

# Anti-Harassment Policy

Freshwater Conservation Canada endeavours to provide a harassment-free environment for its employees, members and volunteers. Mutual respect, along with cooperation and understanding, must be the basis of interaction between volunteers, members, staff and the general public. Freshwater Conservation Canada will neither tolerate nor condone behaviour that is likely to undermine the dignity or self-esteem of an individual, or create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

## INTENT

- a) To create a safe work and volunteer environment, free from any abuse or harm caused by others.
- b) To foster a positive and productive environment where individuals can comfortably express their concerns, opinions and thoughts.

## APPLICATION

This policy applies to all interactions of staff, volunteers and members with each other and the general public, in person, in writing, digitally, whenever and wherever these interactions may occur.

## GUIDELINES

### 1. Aggressive or Abusive Behaviour

We understand that people can become angry when they feel that matters about which they feel strongly are not being dealt with as they wish. However, aggression or abuse by or towards staff, volunteers or members is considered unacceptable.

Aggressive and/or abusive behaviour can be either in person, by telephone, letter, email, or other form of communication such as social media posts or direct message. This policy applies throughout our premises, worksites, online and any meeting places.

Aggressive or abusive behaviour includes language (whether verbal or written) that may cause someone to feel anxious, threatened or abused and may include threats, personal verbal abuse, derogatory remarks and rudeness. We also consider

inflammatory statements, remarks of a discriminatory nature and unsubstantiated allegations, to be abusive behaviour.

While there is no universally accepted definition of 'unacceptable behaviour', examples include (but are not limited to):

- Offensive or abusive language, verbal abuse and swearing including specific references to homophobia, biphobia and transphobia (whether aimed at or conducted by either members of the public, members, volunteers or staff)
- Any physical violence towards any individuals such as pushing or shoving
- Racial abuse and sexual harassment
- Loud and intrusive conversation
- Persistent or unrealistic demands that cause stress
- Unwanted or abusive remarks
- Negative, malicious or stereotypical comments
- Invasion of personal space
- Brandishing of objects or weapons
- Near misses (i.e. unsuccessful physical assaults)
- Threats or risk of injury
- Unsubstantiated or defamatory allegations
- Bullying or intimidation
- Stalking
- Spitting
- Alcohol or drug-fuelled abuse
- Unreasonable behaviour and non-cooperation such as repeated disregard of company policies

Where an individual is aggressive or abusive, Freshwater Conservation Canada asks that:

- Members or volunteers experiencing aggressive or abusive behaviour report their experience to Freshwater Conservation Canada @Freshwater Conservation Canada.org including the following details; date, location, individuals involved, statement of what transpired and a list of other individuals present (if any).
- Staff report their experience to their supervisor.

Where an individual is aggressive or abusive, Freshwater Conservation Canada will:

- Advise the individual that their actions are offensive, unnecessary and unhelpful and ask them to stop;
- If the individual continues to display offensive, unnecessary and unhelpful behaviour, will:
  - End telephone calls, appointments or meetings;
  - Terminate and block all direct contact with the individual;
  - In the case of a member – rescind membership without refund
- Notify the police without warning if physical violence is used or threatened
- Take any other action that we consider appropriate to the circumstances.

## 2. Unreasonable Demands and/or Unreasonable Levels of Contact

A demand becomes unacceptable when it starts to impact excessively on the work of staff, or when dealing with the matter takes up an excessive amount of time and in so doing, impacts the works of the organization.

Where an individual is unreasonably demanding, repeatedly contacts us in person, by phone, email etc., contacts various staff and volunteers about the same issue, raises the same issue repeatedly, or sends us large numbers of documents about which the relevance is not clear, we may decide to:

- Restrict contact to a single staff member who will deal with future correspondence;
- See the person by appointment only;
- Restrict contact to written correspondence only;
- Terminate correspondence and return any future documents/correspondence as unread;
- Advise the person that further irrelevant documentation will be destroyed;
- Take any other action that we consider appropriate to the circumstances;
- and will inform the individual(s) or organization accordingly.

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