



## **Anti-Violence Policy**

*Reviewed and Adopted by the Board of Directors on October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020*

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Fierté Sudbury Pride is committed to fostering a violence-free environment where all are treated with respect and dignity.

### **SCOPE**

The present policy shall apply to the organization's Board of Directors, members, volunteers, contractors, and representatives, especially during the execution of their duties, responsibilities, and assigned tasks in service to the organization.

### **DEFINITIONS**

In the context of the present policy, "violence" can be understood to mean:

- a) physical assault: any physical force or threat of physical force to create fear and control another person;
- b) sexual assault: any unwanted sexual act or statement done or made by one person to another or others;
- c) sexual harassment: sexual harassment may refer to instances where the behaviour demeans or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment to the recipient;
- d) threats (verbal or written): a communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on any person or to personal property by some unlawful act;
- e) verbal/emotional/psychological abuse: a pattern of behaviour that makes someone feel worthless, flawed, unloved, or endangered; and
- f) state violence: the use of legitimate governmental authority to cause unnecessary harm and suffering to groups and individuals.

Discrimination, harassment, abuse, and violence of any kind, be it implicit or explicit, be it online or in-person, targeting members both within and without the organization based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, disability, or conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or in respect of which a record suspension has been ordered shall not be tolerated. This also includes the filing of unfounded complaints intended to cause harm. The Board of Directors shall, in its sole discretion and for the purpose of this policy only, determine what constitutes violence.

## **POLICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT**

Any form of violence as outlined above is understood to be as such independently of its recognition as such by police or law enforcement. Action or inaction by police or law enforcement shall not preclude action or inaction by the organization.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The organization shall take every complaint seriously. The organization is responsible for ensuring that any complaint is treated in a timely, consistent, and confidential manner.

Confidentiality may not be maintained should:

- a) the designated person receiving the complaint themselves have a legal duty to report, though that breach should only include the professional instances obligated by law; or
- b) there be a reasonable assumption that those engaging in violent behaviour pose an immediate danger or threat to the safety and well-being of themselves and/or others.

Those who are subject to the present policy shall commit to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

Those who are subject to the present policy must acknowledge the present policy prior to assuming a role and responsibilities within the organization and agree to abide by its content.

## **COMPLAINTS**

A complaint may be filed by contacting the organization's Chair. The complaint may be verbal or in writing. If the complaint is made verbally, the Chair will record the details provided by the complainant. The complainant should be prepared to provide details such as what happened; when it happened; where it happened; how often and who else was present (if applicable). Complaints should be made as soon as possible, taking into consideration any circumstances preventing the complainant from doing so.

The Chair will tell the person that the complaint has been made against, in writing, that a complaint has been filed. The letter will also provide details of the allegations that have been made against them. Should the matter be time sensitive, unilateral action by the Chair or their designate shall be permitted, though such action is subject to review by the Board.

Every effort will be made to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Should it be the case, the Chair shall advise both parties of the reasons why this is not possible. If either party to a harassment complaint believes that the complaint is not being handled in accordance with this policy, they should contact the Vice-Chair of the organization.

Should a complaint concern the Chair, the Vice-Chair or their designate shall assume responsibility over the complaint. Should both the Chair and the Vice-Chair be implicated in a filed complaint, all other members of the Board of Directors shall, amongst themselves, designate a lead person for that complaint.

## **REMEDIES**

Remedies for any complaint should be proportional to the concerned behavior, though it shall always consider the safety and well-being of all parties involved or affected.

The Board, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to bar any individual, member, or director from attending the organization's events and meetings, using any of its services, or participating in any way in any or all of its programs, projects, or initiatives.

A breach of the present policy deemed by the Board, in its sole discretion, to be severe enough, may trigger the processes for the removal of directorship and/or membership, as outlined in the organization's By-Laws and other policies.

## **REVIEW**

Fierté Sudbury Pride shall review this policy and procedures on an annual basis, or as required, and will make necessary adjustments to ensure that it meets the needs of all concerned.

## **ENQUIRIES**

Enquiries about this policy and related procedures can be made to the Chair or the Secretary.