

ST. STEPHEN'S-ON-THE-HILL UNITED CHURCH (SSOTH) WORKPLACE VIOLENCE & WORKPLACE HARASSMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES

Purpose:

SSOTH is committed to providing a safe workplace and will not tolerate any behaviour by its members or staff (be they general, lay and Order of Ministry) that constitutes harassment or violence of any kind. Harassment and violence are prohibited by federal and provincial law.

Policy:

SSOTH is committed to providing a safe, harassment- and violence-free environment for worship and work. Complaints of harassment or violence will be taken seriously and dealt with in a spirit of compassion and justice.

Violence is defined broadly as:

- The exercise of physical force by a person against a worker or volunteer in a workplace that causes, or could cause, injury;
- An attempt to exercise physical force by a person against a worker or volunteer in a workplace that could cause physical injury;
- A statement or behaviour that is reasonable for a worker or volunteer to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker or volunteer, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury.

Harassment is defined as any unwanted physical, sexual, or verbal conduct that is known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwanted and is a form of discrimination. Harassment may involve a wide range of behaviours, from verbal innuendo and subtle suggestions to overt demands and physical abuse.

Sexual harassment is defined as any attempt to coerce an unwilling person into a sexual relationship, or to subject a person to unwanted sexual attention, or to punish a refusal to comply.

It is the responsibility of all staff or volunteers to raise concerns about harassment, violence, and discrimination. It is also the responsibility of all staff and members to respond to complaints of harassment, violence, and discrimination.

Procedures:

1. Harassment and violence are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
2. All complaints of harassment or violence will be taken seriously and will be investigated.
3. Any complaint of harassment or violence in the workplace must be reported in writing to the staff member's Ministry & Personnel representative, or the Chair of the Ministry & Personnel Committee, in his or her absence. In the case of a volunteer, the written complaint must be reported either to the Chair of the Ministry & Personnel Committee or to the Chair of Council. The complaint must include the details of the nature of the complaint, including the name of the abuser, any witnesses to the offense as well as the

SSOTH WORKPLACE VIOLENCE & HARASSMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES

date of the alleged incident. The complaint should be submitted as soon as practically possible subsequent to the alleged offense to assist in timely and accurate follow-up.

4. In the case of violent incidents requiring emergency response, the staff member or volunteer should immediately call 911.
5. Investigations will be conducted and / or facilitated by SSOTH Council on a timely basis.
6. Each stage in dealing with a complaint of harassment or violence needs to minimize further distress for the complainant and involve as few people as possible. Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality to the extent possible.
7. Upon the conclusion of the investigation, SSOTH Council and / or other appropriate investigative bodies will review the information gathered, take appropriate actions, and respond to the complaint.