

Future-Lineage Spiritual School -- Human Rights Policy

The Ontario Human Rights Code (the Code), states that it is public policy in Ontario to recognize the dignity and worth of every person and to provide equal rights and opportunities without discrimination. Future-Lineage Spiritual School is committed to providing a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of each person, so that each person feels a part of and able to contribute to the community.

Under the *Code*, every person has the right to be free from harassment and discrimination. Harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated, condoned, or ignored at Future-Lineage Spiritual School. The right to freedom from discrimination and harassment extends to all directors, facilitators, instructors, sponsors, employees, adjusters, associated personnel, as well as participants, clients, volunteers, co-op students, interns, and apprentices. This policy applies at every training level of Future-Lineage Spiritual School and to every aspect of the workplace and school environment and employment relationship including recruitment, selection, promotion, transfers, training, salaries, benefits, and termination.

This policy also applies to Future-Lineage Spiritual School related meetings that occur outside of the physical facilities.

Discrimination

Discrimination means any form of unequal treatment based on a ground listed in the *Code*. Discrimination may be intentional or unintentional. It may involve direct actions that are discriminatory on their face, or it may involve rules, practices or procedures that appear neutral, but have the effect of disadvantaging certain groups of people ("systemic"). The *Code* applies to all Future-Lineage Spiritual School related meetings that are governed by provincial law and is intended to ensure the dignity and worth of each person, a climate of respect and mutual understanding, full participation in society and equal rights and opportunities.

Future-Lineage Spiritual School's harassment and discrimination policies are in accordance with the *Code*.

The grounds protected from discrimination and/or harassment are:

- Age
- Creed (religion)
- Sex (including pregnancy and breastfeeding)
- Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression
- Family status
- Marital status (including the status of being married, single, widowed, divorced, separated, or living in a conjugal relationship outside of marriage, whether in a same sex or opposite sex relationship)
- Disability (including mental, physical, developmental or learning disabilities)
- Race, Ancestry, Place of origin, Ethnic origin, Citizenship, Colour
- Record of offences (criminal conviction for an offence or offence for which pardon has been received)
- Association or relationship with a person identified by one of the above grounds
- Perception that one of the above grounds applies

Harassment

Harassment means, "engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcomed". This definition is found in both the *Code* (with respect to harassment) and *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (with respect to Workplace Harassment). Future-Lineage Spiritual School's policies adopt this definition and broaden it to include, in the case of personal harassment, any conduct or behaviours which create intimidating, demeaning or hostile working or school environment.

Defining Harassment: When assessing whether behaviour being experienced amounts to harassment, it is helpful to consider components of the definition. Without fulfilling all requirements, the behaviour, while distressing, is not within the scope of the harassment and discrimination policies at Future-Lineage Spiritual School. It may be indicative of an interpersonal conflict. It is important that the behaviour be addressed.

A course: In almost all cases, harassment is a pattern of behaviour occurring over a period of time, which has a negative effect on the target(s) and/or the environment. However, one single incident can constitute harassment when it is demonstrated that it has caused a significant effect on the target or the environment.

Vexatious: Means not having sufficient reason and/or seeking only to annoy or irritate.

Comment or Conduct: Behaviours can include conversations, jokes, name calling, threats, emails, etc.

Known or Ought Reasonably to Be Known: Both subjective (i.e., the target feels the behaviour is inappropriate) and objective (i.e., a reasonable third party would feel that the behavior was inappropriate).

Unwelcomed: The behaviour must be unwelcomed to the target or within the environment. It is important to note that there is no requirement that a person (target) expressly object to unwelcomed behaviour. It is recognized that where harassment is present, it may be difficult, perhaps risky, to object to a person's behaviour, particularly when that person holds power over the target such as a leader, professor.

Examples of harassment include:

- Epithets, remarks, jokes, or innuendos related to a person's race, gender identity, gender expression, sex, disability, sexual orientation, creed, age, or any other ground.
- Posting or circulating offensive pictures, graffiti or materials, whether in print form or electronic.
- Singling out a person for humiliating or demeaning "teasing" or jokes because they are a member of a Code-protected group.
- Comments ridiculing a person because of characteristics that are related to a ground of discrimination. For example, this could include comments about a person's dress, speech, or other practices that may be related to their sex, race, gender identity, or creed.
- If a person does not explicitly object to harassing behaviour or appears to be going along with it, this does not mean that the behaviour is acceptable. The behaviour could still be considered harassment.
- Sexual and gender-based harassment that can include: Gender-related comments about a person's physical characteristics or mannerisms.
- Paternalism based on gender which undermines his or her self-respect or position of responsibility.
- Unwelcome physical contact.
- Suggestive or offensive remarks or innuendoes about members of a specific gender.
- Propositions of physical intimacy.
- Gender-related verbal abuse, threats, or taunting.
- Leering or inappropriate staring.
- Bragging about sexual prowess or questions or discussions about sexual activities.
- Offensive jokes or comments of a sexual nature about an employee or client.
- Rough and vulgar humour or language related to gender.
- Demands for dates or sexual favours.

Sexual Solicitation: This policy prohibits sexual solicitations or advances by any person who is in a position to grant or deny a benefit to the recipient of the solicitation or advance. Reprisals for rejecting such advances or solicitations are also not allowed.

Poisoned Environment: A poisoned environment is created by comments or conduct (including comments or conduct that are condoned or allowed to continue when brought to the attention of others) that create a discriminatory environment. The comments need not be directed at a specific person and may be from any person regardless of position or status. A single comment, if serious, may create a poisoned environment.

Harassment Hurts

Harassment can have a significant impact on the working or learning environment and those in it. Targets, in addition to third-party observers, can be affected by the behavior. Some of possible impacts for individuals experiencing harassment are:

- Stress, Anxiety, depression, sleep disorders, impaired decision-making, difficulty concentrating
- Reduced productivity, Absenteeism, Medical or stress-related leaves of absence
- Humiliation, loss of self-esteem and self-confidence, feelings of isolation, increase of gossip
- Reduced morale / factions among team members, classmates, colleagues, factions within teams

Duty To Accommodate

Future-Lineage Spiritual School is committed to ensuring that each individual has genuine, open and unhindered access to services, as well as employment and academic opportunities, which are free from systemic or other barriers. As such, Future Lineage Spiritual School respects the duty to accommodate. At the base of this obligation is the recognition that "true equality means respect for people's different needs".

For more information on the human rights system in Ontario visit: www.ontario.ca/humanrights