



Riverside School Board

Policy Name:	Policy to Prevent Harassment
Policy Number:	Policy number HR682-20250520 replacing policy number HR505-20180130
Date submitted to Executive	March 11, 2025
Date received at Council:	March 25, 2025
Consultation Period:	March 28, 2025, to May 11, 2025
Date Approved by Council:	May 20, 2025

Riverside School Board is committed to promoting and ensuring a learning and working environment free from all forms of harassment.

Objectives

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- Affirm *Riverside School Board's commitment* to prevent and put an end to any situation of psychological or sexual harassment related to work, including harassment from external sources.
- Indicate the means put in place to prevent harassment, including the information and training programs offered.
- Establish the procedure for dealing with complaints and problematic situations that are brought to the attention of the employer, or its designated representative.

Scope

This Policy applies to all Riverside School Board employees, parents or guardians, volunteers, our community partners, visitors, service providers, interns "*stagiaires*" and any person who comes into contact with staff. It also applies to elected officials, who are governed by *By-law #2: Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct for Commissioners*.

This Policy applies in particular in the following places and contexts:

- workplaces, including telework locations, if applicable;
- any other place where people are likely to be in the course of their employment (e.g., common areas on the employer's premises, during meetings, training, travel);
- during work-related social activities.

It also applies to exchanges that may occur on social media between a member of staff and any other stakeholder named above.

The *Policy to Maintain a Safe, Respectful and Drug-Free Environment in Schools* applies for complaints directed towards students.

Employee rights in the respective collective agreements shall remain in effect.

Definitions

Harassment

Harassment is a violation of an individual's dignity and basic human rights. It may be defined as unwelcome comments, actions or gestures, repetitive in nature, which deny individuals the dignity and respect to which they are entitled. These behaviors could be psychological, physical and/or sexual in nature, and are discomforting, intimidating, offensive, humiliating, and embarrassing. A single action may also be considered harassment.

Harassment may include but is not limited to:

- a) any action, intentional or not, directed at an individual or group by another individual or group who knows or should know that their action is unwanted;
- b) any implied or explicit bribe, and/or threats of reprisal;
- c) any behavior, verbal and/or physical, which creates an intimidating or hostile atmosphere;
- d) any action, intentional or not, that demeans, causes discomfort or an unsettling atmosphere for an individual or group;
- e) any threat to or abuse of personal property;
- f) abusive language, verbal or written threats, gestures, derogatory comments or degrading descriptions;
- g) inappropriate or unwanted communication of any form including, but not limited to, e-mails, social media and text messages;
- h) inappropriate and/or unwelcome jokes, stories, teasing, taunting, drawings, pictures, gestures, photographs or videos;
- i) the spreading of malicious rumors;
- j) unsolicited remarks of a sexual nature;
- k) derogatory comments, threats or reprisals in reaction to a rejected suggestion, sexual or otherwise;
- l) false accusations.

Psychological Harassment

Psychological harassment means any vexatious behavior in the form of repeated and hostile or unwanted conduct, verbal comments, actions, or gestures, that affects an employee's dignity or psychological or physical integrity and that results in a harmful work environment for the employee. For greater certainty, psychological harassment includes any such behaviors in the form of verbal comments, actions or gestures of a sexual nature. A single serious incidence of such behavior that has a lasting harmful effect on an employee may also constitute psychological harassment.

All cases of harassment reported to Riverside School Board will be treated in the strictest confidence and in accordance with this Policy.

Policy Statement

Riverside School Board does not tolerate or admit any form of harassment in the workplace, including:

- by its managers towards employees;
- between co-workers;
- by employees of their superiors;
- from any person associated with it: representative, customer, user, supplier, visitor or other.

Any person who commits a breach of this Policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. The choice of the applicable measure will take into account the seriousness and consequences of the act(s) as well as the previous record of the person who committed them.

A person who makes false accusations with the intent to cause harm is also subject to appropriate disciplinary measures.

Staff Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all employees to adopt behavior that promotes the maintenance of a work environment free of psychological or sexual harassment. To this end, the expectations of all staff members are as follows:

- contribute to a harassment-free workplace;
- respect people in the course of their work;
- participate in the mechanisms put in place by the employer to prevent and stop harassment;
- report any harassment-related situation as soon as possible to one of the persons designated by the employer to receive and handle complaints and reports;

More specifically:

Human Resources	• Designate a person or department responsible for drafting, disseminating, applying, and interpreting the Policy. • Designate a designated person responsible for handling reports and complaints of harassment or violence and his or her replacement in the event of an absence or if he or she is the subject of a complaint. • Train staff and managers on harassment and violence. • Provide support to those affected by a harassment or violence complaint.
Administrators	• Distribute the Policy to suppliers, contractors, parents, volunteers, and staff at their facility. It is also encouraged to include contractual clauses in service agreements. • Ensure pleasant working relationships within your team. • Treat any situation involving harassment or violence seriously. • Inform the designated person of any complaint or behavior that may be considered harassment or violence. • Acting in an exemplary manner.
Employees and interns " <i>stagiaires</i> "	• Show respect for colleagues, managers, employer, customers, suppliers, partners, etc. • Report as soon as possible to the designated person or his or her manager (or any other person authorized under the Policy) any conduct that contravenes the Policy, whether it is experienced, brought to his or her attention or witnessed. • Comply with the Policy by adopting the behaviors and conduct set out in the Policy.
Partners	• Show respect for employees, managers, employers, customers, suppliers, etc. • Report any harassment or violence that has been experienced or brought to their attention. • Comply with the Policy.

Prevention of Psychological and Sexual Harassment

Riverside School Board is committed to taking reasonable measures to provide a workplace free of all forms of harassment to protect the dignity and psychological and physical integrity of individuals.

In accordance with its legal obligations, the employer implements measures to identify, control and eliminate the risks of psychological or sexual harassment, in particular by:

- 1) disseminating this Policy in a manner that makes it accessible to all its staff by posting it on the intranet.
- 2) maintaining ongoing monitoring of risks and risk factors likely to generate harassment situations.
- 3) being attentive in the workplace to changes in the conduct of individuals, the formation

- of clans or groups that can mobilize against a person, and tensions between colleagues.
- 4) regularly educating staff on the roles and responsibilities of each employee in preventing harassment, including social events.
 - 5) establishing a training and awareness program for staff and designated persons to receive and handle complaints and reports, including:
 - the dissemination and information regarding this Policy;
 - training on civility, prevention of psychological, sexual, or discriminatory harassment.

Coming into Force

This Policy shall come into force on May 20, 2025.