



## **TOWN OF BANCROFT WORKPLACE HARASSMENT POLICY**

### **A. POLICY STATEMENT**

The Town of Bancroft is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace free from harassment. The Town recognizes that workplace harassment is a health and safety and human resources issue and will take reasonable precautions to prevent work place harassment and to protect employees at the workplace.

### **B. PURPOSE OF WORKPLACE HARASSMENT POLICY**

This policy is intended to:

1. Create and foster a work environment free from workplace harassment;
2. Provide a definition of workplace harassment;
3. Establish and detail the responsibilities of all persons in the Town workplaces to maintain a workplace free of harassment;
4. Ensure that incidents of workplace harassment are reported to the Town Clerk and/or law enforcement as appropriate;
5. Ensure that complaints of workplace harassment are handled in a timely and equitable manner by the Township.

### **C. SCOPE AND APPLICATION OF POLICY**

This policy applies to all Town employees and volunteers on behalf of the Town regardless of position, classification or union membership. This policy also applies to all persons who attend the Town workplace including, but not limited to, all visitors, contractors, vendors and delivery persons.

For the purposes of this policy, a Town workplace includes all places where the Town business occurs and includes all:

- Company buildings (whether owned or leased) and surrounding perimeter including parking lots, sidewalks, and driveways (Town Grounds);
- Town vehicles;
- Off-site locations where Town business occurs;
- Town-sponsored functions and recreational or social events, whether taking place on Town Grounds or elsewhere; and
- Travel for Town business.

**D. WORKPLACE HARASSMENT DEFINED**

In this policy, workplace harassment includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.
2. Vexatious comment is comment that demeans, embarrasses or humiliates a person.

This is the companion policy to the Town of Bancroft Workplace Violence Policy which addresses violence.

**E. ZERO TOLERANCE**

The Town values the health and safety of its employees and expects that its workplaces will be free of workplace harassment. The Town will not tolerate incidents of workplace harassment perpetrated against or by any employee, customer, vendor, contractor, visitor or any other person at a Town workplace or involved in Town business.

Every person at a Town workplace is responsible for acting in compliance with this policy.

With respect to acts of workplace harassment, as defined in this policy, the Town may, where appropriate:

- Remove the perpetrator from a Town workplace by security or the police;
- Discipline any employee, up to and including dismissal, and/or report the conduct to the police; and
- Report the conduct of any other person to their employer, supervisor and/or to the police.

Continuous harassment will be reported to police as appropriate.

**F. RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS**

It is the responsibility of:

**1. The Town**

- To take reasonable preventative measures to protect employees and others in the Township workplaces from workplace harassment;
- To ensure that a workplace harassment assessment is conducted;
- To develop procedures to address the workplace harassment risks identified in the harassment assessment;
- To ensure that all employees are trained in this policy;
- To post this policy in a conspicuous place in the workplace;
- To ensure that this policy is communicated to contractors and other persons who attend the Town workplaces;
- To establish a process for reporting and responding to incidents of workplace harassment;

- To ensure the process for reporting and responding to incidents of workplace harassment is communicated, maintained and followed; and
- To ensure that this policy is reviewed at least annually.

## **2. Managers and Supervisors**

- To understand and abide by the requirements of this policy;
- To communicate and review this policy with the employees they supervise or manage;
- To verify that all contractors and others who attend the Town workplaces are aware of this policy;
- To adequately train employees in Town procedures that address the workplace harassment risks applicable to the employee;
- To encourage employees to report complaints or incidents of workplace harassment;
- To respond to all complaints or incidents of workplace harassment in a professional manner appropriate for the circumstances of the complaint or incident;
- To promptly report all complaints or incidents of workplace harassment they receive or witness to the Clerk.

## **3. Employees (Including Managers and Supervisors)**

- To comply with this policy at all times to protect themselves and others in the workplace from workplace harassment;
- To immediately notify their supervisor or other designated person of any incident of workplace harassment whether the notifying worker is the victim or not;
- To participate in training regarding this policy and Town procedures directed at workplace harassment; and
- To fully cooperate in any investigation of complaints or incidents of workplace harassment or breaches of this policy.

## **G. DOMESTIC HARASSMENT**

Any employee experiencing harassment outside of the workplace (i.e. domestic harassment) that may create a risk of danger to themselves or others in the workplace is encouraged to report such harassment so that the Town can take reasonable preventive steps.

## **H. REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION WORKPLACE HARASSMENT**

### **1. Reporting threats of workplace harassment:**

- All incidents of workplace harassment or reprisal must be immediately reported to management;
- Any person subjected to workplace harassment should, where appropriate, go to a safe location at the workplace and report the incident to their supervisor or a Town supervisor or manager so that the incident can be investigated and addressed;

- All incidents of workplace harassment or reprisal must be immediately reported to management;
- All complaints and incidents are to be recorded in writing by the reporting person/employee and the supervisor or manager receiving the report. The date, time, location, potential witness and nature of the incident should be documented;
- If police have not previously been summoned, management will report continuous incidents of workplace harassment to police.
- If an incident of workplace harassment involves a person who is not an employee of the Town, the Town management will report the incident to that person's employer and/or such other person as the Town determines is appropriate in the circumstances.

## **2. Investigation:**

- All complaints or incidents of workplace harassment or reprisal will be promptly investigated by management. Where the perpetrator is a Town employee, the investigation will be conducted as quickly and confidentially as possible in the circumstances. Complete confidentiality is not possible in all circumstances and cannot be guaranteed;
- The management will include:
  - (a) A documented interview with the complainant and/or victim;
  - (b) A documented interview with the alleged perpetrator(s);
  - (c) A documented interview with any witness with relevant information to provide; and
  - (d) Any other step the investigator(s) deems necessary to fully and fairly investigate the complaint or incident;
- At the conclusion of the investigation into an incident or complaint, Management will prepare a written report of the findings of fact and – after evaluating existing policies, procedures, physical premises and devices, employee training – any suggestions to prevent a recurrence;
- Where the perpetrator is a Town employee, the supervisor of the perpetrator, in consultation with management and/or management will take any necessary disciplinary action. The severity of any disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from employment, will be consistent with the seriousness of the conduct at issue such that more significant discipline will follow more serious conduct or repeated violations of this policy.

### **I. NO REPRISAL**

Workplace harassment and this policy are serious matters. This policy prohibits reprisals against employees who have made good faith complaints or provided information regarding a complaint or incident of workplace harassment. Employees who engage in reprisals or threats of reprisals may be disciplined up to and including dismissal from employment.

Reprisals include:

- Any act of retaliation that occurs because a person has complained of or provided information about an incident of workplace harassment;

- Intentionally pressuring a person to ignore or not report an incident of workplace harassment;
- Intentionally pressuring a person to lie or provide less than full cooperation with an investigation of a complaint or incident of workplace harassment.
- An employee who makes a false complaint or otherwise abuses this policy may be disciplined up to and including dismissal from employment. Such discipline is not a reprisal or breach of this policy.

**J. POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed at least annually.

Signed at the Town of Bancroft, in the County of Hastings, this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of June, 2010

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Lloyd Churchill, Mayor

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Barry Wannamaker, C.A.O./Clerk