



Purpose:

- To establish practices and procedures that promote an environment free of bullying, harassment and discrimination and encourages mutual respect, safety (psychological and physical) and inclusiveness for all individuals associated with Island Health.
- Consistent with Island Health’s [Vision, Purpose and Values](#), every individual associated with Island Health has the right to be treated, and the responsibility to treat others, with fairness, courtesy and respect.

Context:

Island Health offers programs and services on the unceded and traditional territories of the Coast Salish, Nuu-chah-nulth, and Kwakwaka’wakw Peoples.

As a signatory to the 2015 Declaration of Commitment to Cultural Safety and Cultural Humility, Island Health is committed to addressing the ongoing impacts of colonialism and Indigenous-specific racism in order to provide a culturally safe, inclusive, healthy and respectful environment.

The organization is committed to strengthening diversity, equity and inclusion to enable excellence in health and care for everyone, everywhere, every time. Through these commitments, Island Health strives to deliver the highest possible standard of care and to promote safe workplaces.

Scope:

- Audience: This policy applies equally to all persons associated with Island Health (collectively defined as “Individuals”) including:
 - Members of the Island Health Board of Directors;
 - CEO, executives, management and supervisory employees;
 - Employees of Island Health, and those involved with its affiliated programs and agencies, including students;
 - Volunteers of Island Health;
 - Contractors;
 - Physicians with privileges at any Island Health site;
 - Medical staff including physicians on contract, resident and clinical trainees;
 - Post-secondary faculty and support staff who work at Island Health facilities; and
 - Individuals authorized to access Island health information, information systems or equipment.
- Environment:
 - Island Health-wide

1.0 Policy

1.1 General

- Island Health’s values provide the foundation for creating a respectful workplace culture. Respect is identified as one of our values and reflects a shared core belief in valuing each individual and bringing trust to every relationship. Bullying and harassment is not acceptable or tolerated in this workplace. All individuals will be treated in a fair and respectful manner.
- To achieve this, Island Health is committed to:
 - Fostering safe, healthy and inclusive workplaces that promote human rights, personal dignity and support every individual’s right to physical safety, psychological safety, and social well-being;

Maintained by:	Health, Wellness, Safety and Ability Management				
Issuing Authority:	Vice President, People				
Last Revised:	2024-Feb-21	Last Reviewed:	2023-Nov-3	First Issued:	2009-Jun
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- Promoting environments in which all individuals are free from bullying, harassment and discrimination, not only the specific conduct prohibited by the [BC Human Rights Code](#) and the [Workers Compensation Act](#), but any behavior that may reasonably cause intimidation, offence or humiliation to another person or group;
- Supporting individuals to manage workplace differences.

1.2 Respectful Workplace

- A respectful workplace is characterized by:
 - Polite behaviour – courteous, compassionate and considerate behaviour towards others;
 - Diversity and inclusion – recognition, acceptance and welcoming the differences that individuals bring to the organization, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, abilities, religious and political beliefs and other ideologies;
 - Freedom from disrespectful, discriminating, bullying and harassing behaviour; and
 - Constructive management of differences – differences are understood to be a fact-of-life and are managed through conflict management and dispute resolution processes.

1.3 Bullying and Harassment

- Not every unpleasant interaction or disrespectful behaviour in the workplace is bullying and harassment. Bullying and harassment is any inappropriate conduct or comment by a person towards another that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause humiliation or intimidation. Bullying and harassment excludes any reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the performance management and work direction of individuals or the place of employment. This would include comments or conduct that occurs away from the workplace/place of volunteering during or outside working/volunteering hours if a connection to the employment/volunteering relationship exists.
- Examples of bullying and harassment may include, but are not limited to:
 - Verbal aggression or insults
 - Physical gestures which are aggressive or insulting
 - Any unwanted physical contact or threat of unwanted physical contact
 - Refusing to use a person’s preferred gender pronouns
 - Spreading rumours which may cause reputational harm
 - Hazing or harmful initiation practices
 - Damaging personal belongings.

1.4 Discrimination

- Discrimination is the unfair differential treatment of an individual or group on the basis of Indigenous identity, race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age or unrelated criminal conviction. Such behaviour must serve no legitimate work purpose and can be intentional or unintentional in nature. This would include comments or conduct that occurs away from the workplace/place of volunteering during or outside working/volunteering hours if a connection to the employment/volunteering relationship exists.

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1.5 Discriminatory Harassment

- Discriminatory harassment is also a form of discrimination where abusive, unfair, offensive, or demeaning treatment of a person or group of persons under any of the grounds listed above has taken place, and has the effect of interfering with an individual’s work or participation in work-related activities; or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment for work or participation in a work-related activity. This would include comments or conduct that occurs away from the workplace/place of volunteering during or outside working/volunteering hours if a connection to the employment/volunteering relationship exists.

