**News Media Canada Template**

**HUMAN RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT POLICY**

**Equity and Diversity**

**-and-**

**Workplace Harassment and Workplace Violence**

**[NOTE: This template policy is being provided to you by News Media Canada (NMC) as part of the Local Journalism Initiative. NMC encourages you to tailor this policy to fit your own circumstances and purposes. Different provinces and territories have different requirements under Human Rights, accessibility and employment legislation. This policy is not intended to replace, and should not be relied upon, as legal advice. You are encouraged to consult, understand and implement your rights and obligations under applicable laws and to seek legal advice as needed.]**

**OUR COMMITMENT**

**[Insert Organization/Company name] (“Company”)** is committed to providing a workplace where the dignity and self-esteem of every worker is respected. The Company upholds the right of every person to be free from harassment and discrimination of any kind in the workplace.

This Human Resources and Employment Policy applies to all Company employees, including full-time, part-time, temporary and casual employees, summer students and volunteers (collectively, **“Workers”**) while in the workplace, on Company premises, or during work-related and/or social functions.

**EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

**OBJECTIVES**

The main objectives of this policy are:

1. To eliminate barriers in the workplace and to foster a work environment that respects people’s dignity, ideas and beliefs; and
2. To promote employment equity, diversity and inclusiveness in the workplace.

The Company demonstrates its commitment to equity, diversity and inclusiveness by providing a supportive work environment and culture that welcomes members of designated groups.

Under human rights and other legislation in Canada, it is generally against the law to discriminate on the basis of race, sex (including pregnancy), colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, national or ethnic origin or ancestry, religion, marital status, family status, disability and sexual orientation. Some provincial laws prohibit or protect discrimination on additional grounds, such as political beliefs and criminal convictions.

The Company does not condone any form of discrimination. The Company endorses and embraces all applicable human rights and accessibility legislation. This policy prohibits discrimination in the workplace.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

Managers, Directors and Senior Management shall:

* Create and maintain a workplace free from discrimination
* Ensure that this policy is available to all staff, accessible and supported
* Empower supervisors and managers to reinforce diversity and inclusion and provide opportunities for capacity-building and action
* Ensure that equity and diversity are considered in all aspects of departmental planning, processes and strategies
* Intervene when discrimination and/or harassment issues arise
* Accept good faith requests for accommodation and work with employees to develop accommodation plans where necessary
* Prevent discrimination by:
  + Engaging in behaviour in support of this policy
  + Communicating and supporting the Company’s objective of a workplace free from discrimination and a workforce that is representative of the population it serves
  + Acting quickly to address behaviours that are contrary to this policy
  + Taking all complaints seriously
  + Implementing changes to employment systems, removing barriers and taking other related actions as appropriate
  + Ensuring that staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities conferred by this policy and Human Rights and employment legislation

Workers shall:

* Report barriers to equal opportunities
* Notify a supervisor or manager of a need for employment-related accommodations and consult with Human Resources or other professionals on the most appropriate accommodation
* Report experiences of harassment or discrimination in the workplace to one of an immediate supervisor, manager, general manager/director, Human Resources or senior management.

**WORKPLACE HARASSMENT AND WORKPLACE VIOLENCE POLICY**

**OBJECTIVES**

The Company abides by all applicable federal, provincial/territorial legislation and will take whatever steps are reasonable to protect its Workers from workplace violence and harassment. Different provinces and territories have their own definitions of workplace harassment and Workers are encouraged to consult their rights and obligations under applicable legislation.

Every employee is entitled to employment free of harassment. Generally, workplace harassment means: (a) engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome; or (b) workplace sexual harassment. Reasonable action taken by the employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the workplace is not workplace harassment.

Workplace sexual harassment means any conduct, comment, gesture, or contact of a sexual nature that is likely to cause offence or humiliation to any Worker, or that might be reasonably perceived by that Worker as placing a condition of a sexual nature on employment or on any opportunity for training or promotion.

Workplace violence means: (a) the attempt or exercise of physical force by a person against a Worker, in the workplace, that causes or could cause injury to the Worker; or (b) a statement or behaviour that is reasonable for a Worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the Worker, in the workplace.

The main objective of this policy is to prevent workplace harassment and workplace violence.

Please note that it is also the responsibility of each Worker to foster such an environment, and to take appropriate steps in the event of a violation of this policy.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Company is responsible for creating a safe work environment, free from workplace harassment and workplace violence. Management and staff each have roles to play in order to prevent workplace harassment and workplace violence.

Managers, Directors and Senior Management shall:

* Create, maintain and promote a workplace free from discrimination;
* Ensure that this policy is available to all staff, accessible and supported;
* Provide Workers with information and instruction regarding this policy with respect to workplace harassment including appropriate steps to be taken;
* Take every reasonable precaution for the protection of Workers; and
* Respond appropriately to complaints brought to their attention.

