

# **OSSTF District 18 TBU**

## **Anti-Harassment Policy**

### **Anti-Harassment Statement:**

*Let us not take thought for our separate interests, but let us help one another.*

It is the policy of the Teachers' Bargaining Unit of District 18 that a member of OSSTF has the right to a workplace and union environment free from harassment and bullying.

Harassment and discrimination are not joking matters. They have a destructive effect on the workplace environment, individual well-being, and union solidarity. Such actions are not only destructive, they can be illegal.

Harassment and discrimination can take many forms and may be verbal, physical or psychological. They can involve a wide range of actions including comments, gestures or looks, pictures, messages, touching, or more aggressive actions. These actions may be indirect or over; they may be isolated or repeated.

However, acts of harassment and discrimination are always degrading, unwelcome and coercive. They are always unacceptable.

As members of OSSTF, District 18 TBU, our goal must be to protect human rights, to promote mutual respect and trust, and to foster inclusion. We cannot condone or tolerate intimidating, demeaning, hostile and aggressive behaviour against another member. We cannot condone these behaviours when we witness them. As OSSTF members, we must speak out against this conduct and stand together to protect human rights. We must take action.

OSSTF is committed to strengthening member solidarity, and in addition to representing members' interests in the workplace, takes seriously its own responsibility to ensure that members are treated with respect and dignity at all District 18 TBU sponsored events and meetings.

Any member who feels targeted by harassment or discrimination must be able to speak up and know their concerns will be responded to immediately in accordance with OSSTF Policies and By-laws and the Resolution and Complaint Procedure.

### **Resolution and Complaint Procedure**

A member who believes s/he has been the target of harassment or discrimination at a District 18 TBU meeting or event is encouraged to take immediate action to ensure this behaviour is stopped.

As a first step, the member should make it clear to the perpetrator that s/he finds the behaviour offensive, and ask that it be stopped. This can be done personally, either in writing or verbally, or with the assistance of a third party.

If the behaviour recurs or persists, or if the member does not feel safe in approaching the perpetrator directly, s/he should speak with the designated officer(s) and ask her/him to act. If no officer has been designated, the member should speak with the Chair/President to ask that one be appointed.

The designated officer(s) will investigate the complaint promptly, including separately interviewing the parties involved and any witnesses, with a view to resolving the problem informally. During this process, the designated officer(s), with the approval of the Chair/President, may remove the respondent temporarily from the meeting if circumstances warrant.

The investigation shall be handled confidentially; however, all complaints will be reported by the designated officer(s) to the Chair.

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the complainant will be asked to put the complaint and all relevant information in writing. If the complainant chooses to provide such a written complaint, it will be submitted to the Chair/President to conduct an investigation, determine if the behaviour falls under the definition of harassment, and decide on appropriate remedial action. The parties involved will receive a written report stating the findings and any action taken.

Resolutions may include but are not limited to apologies, mediation, warnings, temporarily limiting access, or removal/exclusion from the meeting or event. If a decision is made to remove or exclude that member, and where this member is representing a branch, a confidential letter outlining the reasons for this decision will be sent to the president of the appropriate body.

Decisions may be reviewed by Judicial Council on the request of a member.

The Chair shall forward all records and reports related to the investigation of written complaints to the TBU President to be kept for a period of five years.

None of the above restricts a member's right to file a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Commission or make a complaint to police.