

RM OF REYNOLDS POLICY

Title: Respectful Workplace

Policy No. 18

Purpose:

To support a respectful working environment that is free from harassment.

Policy: Every employee and Council can expect to be treated with dignity and respect in the workplace.

All employees are entitled to work in an environment which stresses acceptance, values diversity, and is free from any form of harassment.

Definition of Disrespectful Behavior: Disrespectful behavior includes, but is not limited to the following:

- offensive or inappropriate comments, gestures, material or behavior
- deliberately excluding an employee from relevant work activities or decision making
- swearing, yelling or screaming (except where intended to alert one to danger)
- reprimanding in the presence of others
- aggressive or patronizing behavior
- intimidation or hostile behavior that creates an offensive work environment
- discrimination as defined under human rights legislation
- sexual harassment
- damaging gossip or rumors
- unwarranted physical contact
- decision-making which is influenced by factors which have no work-related purpose
- abusing authority

Zero Tolerance: Disrespectful behavior may consist of a single event or a series of subtle incidents that occur over time. Disrespectful behavior does not have to be intentional – it is the impact of the behavior on the recipient and the workplace that matters.

Policy Application: This policy applies to the following:

- Municipal Employees (including casual and students)
- Members of Council
- Members of Reynolds Fire Department
- Contractors Providing Services
- Volunteers

This policy applies to the workplace itself, as well as activities connected with the workplace, such as travel, conferences, meetings, committees, vendor/supplier sites, work related social gatherings, a ratepayer's home or work site. The workplace also includes work related emails and telephone.

Members of the public, visitors to Municipal facilities or individuals conducting business with The Municipality, are expected to adhere to this policy. If inappropriate behavior occurs, the Municipality will take appropriate action which could include barring the offending person from facilities or discontinuing business with contractors or suppliers.

Consequences of Non-Compliance for Employees: Any employee, who violates this policy, will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment.

Council Responsibilities for a Respectful Workplace

- model, recognize and value respectful behaviour in the workplace
- create an environment that supports the resolution of respectful workplace issues
- orient all employees to the respectful workplace policy
- ensure action is taken to prevent and/or deal with inappropriate behavior

Employee Responsibilities for a Respectful Workplace

- respect the dignity and human rights of all employees, Council, and the public
- recognize and refrain from actions that offend, embarrass or humiliate others, whether deliberate or unintentional
- address disrespectful behaviour with the employee displaying it or with the CAO, as soon as possible.
- do not make allegations of disrespectful behavior that are frivolous or vindictive
- make every effort to resolve respectful workplace issues, where possible in an informal manner

CAO Responsibilities for a Respectful Workplace

- recognize and address actions that offend, embarrass or humiliate others, whether deliberate or unintentional
- treat each situation as a serious matter
- manage the situation towards a resolution between the parties if possible, with a view to correcting behavior and preserving long term working relationships

- safeguard against further incidents
- ensure there are no reprisals against employees making a complaint or participating in an investigation
- provide support to employees who are experiencing the effects of disrespectful behavior
- provide ongoing advice and communications to Council on any disrespectful conduct or behavior

If You are Accused of Disrespectful Behavior

- attempt to resolve the situation by listening and trying to understand the concern
- consider the impact of your actions on the other person
- be willing to make reasonable changes that could make a difference. Often a sincere apology and a commitment to refrain from disrespectful behavior is sufficient to resolve the situation in an informal manner
- if a formal investigation is underway, cooperate with the person(s) conducting the review. Remember that the same care and consideration would be given to you if you had reported an issue
- if necessary, seek support or assistance from an unbiased professional you are comfortable with
- keep your involvement and nature of the complaint confidential

Procedures for Handling Complaints:

- a.) If possible, the employee should confront the offending individual and inform him/her that the conduct is unacceptable and unwelcome;
- b.) If unable to approach the offending individual directly, or if the approach is unsuccessful, the employee should report the offensive behaviour to the CAO;
- c.) If the CAO is the offending individual, the employee should report to the Reeve;
- d.) The recipient of the complaint shall obtain the complaint in writing from the employee and ensure that it is turned over to the appropriate manager within one working day of receiving the written complaint;
- e.) The manager who receives the complaint shall investigate by interviewing the employee, the offending individual and any witnesses.
- f.) The investigation shall be completed within three weeks of receipt of the written complaint, at which time a written report shall be prepared. The employee will receive a summary of the findings but not the content of the report. If the complaint is substantiated and it is determined that disciplinary action is warranted, such action shall be taken in accordance with normal disciplinary practices;
- g.) If the complaint is determined to be frivolous or vindictive, the Municipality may take disciplinary action against the complainant. A frivolous or vindictive complaint is one which has no merit and which is made for the purpose of embarrassing or harming another person. A complaint may be unsubstantiated without being frivolous or vindictive.

- h.) By initiating or participating in a complaint, an employee does not surrender or waive any right to file a complaint with the Manitoba Human Rights Commission (MHRC). If an employee files a complaint with MHRC, information obtained during any internal investigation shall be disclosed in accordance with the provisions of the Human Rights Code.
- i.) All inquiries or complaints and information pertaining to a complaint will be treated in strict confidence. Names will only be disclosed where necessary for the purposes of investigating the complaint or taking disciplinary or legal action.



Reviewed by Council: May 12th, 2011

Implementation Date: June 2, 2011

Resolution: 215/11