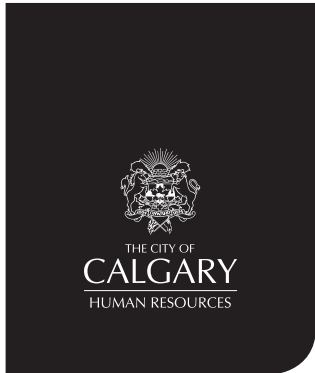


A Guide to the
Respectful Workplace
Policy



BEHAVIOUR AT ITS BEST!



calgary.ca/hr | call 3-1-1

Introduction

The City of Calgary is committed to creating and sustaining a vibrant, healthy, safe and caring work environment for its employees. All employees are to be treated with respect, honesty and dignity. Behaviour and/or situations that run contrary to such treatment will not be tolerated.

At The City, you have a right to fair treatment. You also have a responsibility to treat others with respect.

The City recognizes that conflicts, disagreements or inappropriate behaviours will occur, and expects all employees to resolve these issues in a manner that contributes to a healthy and productive workplace.

This brochure provides an overview of the Respectful Workplace Policy, and options for dealing with workplace concerns. A set of frequently asked questions and answers is provided for your information. To find a copy of the policy, or for more information, please visit calgary.ca/hr and click on 'Policy/Guidelines.' You can also contact your Human Resources Advisor.

Values

We create public value for our community.
We build trusting relationships in an ethical and professional manner. Our behaviours speak louder than words.

- Be **Honest** and tell the truth
- Pursue **Excellence**
- Be **Accountable**
- Be **Responsive**, compassionate and fair
- Treat others with respect**

In living these values, we will serve the citizens of Calgary, making the Corporation one of the best places to work.





“Treating each other on a daily basis with respect and consideration is key to building a workplace where every employee can contribute their best.”



“be aware of the potential effect
of your actions on others...”

Overview

The City of Calgary is committed to maintaining a safe, caring, healthy and productive workplace where all City employees are treated with respect and dignity. The Q and As are meant to help you recognize behaviours that are considered appropriate and consistent with our Corporate values, and those that are not. The information will also help you understand your rights and responsibilities with respect to this policy.

To create a positive, respectful workplace:

- be polite, courteous and respectful to others;
- treat others equitably and fairly;
- listen to what others have to say;
- be open-minded to other people's ideas, comments and suggestions;
- give positive feedback for ideas, suggestions or work accomplishments;
- suggest improvements where appropriate;
- ensure decision-making takes into account relevant factors and fairness;
- recognize and value the diversity of other employees and customers;
- be willing to apologize sincerely to people if you said or did something that may have offended them.

Under the Respectful Workplace Policy, inappropriate behaviour falls into three categories: disrespectful behaviour, discrimination or harassment, and damage to people or property.

Examples of unacceptable behaviours that will not be tolerated at The City are:

- written or verbal comments, behaviours or jokes that are degrading, offensive, demeaning, embarrassing, or insulting;
- bullying or intimidation;
- abuse of authority;
- yelling or shouting (unnecessarily);
- deliberate exclusion of an employee from relevant work activities or decision-making;
- decision-making influenced by factors which have no work-related purpose;
- attempting to discredit an employee by spreading false information about him/her.



Overview *continued*

Discrimination or Harassment

Discrimination or harassment means treating someone differently because they belong to a certain group. This type of behaviour includes comments or actions that:

- are known, or ought to be known, to be unwelcome;
- have a negative affect on work or the work environment.

The City policy covers all of the grounds under Alberta Human Rights legislation. Currently these grounds include: age, ancestry, colour, family status, marital status, mental or physical disability, place of origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, source of income or gender (including pregnancy and sexual harassment).

Immediately report all threats or violent acts to a supervisor and Corporate Security at 403-268-8668. If there is immediate danger get an outside line and call 9-1-1.

