

Early Resolution as part of the Respectful Workplace Policy

The Government of Manitoba recognizes its responsibility to build and maintain a diverse respectful workplace, where all employees enjoy an environment in which the dignity and self-respect of every person is valued and which is free of offensive remarks, material or behaviour.

Everyone has a responsibility to set a positive example and behave in a manner which will not offend, embarrass or humiliate others, whether deliberate or unintentional.

A respectful workplace is one that values:

- diversity and the human rights of others related to their race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, marital status, family status, any physical or mental disability and sexual orientation
- the dignity of the person
- courteous conduct
- mutual respect, fairness and equality
- positive communication between people
- collaborative working relationships

Disrespectful behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

- offensive or inappropriate remarks, gestures, material or behaviour
- inappropriate jokes or cartoons including racial or ethnic slurs

- excluding from a particular group, or conversely, grouping
- yelling or belittling
- reprimanding in the presence of others
- aggressive or patronizing behaviour
- damaging gossip or rumors
- unwarranted physical contact
- covert behaviour, i.e. inappropriately withholding information, undermining, underhandedness

The Respectful Workplace Advisor and the Early Resolution Process

Enquiry

The Respectful Workplace advisor (advisor) acts as a resource to all levels within the civil service. The objective of the **Early Resolution** process is to resolve any situation or conflict as soon as possible, in a fair and respectful manner. The use of problem solving mechanisms such as coaching, mediation and facilitation can in many instances resolve the issue.

At Enquiry it will be determined whether the issue raised is one that can be resolved through early resolution. All contacts will be responded to within two working days.

If a formal complaint has already been filed, it will be held in abeyance pending the outcome of the early resolution process.

Phase 1 – Issue Identification

In a safe and neutral environment, the advisor will assist individuals/groups to honestly and openly identify issues that create

barriers and challenges in the workplace. When workgroups are involved, the advisor will ensure that each employee has the opportunity to identify specific issues having an impact on them. Depending on the issues identified, the advisor will discuss options for a mutually acceptable resolution.

Phase 2 – Resolution Options

Some issues may be resolved between two parties without any further intervention. The advisor is available to assist through coaching or facilitation. Other issues require the involvement of the employing authority to ensure that appropriate action is taken. When warranted, the advisor will discuss the issue(s) with the employing authority to determine if they are willing to resolve the matter outside a formal process. The advisor will ensure that resolutions are consistent in both the interpretation and application of the Respectful Workplace Policy. Should the parties agree to using the early resolution process, a face to face meeting between the parties will be facilitated to discuss specific resolutions to each issue. These discussions focus on understanding the issues raised, what needs to remain the same and what needs to change. Expectations are clarified on a going-forward basis. If the parties resolve the matter, the file is closed.

Phase 3 – Maintaining a Positive Environment

Once specific issues requiring resolution have been completely dealt with, employees/groups/leaders may need additional support/services to help sustain an environment that is positive. The advisor may offer coaching and act as a facilitator

in discussions related to attitudes, role clarifications and work expectations. The goal is to assist individuals/groups in moving beyond specific issue(s), to build a positive environment. The timeframes for this Phase 3 varies depending on the individuals, group size, issues raised, solutions, etc. and the resources that are available/needed.

Confidentiality

The advisor will keep the details of a complaint confidential to the best of his or her ability. Personal information will be shared only to the extent that is necessary to resolve the matter or proceed to a formal complaint.

Other Respectful Workplace Services Available

The Respectful Workplace advisor can also provide assistance in other areas, as follows:

- