

POLICY ON HARASSMENT

PREAMBLE

The policy of the Vancouver and District Labour Council is to declare its absolute opposition to any discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, sex, colour, national or ethnic origin, mental or physical ability, age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, citizenship, creed, religious or political affiliation, criminal or civil offenses, marital or family status. To ignore discrimination or harassment is to condone the acts of the harasser and further penalize the victim.

Union solidarity is based on the principle that we are all stronger together, and we all deserve to be treated equally. Discrimination and harassment erode that principle and our strength.

Harassment is defined as any unwelcomed action, whether verbal or physical, on a single or repeated basis, which humiliates, insults or degrades. It includes jokes or remarks which denigrate persons on the basis of their sex, disability, or any of the aforementioned categories. Such acts may be subtle or overt, but they are always offensive and demeaning. Unwelcomed means any action which the harasser knows, or ought to reasonably know, is not desired by the victim.

Discrimination and harassment are expressions of power or perceived power and superiority. It is intended that this Policy will send a clear message to harassers that their actions will not be tolerated and to empower victims with the support of their union community.

At the commencement of every VDLC function, the Labour Council Policy on Harassment must be brought to the attention of every participant by the chair. Copies of the Harassment Policy will be visible at all functions.

PROCEDURE

1. Confidentiality will be respected throughout.
2. If a participant believes that they are being harassed at the function and wants it to stop, then:
 - (a) The victim, accompanied by a supportive colleague (if they choose) shall approach a Labour Council Officer at the function.
 - (b) The Labour Council Officer will immediately investigate with a view to resolving the problem. The Labour Council Officer may take action necessary to stop the harassment, up to and including removal of the harasser from the function.
 - (c) An incident involving the removal of the harasser must be recorded and brought to the attention of the President of the Council who will inform the harasser's Union of the reasons for the removal. The method of informing will protect the identity of the victim.