Damage to People or Property

Inappropriate behaviours in this category include:

- vandalism or destruction of City property;
- threats
 - including any act, gesture or statement that gives an employee reasonable cause to believe that there is risk of injury to themselves, another person or City property;
 - including any statement, either verbal or written, that is reasonably interpreted by a person to be menacing or taunting in nature;
 - including such things as coercion, intimidation, persecution, humiliation, bullying, ridiculing or belittling;
- violent acts
 - defined as any act that causes, or may cause, physical harm or significant emotional distress to a City employee or a member of the public.



“All forms of inappropriate behaviour are considered serious and are subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.”



“... the best thing you can do
is apologize, receiving feedback
isn't always easy...”

Questions and Answers

Q.

Why do some people treat others badly?

A.

There are many reasons. But actually the *why* isn't the issue. The issue is that you and everyone else has the right to be treated respectfully at The City. You also have the responsibility to treat others respectfully.

If this isn't happening, you have the right to see that it is effectively addressed.

Q.

Does the inappropriate behaviour have to be intentional?

A.

No. Lack of intent is not the issue.

It is the effect or impact of the behaviour that is considered important. If someone has been hurt — the behaviour is hurtful regardless of the intent. The key is to be responsible. Be aware of the potential effect of your actions on others.

Q.

How am I supposed to know what kind of behaviour is unwelcome?

A.

Sometimes the signs are not clear. You need to be sensitive to the possibility that others do not welcome your behaviour. More often than not, if we pay attention, the message is clear. People show their disapproval in different ways:

- verbal responses such as: “no,” “I don't like that,” “your joke is not appreciated,” “please don't do that,” etc.;
- physical responses such as: pushing a hand away, moving away or leaving the room;
- facial expressions indicating discomfort or distress such as embarrassment or shock;
- nervous smiles or laughter;
- silence such as not laughing at ‘jokes.’



Questions and Answers *continued*

Q.

What if someone tells me that I've been out of line with them?

A.

Truly the best thing you can do is apologize. Receiving feedback isn't always easy. If you find that someone is telling you that you've acted inappropriately with them, listen hard. One way to think about it is by remembering the word **LAST: Listen, Apologize, Say what you are going to do differently, and Thank them for having the courage to share their perspective with you.** Then act on what you've been told. Remember, The City of Calgary treats issues brought forward under the Respectful Workplace Policy seriously.

Q.

How is joking around or ribbing someone considered inappropriate if I'm just having a little fun?

A.

Humour is healthy and can help relieve tension, reduce boredom and create a bond between people. Everyone can appreciate a good joke. But if people don't find the joke funny, it's not funny. It's that simple. Your

intent is to be funny, not to offend, right? Look for a new joke.

This advice also applies to e-mail. Just as we all have our own sense of humour around verbal jokes and the same holds true for e-mail jokes. Because we can't see visual cues from people over e-mail, this is even more of a communication minefield! Be careful about sharing your humour through e-mail. Do you know the recipient well enough to know they will find the joke funny? You also need to keep in mind the Corporate standards around computer use and e-mail.

Q.

I've heard about someone who actually yells at you and stands way too close and pounds the desk? Is that allowed?

A.

Absolutely not. Indeed, it sounds pretty intimidating. Intimidation is covered under the Threats and Violence section of the Respectful Workplace Policy. The City of Calgary will not tolerate either in the workplace.

Questions and Answers *continued*

Q.

How do I tell someone that they have crossed the line with me? I don't want to seem to be 'too sensitive.'

A.

Giving someone feedback of this kind is hard. It takes courage. It can also take practice. Here's a way that can help you get your point across: **Describe the behaviour that is out of line. Express your feelings and the impact the behaviour has on you. Say what you need specifically to change. Communicate the consequences if nothing changes. Remember: DESC**

Here's an example: "You make negative comments about [ethnic group]. I find that really hard to take. It makes me really uncomfortable. I need you to stop making those comments around me. If the comments continue I will consider bringing this to our supervisor."

Q.

I hear you can't have pictures of nudes or partial nudes at work?

A.

That's right. This is the workplace and those pictures don't belong here.

Q.

Am I crossing the line if I ask a co-worker out on a date?

A.

