



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE
MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF
COMMONS WORKPLACE
HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE
PREVENTION POLICY
2020-2021



Introduction

The *Members of the House of Commons Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Policy* was adopted by the Board of Internal Economy on January 28, 2021, and replaces the *House of Commons Policy on Preventing and Addressing Harassment*, approved by the Board on December 9, 2014. The new policy responds to the regulations established under Part II of the *Canada Labour Code* that came into effect on January 1, 2021, and outlines the responsibilities of both Members of Parliament, as employers, and their employees in maintaining a healthy, safe, and respectful work environment free from harassment and violence.

This policy applies to:

- all Members of Parliament, as employers, whether acting as a Member, House Officer, or Member responsible for a research office;
- employees of Members, House Officers and research offices; and
- interns and volunteers (paid or unpaid).

This policy does not cover situations between Members, which are addressed by the *Code of Conduct for Members of the House of Commons: Sexual Harassment*.

The updated policy sets out the specific duties of employers to investigate, record and report all occurrences of harassment and violence. It strengthens the focus on the prevention of harassment and violence, the timely and effective processing of complaints, and the support to be provided to affected employees. As with the former policy, the updated policy requires the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) of the House of Commons to present an annual statistical report to the Board of Internal Economy.

The following pages provide a statistical overview of cases processed under the former and updated policies in the 2020–2021 fiscal year by reporting on the number, nature and outcome of harassment and violence complaints. The report also provides information on training sessions related to this policy.

Enquiries and complaints

To provide a more comprehensive view, the report also outlines enquiries made to the Respectful Workplace Team, which may involve a request for information regarding the options available under the policy or otherwise. In certain situations, the person making the enquiry may be referred to a more appropriate channel to resolve the issue.

During the period covered by this report, two complaints were managed through the Office of the CHRO. Of these, one was formally investigated and one was deemed non-receivable. No cases remain active. A total of 22 enquiries were also submitted to the Respectful Workplace Team regarding, for example, coaching on dealing with conflict, information on the policy, and tools available.

The number of reported cases may appear to be lower than in previous years (see table 1)—this may be partly due to the shift to a virtual work environment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, recent amendments to the *Canada Labour Code* have led to greater awareness regarding the necessity for Members to continue to foster a healthy and harassment-free workplace and contributed to the increased preventative measures put in place to safeguard Members and employees from various forms of harassment and violence.

Training and awareness

To achieve the objectives of the policy, significant emphasis is placed on awareness and training opportunities. Over the past fiscal year, Members and their employees have participated in the training sessions outlined below.

Harassment prevention for Members – in-class/virtual training program

The House Administration continued to offer a three-hour in-class session on harassment prevention for Members called “Strengthening a Culture of Respect – From Awareness to Action.” Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, sessions that were given in class prior to April 2020 were adapted to a virtual two-hour session, launched in fall 2020.

Twenty (20) sessions on harassment prevention were offered to Members between April 1, 2020, and March 31, 2021. All active Members of Parliament have participated in this session.

Harassment prevention for Members’ employees – in-class/virtual training program

An in-class training session on harassment prevention for Members’ employees is offered. This interactive session, designed specifically for Members’ employees, provides information on what may constitute harassment in the workplace—including sexual harassment—and covers definitions found in the *Members of the House of Commons Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Policy*. It also presents practical tools for prevention as well as information on the resources available when assistance is needed. Nine (9) sessions were offered to Members’ employees between April 1, 2020, and March 31,

2021, and a total of 95 Members' employees participated in these sessions. The program is available to Members' employees on an ongoing basis through Human Resources Services.

Harassment prevention in the workplace – online training program

A supplementary self-paced training session on harassment prevention in the workplace designed especially for Members and their employees is offered in both official languages as part of the Harassment Prevention Program. This training is accessible on *Source*, the House of Commons' intranet site. During the period covered by this report, 34 participants completed the online training program. A total of 818 participants have completed it since the program was launched in 2016.

Updated training offerings

In compliance with the new regulations under the *Canada Labour Code* and to reflect the new *Members of the House of Commons Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Policy*, the existing training offerings for Members and their employees are being updated, and delivered in accordance with the policy requirements.

Awareness

Members' employees are made aware of the harassment and violence prevention policy when they are hired and as part of the new onboarding program for Members' staff. Finally, a section on harassment prevention is prominently displayed on *Source*. Members can also supplement the information provided through these channels with additional resources and workplace tools.

Michelle Laframboise

Chief Human Resources Officer
House of Commons

Reporting (2020–2021)

Table 1: Complaints reported over the last three fiscal years

| | 2018–2019 | 2019–2020 | 2020–2021 |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Complaints | 6 | 5 | 2 |

Table 2: Grounds for enquiry/complaint

| Grounds | Complaint | Enquiry | Number |
|--------------------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Abuse of authority | - | - | - |
| Harassment | - | - | - |
| Sexual harassment | - | - | - |
| Discrimination | - | - | - |
| Multiple | 2 | - | 2 |
| Prevention | - | - | - |
| Total | 2 | - | 2 |

Table 3: Status of respondent

| Status | Number |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| Member | 1 |
| Colleague/Member's employee | 1 |
| Other | - |
| Total | 2 |

Table 4: Outcomes

| Outcome | Abuse of authority | Harassment | Sexual harassment | Discrimination | Multiple | Prevention |
|---------------------|--------------------|------------|-------------------|----------------|----------|------------|
| Enquiry only | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Complaint withdrawn | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Informal resolution | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Mediated resolution | - | - | - | - | - | - |

| Outcome | Abuse of authority | Harassment | Sexual harassment | Discrimination | Multiple | Prevention |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------|-------------------|----------------|----------|------------|
| Investigation | - | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| Resolved (other) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Non-receivable* | - | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| Pending (still open) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total | - | - | - | - | 2 | - |

*Does not meet policy criteria

Table 5: Results of investigation

| Result | Number |
|--|----------|
| Substantiated | - |
| Partially substantiated | - |
| Not substantiated | 1 |
| Frivolous or in bad faith | - |
| Resolved before the end of the investigation | - |
| Total | 1 |

Table 6: Related enquiries made through the Respectful Workplace Program

| Enquiry | Number |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Abuse of authority | 4 |
| Harassment | 3 |
| Discrimination | 2 |
| Training | 1 |
| Other | 12 |
| Total | 22 |