

Office of Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), POLICY ON “RESPECT AND DIGNITY IN THE WORKPLACE”

Issuing Office: EDI/Immediate Office of the Director (IMOD)

Release Date: 07/25/2013

Note: This policy supersedes any other policy on Respect and Dignity issued in EDI.

This policy outlines the expectations set forth by the EDI with regards to respect and dignity in the workplace.

A. Policy:

This policy outlines the Office of Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) firm commitment to ensuring a positive and professional working environment in which all people are treated with respect and dignity. The EDI believes in a proactive approach to workplace respect and are committed to providing employees with a healthy and safe workplace, free from physical or psychological bullying, discrimination, harassment, gossip, emotional abuse, and violence.

Everyone in the workplace, irrespective of their position, deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. No one should be subjected to bullying or harassment in the workplace. This can put at risk the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees. This organization has therefore adopted a policy of ‘zero tolerance’ to disrespect, bullying or harassment in the workplace.

A truly respectful workplace requires the cooperation and support from each and every employee in the EDI. Everyone has a responsibility to set a positive example and behave in a manner, which will not offend, embarrass or humiliate others, whether deliberate or unintentional.

The absence of bullying, harassment, and violence in the workplace is a fundamental right of all employees. All forms of bullying, discrimination, harassment and violence by management, supervisors, workers, subcontractors, suppliers and clients will not be tolerated. Alleged violations will be investigated and if substantiated can result in immediate counseling to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The efficient and confidential handling of all complaints and other actions taken to resolve,

prevent or address violations of respect will be carefully observed to ensure that the rights of individuals are not prejudiced or jeopardized.

“Dignity and Respect” requires an organization to have and maintain a certain behavioral culture. Acceptable and unacceptable behaviors are defined below.

1. What is a respectful workplace?

A respectful workplace is one that values:

- diversity and the human rights of others regardless of their race, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, age, sex, marital status, family status, any physical or mental disability and sexual orientation
- the dignity of the person
- courteous conduct
- mutual respect, fairness and equality
- positive communication between people
- collaborative working relationships

2. What is disrespectful behavior?

Disrespectful behavior includes, but is not limited to the following:

- offensive or inappropriate remarks, gestures, material or behavior
- inappropriate jokes or cartoons including racial or ethnic slurs
- grouping or isolating (example: on race or ethnic origin)
- yelling
- belittling
- reprimanding in the presence of others
- aggressive or patronizing behavior
- embarrassing or humiliating behavior
- discrimination as defined under human rights legislation
- sexual harassment
- intimidation and/or coercion
- undermining legitimate business interest
- spreading malicious information that have no foundation in fact
- damaging gossip or rumors
- unwarranted physical contact
- covert behavior, i.e. inappropriately withholding information, undermining, underhandedness

B. Coverage:

Everyone (managers and employees alike) is responsible to strictly follow the procedures outlined in this policy. The policy applies to all employees and managers, including full time, part time, temporary employees, volunteers, contractors, subcontractors, and suppliers. It applies to the workplace itself as well as to

activities connected with the workplace such as travel, conferences, and work related social gatherings.

C. Responsibilities and Expectations

Every employee can expect to be treated with dignity and respect in the workplace. Every employee has the responsibility to refrain from participating in behavior that is, or could be perceived to be disrespectful in nature.

To support the objective of providing all employees with a healthy safe workplace, managers, supervisors and employees are required to take preventative action to ensure that risks to individual's health and safety due to violations of *respect* are eliminated or reported.

Managers and Team Leads are responsible to:

- Make employees aware of this Policy;
- Provide, with appropriate assistance, interpretations to employees regarding potential breaches of the policy;
- Lead by example by creating and maintaining a workplace which demonstrates respect and professionalism and following the tenets in this policy;
- Ensure that harassment, bullying and violence are not allowed, condoned or ignored;
- To prevent the development, escalation or recurrence of incidents that violate the respect policy;
- Maintain confidentiality at all times and only speak to the appropriate managers, not to other co-workers regarding any complaint;
- Address concerns of the staff swiftly and immediately and with consequences;
- Managers may be considered party to the offence if they fail to take corrective actions.

Employees are responsible to:

- Read and comply with this policy;
- Request an interpretation of the policy from their Manager if they are unsure whether any of their behaviors, circumstances or interests may be in present or future breach of the policy;
- Treat all other employees with respect ;
- Speak up when bullying, discrimination, intimidation, harassment or violence occurs;
- Report any violations of this policy through your chain of command if possible or another EDI manager;
- Maintain confidentiality at all times and only speak to the appropriate managers, not to other co-workers regarding any complaint.

This policy establishes the standard of treating employees with dignity and respect. It is incumbent on every employee to do the same and begin/continue treating one another with respect and dignity.