

# **OSSTF DISTRICT 11**

## **District Anti-Harassment Policy**

(proposed interim Feb. 2008)

### **Anti-Harassment Statement**

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

A member of District 11 OSSTF has the right to a union environment free from harassment.

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

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

However, acts of harassment are always unacceptable.

As members of District 11 OSSTF, our goal must be to promote mutual respect and trust. We cannot condone or tolerate intimidating, demeaning, hostile and aggressive behaviour against another member. We cannot condone these behaviours when we witness them. As District 11 OSSTF members, we must speak out against this conduct and stand together to protect one another. We must take action.

District 11 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 11 OSSTF events and meetings.

Any member who feels targeted by harassment must be able to speak up and know his or her concerns will be responded to in a timely fashion in accordance with District 11 Policies and Bylaws and the Resolution and Complaint Procedure as approved by District Executive Council.

### **Resolution and Complaint Procedure**

Any member who believes that he or she has been the target of harassment at any District 11 OSSTF meeting or event is encouraged to take immediate action to ensure this behaviour is stopped.

As the first step, the member claiming to have been harassed should make it clear to the other member that the behaviour is 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 claiming member (claimant) does not feel safe in approaching the other member, the claimant should speak with the designated harassment officer(s) (DHO) and ask the officer for assistance. For all District executive and committee meetings, and normally for Bargaining Unit executive and committee meetings, the DHO will be the Federation Services Officer assigned. If, for some reason, no DHO has been designated, the member should speak with the Federation Services Officer (FSO) or the Executive member in charge of the meeting/event to ask that one be appointed.

The DHO will investigate the complaint promptly, which may include separately interviewing the parties involved and any witnesses, with a view to resolving the problem informally. During this process, the DHO with the approval of the District President may remove the respondent member temporarily from the meeting if circumstances warrant.

The investigation shall be handled confidentially; however all complaints will be reported immediately by the DHO to the appropriate Bargaining Unit President(s) and the District President.

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the claimant will be asked to put his or her concerns and all relevant information in writing. If the claimant chooses to provide the concerns in writing, it will be submitted to the District President. Actions taken shall be the joint responsibility of the District President, the appropriate Bargaining Unit President(s), and the Federation Services Officer or Executive Member in charge. Under normal circumstances, actions taken will include conducting an investigation, determining if the behaviour falls under the definition of harassment, and deciding on appropriate remedial action. The parties involved, including the respondent and claimant, will receive a written report stating the findings and any action(s) taken.

Resolutions may include, but are not limited to apologies, mediation, warnings, temporarily limiting access, or removal/exclusion from current and/or future meetings/events. If a decision is made to remove or exclude that member, and where this member is a recognized OSSTF representative of or within a Bargaining Unit, a confidential letter outlining the reasons for the decision will be sent to the President of the appropriate body from the District President.

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

The District President, and possibly the appropriate Bargaining Unit President(s), shall keep a confidential file of all records and reports related to the investigation of written complaints 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.