Workers are responsible for complying with this policy in their dealings with other Workers and third parties in the workplace. Workers must:

* Comply with this policy by avoiding any behaviour or conduct that could reasonably be interpreted as a violation of this policy;
* Report experiences of harassment (including sexual harassment) or discrimination in the workplace to an to one of an immediate supervisor, manager, general manager/director, Human Resources or senior management; and
* Maintain a work environment free from discrimination and harassment.

**Reporting Workplace Violence or Harassment**

A Worker who is the recipient of or witness to an incident of workplace harassment shall:

* If the Worker feels comfortable, confront the individual engaging in the harassing conduct, point out the unwelcome behaviour and request that it stop; and
* If the Worker does not feel comfortable, or if the unwelcome behaviour continues, report the incident to one of an immediate supervisor, manager, general manager/director, Human Resources or senior management.

Upon receiving notice of an incident, the recipient of the notice shall consult with Human Resources, the Legal Department or such other internal or external advisor as deemed appropriate to ensure an investigation is conducted that is appropriate in the circumstances. If the incident involves a member of senior management, an external person may be retained to conduct the investigation.

**Reporting Workplace Violence**

A Worker who is the victim of, or witness to, an incident of workplace violence that presents an immediate risk of physical harm shall:

* If it is safe to do so, remove themselves from the situation;
* Report the incident to one of an immediate supervisor, manager, general manager/director, Human Resources or senior management; and
* In cases where immediate assistance is required, contact building security or where necessary, dial 911 for emergency services.

A Worker who is the victim of, or witness to, violent acts which do not present an immediate risk of physical harm shall report the incident to the Worker’s direct supervisor or manager, to Human Resources, to another supervisor or manager or to a member of the senior management team.

**Contents of Report**

The Company expects that Workers will keep written accounts of incidents and file them with the Company. A written report regarding workplace harassment and/or workplace violence filed by a Worker should contain the following information:

* Name and contact information of the Worker who has allegedly experienced workplace harassment;
* Name(s) of the alleged harasser(s), position and contact information;
* Name and contact information of any witnesses or other persons with relevant information to provide about the incident;
* Dates, locations, frequency and details of the incident or incidents;
* Any supporting documents that are relevant to the incident; and
* The date and signature of the person who has filed the report.

**Confidentiality**

The Company will not disclose any information obtained about a reported incident of workplace harassment or violence, including any identifying information about the individuals involved, to anyone other than the individuals involved in the reported incident, except where disclosure is necessary to investigate the incident, required to take corrective action or as otherwise required by law.

**Investigation Process**

Upon being notified of an incident of workplace violence and/or harassment, the Company will facilitate a timely investigation that is appropriate in the circumstances. The Company will choose an appropriate investigator based on the nature and severity of the incident. The investigation may include internal personnel, and/or, if warranted, an external investigator.

The investigator will not disclose any details about the complaint or the related investigation except where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the incident, take corrective action, or as otherwise required by law. The investigator will fully and completely investigate the incident, review all evidence and may interview the Worker, the respondent and any relevant witnesses. Workers are expected to cooperate with investigators and provide any details of incidents they have experienced or witnessed.

If the investigator finds that workplace harassment or workplace violence has occurred, appropriate remedial action will be taken as well as steps to prevent any recurrence. Any Worker that breaches this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. The action to be taken will depend on the seriousness of the violation, previous discipline and a review of the circumstances.

The Company will notify the complainant and the respondent in writing of the results of the investigation, which will be kept confidential unless disclosure is necessary or required by law.

**No Reprisal**

Any Worker filing an incident report or complaint, as well as anyone providing information, will be protected from any form of reprisal.

**Recordkeeping**

The Company will keep records of the investigation, including but not limited to:

* A copy of the incident report;
* A record of the investigation, including notes;
* A copy of the investigation report, if any; and
* A summary of the results of the investigation, and any corrective action taken, that was provided to the complainant and the respondent.

All records will be kept confidential.

**Domestic Violence**

Any Worker who believes that domestic violence may occur in the workplace that would likely expose the Worker or another worker to physical injury should report the matter to one of an immediate supervisor, manager, general manager/director, Human Resources or senior management. Such information shall be kept confidential to the extent that it is possible. If a supervisor or Human Resources is aware that a Worker may encounter a person with a history of violent behaviour, and the risk of workplace violence by that person is likely to expose the Worker to physical injury, the Company will take steps to ensure the safety of all Workers, including advising the Workers who are at risk and reviewing procedures to minimize such risk.

**Work Refusal**

A Worker who has reason to believe that he or she may be endangered by workplace violence has the right to refuse the work in accordance with applicable law.

**Posting**

This policy will be posted at a conspicuous place in the workplace.

**Risk Assessment and Periodic Review**

The Company will conduct periodic reviews to assess the risks of workplace violence that may arise. To the extent that certain risks are identified, safe work procedures will be developed and implemented. The Company will review this policy annually or as often as is necessary to reduce the risk of workplace violence and workplace harassment.

For questions regarding this policy, please contact **[insert name, position and contact information]**.