

Policy Statement

The Engineering and Geoscience Education Foundation Inc (EGEF, the Foundation). is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination and harassment, where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, can contribute fully and have equal opportunities.

Every person has the right to be free from discrimination and harassment. Discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated, condoned or ignored at EGEF. If a claim of discrimination or harassment is proven, disciplinary measures will be applied, up to and including termination of the offending individual's relationship with EGEF.

Definitions

“Discrimination” means any form of unequal treatment based on a Human Rights Code ground, whether imposing extra burdens or denying benefits. It may be intentional or unintentional. It may involve direct actions that are discriminatory on their face, or it may involve rules, practices or procedures that appear neutral, but disadvantage certain groups of people. Discrimination may take obvious forms, or it may happen in very subtle ways. Even if there are many factors affecting a decision or action, if discrimination is one factor, that is a violation of this policy.

“Harassment” means a course of comments or actions that are known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome. It can involve words or actions that are known or should be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, demeaning or unwelcome, based on a ground of discrimination identified by this policy. Harassment can occur based on any of the grounds of discrimination.

“Sexual Solicitation” - this policy prohibits sexual solicitations or advances by any person who is in a position to grant or deny a benefit to the recipient of the solicitation or advance. This includes directors and officers, as well as co-workers and volunteers where one person is in a position to grant or deny a benefit to the other. Reprisals for rejecting such advances or solicitations are also not allowed.

“Poisoned (or toxic) environment” - a poisoned environment is created by comments or conduct (including comments or conduct that are condoned or allowed to continue when brought to the attention of management) that create a discriminatory work environment. The comments or conduct need not be directed at a specific person, and may be from any person, regardless of position or status. A single comment or action, if sufficiently serious, may create a poisoned environment.

Scope

EGEF wishes to make sure that members, staff, volunteers, donors, clients and associates of the Foundation are aware that discrimination and harassment are unacceptable practices and are incompatible with the standards of this organization, as well as being a violation of the law.

Policy Provisions

This policy prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following grounds, and any combination of these grounds:

- Age
- Creed (religion)
- Sex (including pregnancy and breastfeeding)
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity
- Gender expression
- Family status (such as being in a parent-child relationship)
- Marital status (including married, single, widowed, divorced, separated or living in a conjugal relationship outside of marriage, whether in a same-sex or opposite-sex relationship)
- Disability (including mental, physical, developmental or learning disabilities)
- Race

- Ancestry
- Place of origin
- Ethnic origin
- Citizenship
- Colour
- Record of offences (criminal conviction for a provincial offence, or for an offence for which a pardon has been received)
- Association or relationship with a person identified by one of the above grounds
- Perception that one of the above grounds applies.

Examples of harassment include:

- Epithets, remarks, jokes or innuendos related to a person's race, gender identity, gender expression, sex, disability, sexual orientation, creed, age, or any other ground
- Posting or circulating offensive pictures, graffiti or materials, whether in print form or via e-mail or other electronic means
- Singling out a person for humiliating or demeaning "teasing" or jokes because they are a member of a Human Rights Code-protected group
- Comments ridiculing a person because of characteristics that are related to a ground of discrimination. For example, this could include comments about a person's dress, speech or other practices that may be related to their sex, race, gender identity or creed.

If a person does not explicitly object to harassing behaviour, or appears to be going along with it, this does not mean that the behaviour is okay. The behaviour could still be considered harassment under the Human Rights Code.

Sexual harassment is a form of harassment that can include:

- Gender-related comments about a person's physical characteristics or mannerisms
- Paternalism based on gender which a person feels undermines his or her self-respect or position of responsibility
- Unwelcome physical contact
- Suggestive or offensive remarks or innuendoes about members of a specific gender
- Propositions of physical intimacy
- Gender-related verbal abuse, threats or taunting
- Leering or inappropriate staring
- Bragging about sexual prowess or questions or discussions about sexual activities
- Offensive jokes or comments of a sexual nature about an employee or client
- Rough and vulgar humour or language related to gender
- Display of sexually offensive pictures, graffiti or other materials including through electronic means
- Demands for dates or sexual favours.

All persons working for or with EGEF are expected to uphold and abide by this policy, by refraining from any form of discrimination or harassment, and by cooperating fully in any investigation of a discrimination or harassment complaint.

Directors and officers of EGEF have the additional responsibility to act immediately on observations or allegations of discrimination or harassment. Directors and officers are responsible for creating and maintaining a discrimination- and harassment-free organization, and should address potential problems before they become serious.

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