1.6 Sexual Harassment

- Sexual harassment is any conduct, comment, gesture, or contact of a sex or gender-related nature made by a person who knows or reasonably ought to know such conduct is unwanted, unwelcome, or likely to cause offence or humiliation to any individual. It also includes conduct that might, on reasonable grounds, be perceived by that individual as placing a condition of a sexual nature on employment or on any opportunity for training or promotion. This would include comments or conduct of a sexual nature that occurs away from the workplace/place of volunteering during or outside working/volunteering hours if a connection to the employment/volunteering relationship exists.

Note: Discrimination, discriminatory harassment and sexual harassment may also constitute breaches of the [British Columbia Human Rights Code](#).

1.7 Roles and Responsibilities

- Island Health (The Employer):
 - Island Health is responsible for developing and implementing policy, procedures and programs that promote safe and respectful work environments. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
 - Taking reasonable steps to prevent, where possible, or otherwise minimize workplace bullying and harassment;
 - Developing, maintaining, and reviewing (annually) internal policies, procedures, training and programming that identify and manage unacceptable conduct (including, but not limited to, bullying and harassment);
 - Developing and maintaining procedures for reporting, investigating and resolving respectful workplace concerns;
 - Supporting resolution options which will include both formal and informal avenues, including dispute resolution; and
 - Taking appropriate action, including progressive corrective action up to dismissal where behaviour has violated the policy and other measures as deemed appropriate.
- Island Health Management (at all levels):
 - Every Island Health Leader has responsibilities that include (but are not limited to):
 - Ensuring that this policy and any associated Respectful Workplace programming is communicated to, and understood by, all individuals within their scope of leadership and throughout the broad spectrum of personal contacts and relationships generated by Island Health’s operations;
 - Attending to the prevention and early informal and/or formal resolution of interpersonal conflicts with attention given to the underlying and contributing issues;

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- Role modeling respectful behaviours in the workplace;
 - Applying and complying with the Respectful Workplace Policy and associated Procedures.
- Island Health Employees, Medical Staff and Volunteers:
 - Conducting themselves in a respectful, non-discriminatory manner in the workplace and while conducting work-related activities;
 - Refraining from engaging in behaviours that would constitute disrespect, bullying and harassment, discrimination, discriminatory harassment and/or sexual harassment;
 - Taking responsibility for their own behaviour and it’s impact on others, whether the behaviour was deliberate, unintentional or negligent.
 - Engaging in initiatives meant to improve the level of respect within their work unit(s); and
 - Reporting any violations of this policy according to applicable Respectful Workplace procedures/programming;
 - Applying and complying with the Respectful Workplace Policy and associated Procedures, including by participating in Respectful Workplace processes when reasonably required.
- This policy is in addition to and not in substitution for any rights an individual may have to pursue action, whether under collective agreements, policies including [Medical Staff Bylaws](#) or any applicable legislation, including the [BC Human Rights Code](#) and the [Workers Compensation Act](#).
- In cases where an individual initiates an internal process to resolve concerns related to bullying, harassment and/or discrimination, and simultaneously initiates a second internal or external process to resolve their concerns, it may be appropriate to pause or discontinue the Respectful Workplace process. Decisions to do so will be made by the Respectful Workplace case manager in collaboration with appropriate stakeholders on a case-by-case basis and taking an individual’s rights under relevant legislation into account.
- Refer to Respectful Workplace Procedures for information on reporting concerns, accessing supports and options for resolution.

2.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed by Respectful Workplace annually and updated where necessary.

3.0 Related Island Health Policy Documents

- [Code of Conduct Policy](#)
- [Domestic, Targeted Violence in the Workplace Policy](#)
- [Medical Staff Bylaws](#)
- [Medical Staff Rules](#) (Professional Conduct and Unprofessional behavior)
- [Respectful Workplace Procedures for Employees](#)
- [Respectful Workplace Procedures for Medical Staff, Resident Doctors and Medical Students](#)
- [Respectful Workplace Procedures for Volunteers](#)
- [Student Practice Education Guideline for Respectful Practice Education Experience](#)
- [Visitors who Pose a Risk to Health and Safety in Health Care Facilities Policy](#)
- [Workplace Violence Prevention Program](#)

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POLICY

Respectful Workplace Policy

5.5.2P

Policies direct required organizational practice/behaviour



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4.0 References

- [Human Rights Code](#), SBC 1996, c 210.
- [Labour Relations Code](#), SBC 1996, c 244.
- [Occupational Health & Safety Regulation](#)
- [Workers Compensation Act](#), SBC 2019, c 1.
 - [Workers Compensation Act \(Part 2: Occupational Health & Safety\)](#)
 - [Policies for the Workers Compensation Act](#)
 - P2-21-2 [Employer Duties – Workplace Bullying and Harassment](#)
 - P2-22-1 [Worker Duties – Workplace Bullying and Harassment](#)
 - P2-23-2 [Supervisor Duties – Workplace Bullying and Harassment](#)
- [CAN/CSA-Z1003-13/BNQ 9700-803/2013 \(R2022\), Psychological health and safety in the workplace standard](#)

5.0 Resources

- [Violence Prevention](#)

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