

## **Parliamentary Internship Programme Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Policy**

### **STATEMENT ON HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION**

*The Parliamentary Internship Programme does not accept harassment or discrimination in any form. The Programme recognizes that an individual's experiences are based on multiple identities that can be linked to more than one ground of discrimination. We expect all stakeholders, including interns, to uphold the highest standards in all of their interactions.*

### **OVERVIEW**

The Parliamentary Internship Programme (“the Programme”) is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination and harassment, where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, and can contribute fully and have equal opportunities.

Under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, every person has the right to be free from harassment and discrimination. Harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated, condoned or ignored by the Programme and its partners.

The Programme is committed to a comprehensive strategy to address harassment and discrimination, including:

- Providing training and education to ensure the interns and Programme staff know their rights and responsibilities
- Sharing the policy with everyone in the Programme community and making it available online
- Ensuring access to an effective and fair complaints procedure
- Promoting appropriate standards of conduct, including in social media and at events that occur outside of the physical workplace such as business trips or receptions.

The Programme, which includes the interns, reserves the right to make all final decisions on work placements.

Nothing in this agreement shall be construed to create or constitute an employment relationship between the interns and the Programme.

## POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Programme's Anti-Harassment Policy are to:

- Promote human rights within the Programme community and within each intern cohort, preventing harassment and discrimination, and defining principles and standards for behaviour
- Empower interns, alumni, sponsors, partners and the Director to be leaders in contributing to an inclusive and non-discriminatory political culture
- Ensure that all members of the Programme community are aware that harassment and discrimination are unacceptable practices and are incompatible with the mandate of PIP, as well as being a violation of the law

## PROHIBITED BEHAVIOURS

**Discrimination** means any form of unequal treatment based on a *Code* ground, whether imposing extra burdens or denying benefits. It may be intentional or unintentional. It may involve direct actions that are discriminatory on their face, or it may involve rules, practices or procedures that appear neutral, but disadvantage certain groups of people. Discrimination may take obvious forms, or it may happen in very subtle ways. Even if there are many factors affecting a decision or action, if discrimination is one factor, that is a violation of this policy.

**Harassment** means a course of comments or actions that are known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome. It can involve words or actions that are known or should be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, demeaning or unwelcome, based on a ground of discrimination identified by this policy.

Examples of harassment include:

- Epithets, remarks, jokes or innuendos related to a person's race, gender identity, gender expression, sex, disability, sexual orientation, creed, age, or any other ground of discrimination provided for in the *Ontario Human Rights Code*
- Posting or circulating offensive pictures, graffiti or materials, whether in print form or via e-mail or other electronic means
- Singling out a person for humiliating or demeaning "teasing" or jokes because they are a member of a *Code*-protected group
- Comments ridiculing a person because of characteristics that are related to a ground of discrimination. For example, this could include comments about a person's dress, speech or other practices that may be related to their sex, race, gender identity or creed.

- Refusal to work with an individual on the basis of a ground of discrimination provided for in the *Ontario Human Rights Code*

This policy prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following grounds, and any combination of these grounds:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Creed (religion)</li> <li>• Sex (including pregnancy and breastfeeding)</li> <li>• Sexual orientation</li> <li>• Gender identity</li> <li>• Gender expression</li> <li>• Family status (such as being in a parent-child relationship)</li> <li>• Marital status (including married, single, widowed, divorced, separated or living in a conjugal relationship outside of marriage, whether in a same-sex or opposite-sex relationship)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability (including mental, physical, developmental or learning disabilities)</li> <li>• Ancestry, Race, or Colour</li> <li>• Place of origin</li> <li>• Ethnic origin</li> <li>• Record of offences (criminal conviction for a provincial offence, or for an offence for which a pardon has been received)</li> <li>• Citizenship</li> <li>• Association or relationship with a person identified by one of the above grounds</li> <li>• Perception that one of the above groups applies</li> </ul> |
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Notwithstanding the above, as an educational program, the Programme reserves the right to apply its application criteria during the selection competition.

### **Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment**

Sexual harassment and gender-based harassment are forms of harassment that can include:

- Unwanted gender-related comments about a person's physical characteristics or mannerisms
- Rough and vulgar humour or language related to gender
- Paternalism based on gender which a person feels undermines his or her self-respect or position of responsibility
- Suggestive or offensive remarks or innuendoes about individuals of a specific gender
- Gender-related verbal abuse, threats or taunting
- Unwanted physical contact
- Propositions of physical intimacy

- Demands for dates or sexual favours
- Leering or inappropriate staring
- Unwelcome bragging about sexual prowess or questions or discussions about sexual activities
- Offensive jokes or comments of a sexual nature
- Display of sexually offensive pictures, graffiti or other materials including through electronic means
- A recurring pattern of any of the offensive behaviours listed above.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All interns and Programme staff are expected to uphold and abide by this policy, by refraining from any form of harassment or discrimination, and by cooperating fully in any investigation of a harassment or discrimination complaint. The following roles will have additional responsibilities.

