for obtaining assistance, and*
  - (d) *the procedures for reporting, investigating and documenting incidents of workplace violence and harassment.*
- 391.1 *Sections 33(6)(b) to (d), (7) and (8) and 36 of the Act apply to incidents of violence or harassment.*
- 391.2 *An employer must ensure that a worker reporting an injury or adverse symptom resulting from an incident of violence or harassment is advised to consult a health professional of the worker’s choice for treatment or referral.*

## **DEFINITIONS:**

### **Harassment:**

Harassment is any improper comment or behaviour that demeans, humiliates, or embarrasses a person, and that a reasonable person knows or should have known would be unwelcome. It includes actions (such as touching or pushing), comments (including jokes and name-calling) and visual displays (such as drawings and pictures), which are perceived as insulting, intimidating, humiliating, hurtful, malicious, degrading or otherwise offensive to an individual, or which create an uncomfortable or threatening work environment, and includes sexual harassment, discriminatory harassment, and other forms of harassment. Harassment can involve a single incident, or a series of incidents. Harassment can also occur on-line or through social media, as inappropriate emails, texts and social media posts can be equally hurtful.

The above are examples only and may not cover all circumstances. Individuals should exercise their own judgment if they feel that they are being harassed and are encouraged to seek guidance from their manager or Joint Health and Safety Committee.

Legitimate management intervention, or exercise of authority, including performance appraisals, counselling, and discipline, is not harassment.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is any conduct, comment, gesture, or contact of a sexual nature that is likely to cause offence or humiliation to any employee or that might, on reasonable grounds, be perceived by that employee as placing a condition of a sexual nature on employment or on any opportunity for training or promotion within a work setting.

Sexual harassment also includes offensive or humiliating behaviour of a sexual nature that creates an intimidating, hostile or "poisoned" work environment. It occurs when comments or actions ridicule or demean a person or group of persons. A few examples are: questions and discussions about a person's sexual life; touching a person in a sexual way; commenting on someone's sexual attractiveness or sexual unattractiveness; persisting in asking for a date after having been refused; telling a woman she belongs at home or is not suited for a particular job; eyeing someone in a suggestive way; displaying cartoons or posters of a sexual nature; obscene jokes, suggestive comments, and writing sexually suggestive letters or notes, including emails; and offensive, obscene or persistent phone calls.

Sexual harassment is frequently more about the abuse of power than sex. It often occurs in situations where there is unequal power between the people involved and is an attempt by one person to assert power over the other. The harassment can also occur when an individual is in a vulnerable position because they are in the minority.

Employees flirting with each other or becoming involved in a romantic or sexual relationship are not harassing each other, if the relationship is consensual and none of the elements of sexual harassment, discussed above, are present. If one of the employees changes their mind, and the other person persists in trying to continue the relationship, then the conduct can quickly become harassment and would fall within the behaviour prohibited by this policy.

## **Violence**

For purposes of this policy, violence is any violent or potentially violent behaviour that arises from or occurs in the workplace that affects staff, visitors and/or the public. About Staffing will not tolerate any acts of violence and protect employees from threats of violence. Appropriate remedial, disciplinary and/or legal action will be taken. Violence includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal or physical actions that are threatening against an individual, their family, friends, or associates;
- Hitting, shoving, pushing;
- Verbal or physical action that is intimidating to an individual, their family, friends, or associates;
- The intentional damage or destruction of, or threat of damage or destruction to property;
- Harassing or threatening phone calls or electronic communications;
- Harassing surveillance or other form of stalking/following;
- The suggestion or intimation that violence is appropriate; and
- Possession or use of weapons or firearms.

## **REPORTING PROCEDURES:**

Reporting threats of violence, or violent incidents shall be managed in a serious manner, always. Employees, supervisors, and managers are expected to follow this policy at all times and report all actual or alleged incidents or threats of violence in the workplace to both your direct manager and/or the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC). In addition, all legislative and regulatory requirements will be followed at all times.

Employees who report incidents may request to do so confidentially. Such requests will be honoured to the degree legally allowable. Employees concerned about their confidentiality can submit a confidential incident report through the JHSC reporting page.

## **INVESTIGATION:**

In the event of a report of violence or threat of violence, About Staffing Ltd. will conduct an investigation and will be completed in accordance with the legislated requirements.

## **CONSEQUENCES:**

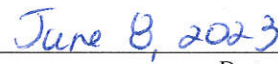
Any violent behaviours or actions are strictly prohibited. Individuals who engage in the behaviour described or any other action that is considered to fulfill the definition of violence as intended by this policy shall result in disciplinary action, potential termination, arrest and/or criminal prosecution.



## **FALSE ALLEGATIONS:**

To help protect our employees against false accusations, any employee found to knowingly make false allegations against an employee will be reprimanded. Consequences may include termination of employment with About Staffing Ltd.

  
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*Signature*

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*