

OSSTF DISTRICT 10

Anti-Harassment Policy

Anti-Harassment Statement

Let us not take thought for our separate interests, but let us help one another.

A member of District 10 OSSTF has the right to a union environment free from harassment and bullying.

Harassment and discrimination are not joking matters. They have a destructive effect on the workplace environment, individual well-being, and union solidarity. Such actions are not only destructive, they can be illegal.

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

However acts of harassment and discrimination are always degrading, unwelcome, and coercive. They are always unacceptable.

As members of District 10 OSSTF, our goal must be to protect human rights, to promote mutual respect and trust, and to foster inclusion. We cannot condone or tolerate intimidating, demeaning, hostile and aggressive behaviour against another member. We cannot condone these behaviours when we witness them. As District 10 OSSTF members, we must speak out against this conduct and stand together to protect human rights. We must take action.

District 10 OSSTF is committed to strengthening member solidarity, and in addition to representing members' interests in the workplace, takes seriously its own responsibility to ensure that members are treated with respect and dignity at all District 10 OSSTF events and meetings.

Any member who feels targeted by harassment or discrimination must be able to speak up and know their concerns will be responded to immediately in accordance with District 10 OSSTF Policies and Bylaws and the Resolution and Complaint Procedure as approved by District 10 OSSTF Council.

Resolution and Complaint Procedure

A member who believes s/he has been the target of harassment or discrimination at a District 10 OSSTF meeting or event is encouraged to take immediate action to ensure this behaviour is stopped.

As the first step, the member should make it clear to the perpetrator that s/he finds the behaviour offensive, and ask that it be stopped. This can be done personally, either in writing or verbally, or with the assistance of a third party.

If the behaviour recurs or persists, or if the member does not feel safe in approaching the perpetrator directly, s/he should speak with the designated officer(s) and ask him/her to act. If no officer has been designated, the member should speak with the Executive member or Branch President in charge to ask that one be appointed.

The designated officer(s) will investigate the complaint promptly, including separately interviewing the parties involved and any witnesses, with a view to resolving the problem informally. During this process, the designated officer(s), with the approval of the District President, may remove the respondent temporarily from the meeting if circumstances warrant.

The investigation shall be handled confidentially; however all complaints will be reported by the designated officer(s) to the District President.

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, 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 District President for action, and it shall be the joint responsibility of the District President and the Executive Member or Branch President in charge to 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.

Resolutions may include, but are not limited to apologies, mediation, warnings, temporary limiting access, or removal/exclusion from the meeting or event. If a decision is made to remove or exclude that member, and where this member is representing a branch, or bargaining unit, a confidential letter outlining the reasons for the decision will be sent to the President of the appropriate body.

Decisions may be reviewed by the District Executive on the request of a member.

The President 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 make a complaint to police.