

RED DEER PUBLIC LIBRARY	SUBJECT: PERSONNEL POLICIES SEXUAL HARASSMENT	SECTION: 7.33 PAGE: 1 DATED MAY 2002
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7.33 SEXUAL HARASSMENT

.01 PURPOSE

- ✍ To create and maintain a workplace free of sexual harassment
- ✍ To ensure a confidential complaint procedure for employees and volunteers victimized by sexual harassment.

The Red Deer Public Library is committed to a healthy work environment free of harassment for all our employees and volunteers. To this extent, the Red Deer Public Library has developed this policy intended to prevent sexual harassment of employees and to deal quickly and effectively with any incident that might occur. The Red Deer Public Library seeks to provide a safe, healthy and rewarding work environment for employees and volunteers. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated by Red Deer Public Library.

.02 DEFINITION

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is any behaviour that is sexual in nature and is unwelcome. The Alberta Human Rights Commission defines sexual harassment as follows:

“Sexual harassment, being discrimination on the grounds of sex, is a violation of the Individual’s Rights Protection Act. Unwanted sexual advances, unwanted requests for sexual favours, and other unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment,
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual affects that individual’s employment.”

Sexual harassment is illegal under the provisions of the Individual’s Rights Protection Act.

Sexual harassment can include such things as pinching, patting, rubbing or leering, dirty jokes, pictures or pornographic materials, comments, suggestions, innuendos, and requests or demands of a sexual nature.

The behaviour need not be intentional in order to be considered sexual harassment. It is offensive and in many cases intimidates others.

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.03 PROCEDURE

If you are being sexually harassed:

1. Tell the individual his/ her **behaviour is unwelcome and ask him/ her to stop.**
2. **Keep a record of incidents** (dates, times, locations, possible witnesses, what happened, your response). You do not have to have a record of events in order to file a complaint, but a record can strengthen your case and help you remember details over time.
3. **File a complaint.** If, after asking the harasser to stop his/ her behaviour, the harassment continues, report the problem to one of the following:
 - a) Your Supervisor
 - b) A Department Manager
 - c) The Library Director

You also have the right to contact the Alberta Human Rights Commission to file a complaint of sexual harassment. If circumstances warrant it, the police can be contacted to file a charge of assault.

.04 Dealing with a complaint

1. When a complaint is received, an investigation will be undertaken immediately and all necessary steps taken to resolve the problem.
2. The complainant and the alleged harasser will both be interviewed along with any individuals who may be able to provide relevant information. The investigation will be performed in as discreet and confidential a fashion as possible. All information will be kept in confidence.
3. If the investigation reveals evident to support the complaints of sexual harassment, the harasser will be disciplined appropriately. Discipline may range from a written warning up to and including dismissal, and the incident will be documented in the harasser's file.

No documentation whatsoever will be placed in the complainant's file where the complaint is filed in good faith, whether the complaint is upheld or not.

4. If the investigation fails to find evidence to support the complaint, there will be NO documentation concerning the complaint placed in the file of the alleged harasser. Confidential counselling will be made available to alleged harassers in cases where complaints have not been

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upheld.

5. Regardless of the outcome of a sexual harassment complaint, where complaints are made in good faith, the employee or volunteer lodging the complaint, as well as anyone providing information, will be protected from any form of retaliation by either co-workers or superiors. This includes protection from demotion, unwanted transfer, denial of opportunities, as well as harassment of the individual as a result of his/ her having made a complaint or having provided evidence regarding the complaint.

.05 RESPONSIBILITY

Employees or Volunteers

Employees or volunteers who believe they have been the subject of sexual harassment have the responsibility to advise the offender that the action is unacceptable behaviour and is unwelcome.

Supervisors

It is the responsibility of a director, manager, or any person supervising one of more employees or volunteers to:

1. Take immediate and appropriate action to deal with incidents of sexual harassment whether brought to their attention or personally observed.
2. Report all incidents to the Director.
3. Apply appropriate discipline.

Under no circumstances should a complaint be dismissed or downplayed or the complainant told to deal with it himself or herself.

The Director

The Director is accountable to ensure that a thorough investigation is completed and, if necessary, recommend appropriate action.