



Watch your thoughts, they become words.  
Watch your words, they become actions.  
Watch your actions, they become habits.  
Watch your habits, they become character.  
Watch your character, for it becomes...  
your destiny.

**For further information on Central Health's  
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**Respectful Workplace Advisors**

For a full listing of contacts visit  
<http://chintranet/default.aspx>

***You can't train diversity...but you can educate  
about respect***

# **Creating and maintaining a respectful workplace**

## **AN EMPLOYEE GUIDE**



Central  
Health



***Small actions by a lot  
of people make  
a great difference!***

## What is a respectful workplace?

A respectful workplace is one that is healthy, safe, supportive and values diversity. It is a place where employees are valued; communication is polite and courteous; people are treated with respect; conflict is addressed in a positive and respectful manner; and disrespectful behavior, harassment and bullying, are addressed.

## What is the respectful workplace policy?

Central Health will develop, implement and monitor a Respectful Workplace Program through which employees will be able to address issues of disrespectful behaviors and bullying in the workplace, utilizing both informal and formal processes. Central Health's policy is to promote a safe and respectful workplace for all its employees where bullying or disrespectful behavior is not acceptable anywhere in the workplace, at any level. This policy goes beyond the parameters of legislation by addressing workplace behavior that is not related to the grounds prohibited by the Canadian Human Rights Act.



***Creating a respectful workplace is everyone's business***

- Counseling
- Team Building Services
- Education and Training

In addition to this, employees, workgroups, teams and groups can access training services which can include information sessions, awareness sessions and skills training, in:

- Respectful Workplace - employee training
- Respectful Workplace – manager's training
- Conflict management/resolution
- Communication skills
- Awareness raising sessions (on specific workplace issues)
- Stress in the workplace
- Occupational health and safety professional practices

## How will this policy be supported in the future?

This policy will be supported through:

- The Respectful Workplace Program
- The Employee Wellness/Health and Safety Division
- Employee and Family Assistance Program
- The Violence Prevention Committee

...which all promote, advise, measure and report on our performance in creating and maintaining a respectful workplace.



***In a respectful workplace, success is measured by what 'doesn't' happen***

The purpose of the Respectful Workplace Program is to enhance the capacity of Central Health to promote, create and maintain a Respectful Workplace for all employees by:

- ensuring all employees are aware of and understand that disrespectful behavior and/or conflict in the workplace are serious issues that can negatively affect employees and their work environments;
- ensuring all employees are aware of policies and procedures to prevent and/or respond to disrespectful behavior and/or workplace conflicts;
- ensuring that support is available and accessible to all employees directly affected by disrespectful behavior and/or conflict in the workplace;
- providing education about effective ways to resolve issues when they first arise; and
- providing means through which employees can seek resolution to these issues providing avenues of recourse to employees if they are subjected to disrespectful behavior and/or workplace conflict.

### **What options are available to deal with workplace issues?**

Central Health will provide resources to individuals (and/or groups) to assist in the resolution of workplace issues. Employees are encouraged to utilize these options to resolve any situation or conflict in a fair and respectful manner, as early as possible. The use of these options can in many instances resolve the issue and prevent a situation from escalating to the point where filing a complaint is necessary. The following services are available through the Respectful Workplace Program:

- Mediation
- Facilitation
- Consultations

### **What are disrespectful or bullying behaviours?**

Disrespectful behaviors are any unwarranted or unnecessary comment or act (unwelcome, objectionable or offensive, including verbal, written or internet threats) that is known, or ought to have been known to cause offense, distress, psychological or physical harm to the victim(s). This may occur during one incident or over a series of incidents.

Bullying is defined as persistent, demeaning and downgrading behavior through vicious words and cruel acts such as belittling, coercion, threatening, intimidation, undermining staff or colleagues, blaming, fear and professional humiliation that gradually undermine confidence and self-esteem". (Ontario Safety Association) It usually involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behavior that is intended to intimidate, offend, degrade, or humiliate a particular person or group of people. (CCOHS, 2005)

### **What they are not?**

Disrespectful behaviors or bullying does not include the normal exercise of supervisory responsibilities, including performance reviews, direction, counseling and directive action where necessary, provided they are conducted in a respectful, professional manner, in accordance with Central Health's policies and procedures.



***Fostering respect is a way of life that must be defined, communicated and modeled***

## Who provided input into the policy?

A Respectful Workplace Advisory Committee was established by Central Health to provide guidance to the Respectful Workplace Coordinator to oversee the development of this policy, and the development of the Respectful Workplace Program. The committee consists of representatives from Newfoundland Association of Public Employees (NAPE), Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Association of Allied Health Professionals (AAHP), Newfoundland and Labrador Nurses Union (NLNU), Non-union non-management, Management, Employee Relations and Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP).

## Why do we need a respectful workplace policy?

This policy is a key component of Central Health's overall vision of a healthy workplace. Research consistently shows that the number one priority for employees, as identified through workplace surveys across Canada, is respect in the workplace. Health Canada supports this not only as a right of all employees, but as a need. According to Health Canada, a healthy workplace has three interrelated components:

1. a focus on healthy lifestyle practices,
2. safe physical environments and
3. a positive organizational culture that supports employee well being and effective work practices.

A respectful workplace is a major component of a positive organizational culture and therefore, of a healthy workplace. It is one that supports the physical, psychological and social well-being of all employees.

## How does this policy affect me?

It recognizes that every individual has the responsibility to conduct themselves in a respectful manner in the workplace. The policy

outlines that employees will:

- engage in workplace behavior that is respectful of others and does not place other employees or themselves at risk
- respect the diversity brought to the workplace by all employees
- create and maintain a respectful workplace through fostering respectful behavior towards others
- challenge disrespectful or inappropriate behavior when it happens
- report any incidents of disrespectful behavior to the supervisor/manager
- keep written notes of any episodes of disrespectful behavior which are addressed directly
- utilize your Employee and Family Assistance Program, if it is felt necessary
- utilize Respectful Workplace Advisors, if it is felt necessary. A Respectful Workplace Advisor is a volunteer employee who serves as a source of information, support and guidance to any employee who believes they are experiencing disrespect or bullying in the workplace.

## How does this policy affect my employer?

Central Health recognizes its role both legally and ethically to ensure its employees work in an environment that is psychologically safe, healthy and respectful, which is free from harassment, discrimination and bullying. It is therefore committed to addressing conflict in the work environment in a fair, timely and respectful way. Conflict is a natural part of human interaction and it is recognized that the closer people work together, the more likely they are to experience conflict. When conflict is brought into awareness, identified openly and resolved, working relationships are enhanced.