

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

What is Harassment?

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

These actions may relate to, but are not restricted to, an individual's race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, gender expression, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, socio-economic status, family status, or mental or physical ability.

What is not Harassment?

Vigorous professional debate or disagreement during federation discussions or during meetings, in and of itself, does not constitute harassment. Similarly, firm advice given by federation officers/representatives does not constitute harassment nor do innate personal attributes in and of themselves, such as a naturally loud voice, physical appearance, or substantial physical size.

Complaint Resolution Procedure:

Step 1:

The member, or an advocate acting on behalf of the member, verbally or in writing, should make known to the individual that their conduct/behaviour constitutes harassment or discrimination and is unwelcome. The member, or advocate, should request that the offensive behaviour(s) cease.

Step 2:

If the member (or advocate) is not comfortable communicating with the individual or if there is a recurrence of such behaviour(s) following a resolution at Step 1, the member should approach a designated Anti-Harassment Officer at the activity and ask the officer to act on their behalf. If no Anti-Harassment Officer has been designated, the member should approach the OSSTF representative in charge of the event or activity (i.e., the presiding officer), and request the complaint be addressed.

Step 3:

The Anti-Harassment Officer (or appropriate designate), upon request of the complainant, will investigate the complaint promptly and confidentially, including separately interviewing the parties and any witnesses, with a view to resolving the problem informally and having any offensive behaviour(s) stop.

Resolutions at this stage may include (but are not limited to): dismissal of the complaint as vexatious, frivolous, or not meeting the definition of harassment, a verbal apology, a warning from the presiding federation officer, or relocation of the respondent within the venue. If, in the judgment of the Anti-Harassment Officer and/or presiding federation officer, the offending member should leave the activity or event, such a request will be made, and appropriate steps taken to ensure compliance.

Step 4:

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the Anti-Harassment Officer will ensure that the federation event or activity can proceed without further harassment. The complainant will be asked to put the complaint and all relevant information in writing. If the complainant chooses to provide such a written complaint, it will be submitted to the OSSTF District 10 President or designate (designate should be an option in the event that the person previously identified is part of a complaint) for action. As per the OSSTF District 10 Anti-Harassment Policy and Procedures outlined in Bylaw 24 and 25, the Anti-Harassment Officer and/or designate will conduct an investigation, determine if the behaviour falls under the definition of harassment, and decide on appropriate remedial action. The parties involved will receive a written report stating the findings and any action taken.

The complainant may request local District officers to assist in filing the written complaint. The respondent may request local District officers to assist in preparing a rebuttal, defence, or appeal.

Decisions made by the Anti-Harassment Officer or designate may be reviewed by the District Executive at the request of the member.

The District 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 to make a complaint to police.

Anti-Harassment Appeals Procedure:

The Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Appeals Procedure is as outlined in OSSTF District 10 Bylaw 25.