1. Advisor on Respect and Inclusion (Intern Liaison):
  - a) The purpose of the intern liaison is to provide a third party in cases when the director requires support or experiences a conflict of interest. The intern liaison must have expertise in relevant fields (such as labour or human rights law) as well as the requisite skills and interest in assisting with the policy.
  - b) Provide recommendations to the intern cohort for the liaison's own successor
  - c) Meet with the interns during their Orientation Period to discuss the Policy and harassment
  - d) Meet once a year with the Director to discuss best practices
  - e) Provide recommendations for updating and reforming the Policy, when necessary.
2. Intern Cohort
  - a) Abide by the *House of Commons Policy on Preventing and Addressing Harassment* and all subsequent policies
  - b) Participate in all training sessions for interns during Orientation and throughout the year
  - c) Inform the Director when additional training is necessary
  - d) Designate an Intern Liaison by the end of the internship year (June 30).
3. The Academic Director or Equivalent

- a) Abide by the *House of Commons Policy on Preventing and Addressing Harassment* and all subsequent policies
  - b) Organize semi-annual training sessions for Interns on the anti-harassment policy in September and January
  - c) Participate in all annual training
  - d) When needed, arrange for additional training when requested by the interns
  - e) Ensure that interns feel comfortable coming forward to discuss harassment issues informally, upholding the values of the policy and acting with discretion and confidentiality
  - f) If alleged conduct relates to the Director or presents the Director with a conflict of interest, the intern can ask the Intern Liaison to manage the complaint or referring the complaint to the relevant body
  - g) Speak annually with the Intern Liaison about the Policy, its application to the Programme, and potential updates to the Policy
  - h) If the complaint relates to a House of Commons Staff or Member of Parliament and the Intern wishes to bring a complaint forward, support the Intern in resolving the complaint via the steps outlined in the *House of Commons Policy on Preventing and Addressing Harassment* and all subsequent policies
  - i) If the complaint relates to a member of the Programme community not included in the *House of Commons Policy on Preventing and Addressing Harassment* and all subsequent policies, support the intern in resolving the dispute informally by identifying future steps
  - j) Where informal resolution is unsuccessful, support the intern in pursuing a formal complaint (i.e. with the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario)
  - k) For the purposes of this section “support” means ensuring that the intern is aware of and able to access the recourse available.
4. Alumni, Advisory Board, Sponsors and Friends, Members of Parliament, and MP staff
- a) In the course of all programme activities, functions and relationships, uphold the values and objectives of this policy, also reflected in the *House of Commons Policy on Preventing and Addressing Harassment* and all related and subsequent policies.

## **TOOLS FOR INFORMAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

Where there is a harassment complaint within the Programme community and the party (or parties) wish to resolve it informally, with or without the Director’s involvement, some of the following steps will apply:

- Re-distribute this policy and other relevant policies
- Set aside time to meet to discuss the incident(s) or conduct in question
- Identify the harmful conduct
- Examine whether it falls within the definition of harassment
- For the complainant, reflect on their ideal outcome of informal or formal dispute resolution.

After identifying the harmful conduct and reflecting upon ideal outcomes, some of the following steps will apply:

- Determine who would be the most appropriate actor(s) for each subsequent step (e.g. Intern, Director, Liaison, Whip, etc.)
- Examine whether it would be healthy to continue a working relationship in light of the conduct
- Explain to the person carrying out this course of conduct that it is unwanted and negatively impacts the professional environment
- Ask for a commitment from the person carrying out the course of conduct to stop unwanted behaviours, comments, etc.
- Where appropriate and with the complainant's consent, reassign the intern to a different office or placement.

This is not an exhaustive list of options, and *in no way* precludes a complainant from seeking independent legal advice and asserting their rights beyond the mechanisms identified in this policy.

This policy is not intended to address conduct or incidents rising to the level of a criminal offence. If there is any suggestion of criminal conduct, complainants are encouraged to seek independent legal advice.

As stated above, the Director and/or the Intern Liaison commit to ensuring that this process remains confidential.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY AND A HARASSMENT-FREE WORKPLACE**

Workplace confidentiality does not preclude complainants from taking appropriate action to end harassing conduct. Should any member of the Programme community feel confused about the intersecting demands of confidentiality, professionalism and the right to a harassment-free workplace, they are invited to speak with the Director or Intern Liaison for further guidance and support or seek independent legal advice.

The foregoing is not legal advice nor does it exhaustively describe program confidentiality obligations.

*This policy was last updated August 21, 2018 by the Director in consultation with the interns, alumni experts, and a lawyer. It will be updated in future years based on the advice of the interns.*

*If you have questions about the policy, please contact the Programme at [info@pip-ppsp.org](mailto:info@pip-ppsp.org).*