

# TOWN POLICY

## ADMINISTRATION POLICY:

# Harassment Policy

**DEPARTMENT:** Human Resources

**POLICY NUMBER:** HR-008

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** May 26, 2017

**REVISED DATE:** January 16, 2025

**SUPERSEDES:** Policy #H-2

**UP FOR REVIEW:** January 19, 2028

### Policy Statement:

The Town of Cardston is committed to maintaining a harassment-free work environment. Every person has the right to individuality, respect, dignity, and to be treated right in their working environment. All investigation of harassment will be handled promptly, discreetly, and will be kept strictly confidential in respect to everyone involved. Incidents of alleged harassment will be promptly investigated and if allegations have merit – person or persons will be terminated or disciplined – according to the severity of the incident. The complainant will be protected from any form of retaliation by the respondent(s) who were the subject of the complaint, whether they are employees, supervisory or managerial personal.

### The purpose of this policy is to:

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a working environment that is free from harassment, and to inform all employees and Town volunteers that matters of harassment will be dealt with promptly, fairly, and systematically. This policy is not intended to discourage a worker or volunteer from exercising their rights to pursue any other form of law enforcement.

### Definition

**“Harassment”** is defined as:

Any unwanted physical or verbal conduct that offends or humiliates a person. Such conduct could interfere with ability to do a job or obtain a service. Harassment can create a negative or hostile work environment which can interfere with job performance and result in being refused a job, a promotion, or a training opportunity. (Harassment complaints can be based on race, colour, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, marital status, family status, mental or physical disability, pardoned conviction, and sexual orientation); or





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Any unwelcome behavior which creates an intimidating, threatening, or hostile work environment, or which threatens the person's dignity or respect.

## Responsibilities

### 1) Management and Supervisory Personnel

(a) It is the responsibility of every management and supervisory person to:

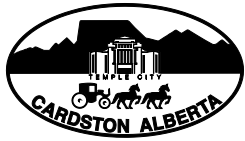
- i. Be familiar with this policy and the provisions of the Alberta Human Rights Act or any other legislation/regulations governing human rights in the work environment;
- ii. Inform all new and existing Employees, Counselors, and/or Town Volunteers of the policy;
- iii. Create a work environment where employees will come forward with complaints;
- iv. Investigate all reports of harassment and confirm clarification from the complainant and solution (handle complaints with objectivity, fairness, consistency, seriousness, and sensitivity);
- v. Inform the complainant(s) of their rights under the Alberta Human rights Act;
- vi. Inquire if complainant(s) wants to make a formal complaint;
- vii. Inform complainant to maintain an awareness of any retaliation for making the complaint and to carry out his/her duties in such a manner to promote the purpose of the policy and to ensure compliance with its provisions;
- viii. Unless the situation deems inappropriate, the incident should be investigated by the immediate supervisors and manager of the respondent and complainant. Where more than one department is involved, the Town CAO will decide the appropriate supervisor to investigate.

### 2) Employees and Town Volunteers

(a) It is the responsibility of every Employee or Town Volunteer to:

- i. Know the purpose of the policy, and comply with its provision and any other legislation/regulations governing human rights in the work environment;





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- ii. Have an awareness of what behavior is appropriate and not appropriate in the work environment in respect to harassment;
- iii. Promote a harassment-free work environment;
- iv. Cease any behavior that is found offensive by another employee(s). This includes verbal behavior, physical contact, non-verbal behavior, visual sexual-harassment, and psychological sexual harassment;
- v. Be sensitive to any situation in the working environment, which may create a sexist or hostile working environment. Make the management aware of these conditions.

### **3) Complainant (must be recipient of harassment)**

**(a)** It is the responsibility of a complainant to:

- i. Inform the respondent(s) (i.e. the person who is harassing) that any inappropriate behavior is unwelcome and unacceptable; preferably at the time of the occurrence;
- ii. Keep a record of all incident (dates, times, location, possible witnesses, what occurred, and your response). The Complainant's does not have to record any incidents in order to file a complaint, but a record can strengthen their case and help them remember details over time;
- iii. Report their complaint to a supervisor or Department manager;

### **4) Respondent (Harasser)**

**(a)** It is the respondents' responsibility to;

- i. Know their rights;
- ii. Report witnesses they may have;

## **Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Harassment**

When a report of alleged harassment is made to persons in authority the complainant(s) will be advised of their rights and the respondent(s) rights in the matter.

Complainant(s) will then be asked whether he/she wishes to make a formal complaint. A formal complaint occurs when complainant(s) files a complaint in writing of the incident that occurred. (i.e. date, time, and people involved).





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If a complainant(s) make a complaint about person(s) in management or a person in authority, but does not wish to make a formal complaint, the person taking the complaint will take such action that is appropriate to investigate the situation.

For all complaints investigated (whether formal or informal), the investigator will then meet and inform the respondent(s) of the complaint and process that will be followed.

Respondents should be informed of his/her rights.

Investigator will then interview the person(s) having knowledge of or who might have witnessed the incident(s).

Investigator will then conclude key incidents, facts, supporting materials, and conclusions of the investigations and submit a confidential report to all other supervisors involved. Appropriate results will be given to the respondent(s) and complainant(s).

The Town of Cardston will then review the report and decide on what course of action to take. Any decision to terminate or otherwise disciplined respondent involved for harassment will be based on the seriousness of the incident(s). No written documentation will be placed in the complainants personnel file and no disciplinary action will be taken against the complainant unless it is determined that the complaint was made for malicious purposes.

The complainant and the respondent(s) will then be notified in writing of the actions arising from the investigation.

## REVISION HISTORY

Date	Description
May 26, 2017	Council designates Policy #H-2 as an Administration Policy
June 13, 2019	Updated to comply with OHS Act
January 19, 2024	Updated to comply with OHS Act
January 16, 2025	Add policy is not intended to discourage a worker from exercising rights to pursue any other law.

**APPROVAL: Jeff Shaw** .....  
*Chief Administrative Officer, Jeff Shaw*

**DATE: January 16, 2025**.....  
*(signed copy kept in CAO policy binder)*

