

Policy HR211: Harassment and Abuse

Category: Human Resources

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POLICY

The Town of Bonnyville Library Board, in its efforts to provide a positive, comfortable, and professional environment, will not tolerate any form of harassment or violence directed by, or at, any library employee by another employee, Board member, or member of the public. The Board believes in a positive environment for users and employees and is committed to preventing acts of violence, harassment, or discrimination on its premises.

PURPOSE

RESPONSIBILITY

1. For acts of harassment, discrimination, or abuse by a member of the public toward a staff member, the action taken will be commensurate with the incident up to and including temporary or permanent withdrawal of services or legal action.
2. Reasonable, justifiable, consistent, and non-discriminatory acts of discipline provided by an individual who has the authority to provide such discipline shall not be construed as harassment.
3. Staff faced with an urgent situation involving the threat of violent conduct, where there is a reasonable belief that the safety of themselves or others may be in danger, should contact the police immediately.
4. If an employee believes they have been subjected to discrimination, harassment, or abuse, the employee has the responsibility to advise the offender, directly or through a third party, that the action is unacceptable behaviour and unwelcome. It is imperative that the alleged offender is made immediately aware of any behaviour that is offensive and given the opportunity to cease such behaviour.
5. If the behaviour does not cease, or the severity of the behaviour warrants it:
 - The Library Manager shall be responsible for ensuring that the complaint is promptly and thoroughly investigated.
 - Any incident involving the Library Manager should be reported to the Library Board. The Library Board will coordinate any required investigation.
 - Any employee who experiences a workplace violence incident is advised to consult with a health-care professional.

DEFINITIONS

Abuse: Physical contact intended to cause bodily harm, or the use of threats, humiliation, forced social isolation, intimidation, coercing, or restricting from appropriate social contact with the intention of causing emotional harm.

Board: Town of Bonnyville Library Board

Discrimination: Unfavourable treatment based on racial, sexual, political, age, nationality, religion, or gender.

Harassment: Repeated offensive comments and/or actions that demean and belittle an individual.

PROCEDURE

- The preparation of a written statement with a specific and clear description of the words or actioned complained about, signed by the complainant
- Interviews of the complainant and the alleged offender
- Interviews of any other staff members who may be able to provide additional information
- If the investigation reveals evidence to support complaint(s) of harassment, abuse, or discrimination, appropriate disciplinary action will be undertaken
- If the investigation reveals no evidence to support the complaint(s) the complainant will be advised of their right to contact the Alberta Human Rights Commission to file a complaint
- If the complaint was both groundless and motivated by malice, disciplinary action may be initiated against the complainant