

Frequently Asked Questions

1) To whom does the Respectful Workplace Policy apply?

This policy applies to all civil servants whose terms and conditions are set out in accordance with the *Civil Service Act* and regulations. Other direct employees of the provincial government, including all bargaining unit employees must abide by this policy as well.

2) Why was the policy revised?

Input from our clients, including results from the employee survey and other sources, indicate that we need stronger, clearer policies and easier access to Respectful Workplace training. Based on this feedback the Public Service Commission undertook a review of the Respectful Workplace Policy which led to enhancements of the policy, procedures, training, and other aspects of the program.

3) What is new or changed in the revised policy?

- Directives related to procedural fairness and confidentiality have been added to the policy;
- some accountabilities have been added or expanded;
- an informal complaint process has been incorporated; and
- procedures related to the handling of complaints have been removed from the policy and placed in a procedures manual.

4) Are there new forms of offensive behaviour covered by the policy?

No. The policy continues to define offensive behaviour as: harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination. However, we have clarified that bullying is a form of harassment.

5) If I have already taken Respectful Workplace training, do I need to take it again?

Yes. There have been changes to the policy that affect employees, managers, and human resource professionals. Therefore all employees are asked to complete the appropriate training course(s). Respectful Workplace training for employees and managers can now be completed by e-learning meaning that employees with access to a computer can complete the training at their desks. Information about which training course(s) you should take, and how to register, can be found on the website.

6) The policy applies to respect in the workplace. What is meant by the workplace?

A workplace is any place occupied by an employee as part of their employment. This includes, but is not limited to, lunchrooms, a client's home or work site, vehicle, training events, conferences, business travel, work-related social gatherings, or other locations where an employee is engaged in activity associated with employment.

7) What happens when the Respectful Workplace Policy is violated?

Allegations of offensive behaviour will be thoroughly reviewed and where it is warranted, an action plan to resolve the matter will be initiated. This may include mediation, investigation or a workplace assessment. Depending on the circumstances, a finding of offensive behaviour may result in disciplinary action.

8) Where can I get additional information about the Respectful Workplace Policy?

Check with your manager or human resource professional for additional information, read the Respectful Workplace brochure, visit our website at:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/employeeCentre/respectfulWorkplace/>

or contact the Respectful Workplace office:

Respectful Workplace Coordinator

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