No. However, should your co-worker not wish to go out with you and you persist, this could be interpreted as a form of harassment. Should he or she say "NO" — this is your cue to stop. If you are a supervisor, it is not appropriate to ask out someone who works for you. Supervising someone you are dating or with whom you live or someone to whom you are related is most likely a conflict of interest. It can lead to perceptions of favouritism despite any efforts you make to be fair. Many court cases have decided that an employee cannot give consent to date a person who is their supervisor and the supervisor is held solely responsible if things go wrong.

Questions and Answers *continued*

Q.

How do I handle it if a colleague is looking for a more personal relationship than I want?

A.

A colleague can ask — and you can say yes or no. If you are not interested, you need to let them know clearly and respectfully that you don't share their interest.

Q.

Isn't it too risky to report an incident? I could be isolated at work. It could negatively affect my career.

A.

The City takes your concerns seriously and has confidential support and advice for anyone with questions and concerns. Many people remain silent because they are afraid and so the cycle of inappropriate behaviour continues. Speaking up isn't easy and it takes courage to come forward. Be one of those who chooses to break the cycle. Retaliation for raising a concern is prohibited under the policy.

Q.

What are some options to deal with a situation?

A.

The sooner action is taken the better. There is a range of possible responses. They include:

- You tell the person to stop.
- You write them a note.
- You ask a respected colleague, supervisor or union representative to help you choose a course of action.
- You ask a Human Resources Advisor:
 - to help you draft a way to either tell or write to the person that you want them to behave differently;
 - to role-play telling the person to stop;
 - to arrange for conciliation or mediation.
- You ask your manager to take action.

These options are all fairly informal and keep control of the situation largely in your hands. It also keeps information about the situation contained to as few people as possible.

Questions and Answers *continued*

Q.

What if there is still a problem?

A.

The City of Calgary has a formal internal complaint process. Before you submit a formal complaint you should contact the Business Partner Human Rights & Respectful Workplace by calling 403-268-2594 to determine if a formal complaint is the best way to proceed. This consultation will provide you with information on what options there are to deal with your situation.

The investigation will assess whether or not there has been a violation of the Respectful Workplace Policy and if so, make recommendations to resolve the situation. The findings and recommendations are presented to the Director of the business unit where the violation occurred. The Director will then decide on what type of corrective action is necessary to address the policy violation. The corrective action taken may include discipline.

Formal investigations take control of the situation out of your hands and involve more people. Wherever possible, we encourage people to address the problem at the first opportunity and allow unit leaders an opportunity to ensure that they, as leaders, are providing respectful workplaces and respectful leadership.

Q.

Can formal complaints under the Respectful Workplace Policy be brought forth at any time?

A.

Complaints or allegations should be reported as soon as possible. Formal complaints can be accepted up to a year after the most recent incident of inappropriate behaviour. Once received, the allegation is reviewed to determine if it is complete and if it is best addressed by a formal complaint investigation.



Resources

Sometimes we need help figuring out what to do to address workplace problems. Here are some of the resources available to you:

- **Your supervisor or manager.**
- **Your union or association.**
- **Your Human Resources Advisor** (call 403-268-5800 or visit calgary.ca/hr if you need to know who your HR Advisor is).
- **The Business Partner Human Rights & Respectful Workplace (403-268-2594)** to discuss what options there are to deal with your issue.

Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)

Call Human Solutions toll-free (24/7):

English
1-800-663-1142

French
1-866-398-9505

TTY (hearing assistance)
1-888-384-1152

International (call collect)
1-604-689-1717

Or visit humansolutions.ca.

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

1-800-663-1142 (24/7)



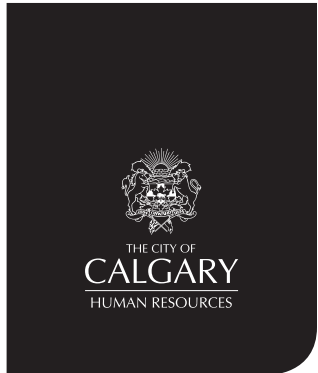
“...sometimes we need
help figuring out
what to do...”



ALL EMPLOYEES SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY
FOR BUILDING AND SUSTAINING
RESPECTFUL WORKPLACES AT THE CITY



2012-0721



calgary.ca/hr | call 3-1-1