

Parliamentary Internship Programme Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Policy

1.0 STATEMENT ON HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, AND RACISM

The Parliamentary Internship Programme (“the Programme”) does not accept harassment or discrimination in any form. We recognize 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 their interactions.

The Parliamentary Internship Programme recognizes inequalities experienced by racialized individuals, most often non-white groups including Black and Indigenous Peoples, and how these inequalities affect individuals and communities in Canada. We strongly condemn racism in all its forms. Racial discrimination will never be tolerated in our larger Programme community. We are furthermore committed to include and uplift racialized voices within our organization under the premises of fair treatment, opportunities, and outcomes.

2.0 OVERVIEW

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 relevant members of the Programme community, including, but not restricted to MPs, sponsors, alumni, and external partners, and making the policy available online;
- Ensuring access to an effective and fair complaints procedure;
- Promoting appropriate standards of conduct, including on social media, during placements with Friends of the Programme and at events that occur outside of the physical workplace such as business trips, stakeholder meetings, and receptions.

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



3.0 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

4.0 PROHIBITED BEHAVIOURS

4.1 General provisions

The Programme reserves the right to exclude entry to individuals who have persistently exhibited the prohibited behaviours described below.

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:

- Age
- Creed (religion)
- Sex (including pregnancy and breastfeeding)
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity
- Gender expression
- Family status (such as being in a parent-child relationship)
- 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)
- Disability (including mental, physical, developmental or learning disabilities)
- Ancestry, Race, or Colour
- Place of origin or ethnic origin
- Record of offences (criminal conviction for a provincial offence, or for an offence for which a pardon has been received)
- Citizenship
- Association or relationship with a person identified by one of the above grounds
- Perception that one of the above groups applies.

Notwithstanding the above, as an educational program, the Programme will refer to its eligibility criteria during the selection competition.

4.2 Racial Discrimination

Racialized persons refers to persons belonging to communities facing racism.

Racial discrimination can happen between individuals or on an institutional – or systemic – level, from everyday rules and structures that are not consciously intended or designed to discriminate. Patterns of behaviour, policies or practices that are part of the structures of an organization or an entire sector can disadvantage or fail to reverse the ongoing impact and legacy of historical disadvantage of racialized persons. This means that even though a person did not intend to, a “normal way of doing things” might have a negative impact on racialized persons.

Racial harassment is a form of discrimination. It includes comments, jokes, name-calling, display of pictures or behaviour that insults someone, offends someone or puts someone down because of their race and other related grounds. Racial harassment can include, but is not limited to the following:

- making racial slurs or “jokes” based on someone’s race, colour, citizenship, place of origin, ancestry, ethnic background, or creed
- posting cartoons or pictures, in a workplace, school or housing space, that degrade persons of a particular racial group

Furthermore racial discrimination can include the following:

- treating normal differences of opinion as confrontational or insubordinate when racialized persons are involved



- characterizing normal communication from racialized persons as rude or aggressive
- penalizing a racialized person for failing to get along with someone else (such as a co-worker or manager), when one of the reasons for the tension is the co-worker or manager's racially discriminatory attitudes or behaviour.

4.3 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.

5.0 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.

5.1 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.

5.2 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) Suggest to the Director additional training that could be helpful, if the intern is comfortable doing so
- d) Designate an Intern Liaison by the end of the internship year (June 30).

5.3 The Academic Director or Equivalent

- a) Convene the *Alumni Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Committee* at the end of each PIP fiscal year and invite recent interns to contribute to the committee's updates to this policy.
- b) Provide an overview and update on the status of this policy to the Fall Advisory Board of the Parliamentary Internship Programme and the Semi-Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association.
- c) Abide by the *House of Commons Policy on Preventing and Addressing Harassment* and all subsequent policies
- d) Organize semi-annual training sessions for Interns on the anti-harassment policy in September and January, including anti-oppression training
- e) Participate in all annual training
- f) When needed, arrange for additional training when requested by the interns
- g) Ensure that interns feel comfortable coming forward to discuss harassment issues informally, upholding the values of the policy and acting with discretion and confidentiality. 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
- h) Speak annually with the Intern Liaison about the Policy, its application to the Programme, and potential updates to the Policy
- i) 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
- j) 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 to resolve the complaint, which may include an investigation
- k) For the purposes of this section "support" means ensuring that the intern is aware of and able to access the recourse available.



5.4 Alumni, Advisory Board, Sponsors and Friends, MPs, 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.

6.0 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 in the official language of the complainant's choice
- Identify the harmful conduct and any enabling environment
- Examine whether it falls within the definition of harassment
- For the complainant, reflect on their desired outcome of informal or formal dispute resolution.

After identifying the harmful conduct and reflecting upon desired 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.

7.0 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, 2020 by the Director in consultation with the Alumni Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Committee and the 2019-2020 intern cohort. If you have questions about the policy, please contact the Programme at info@pip-psp.org.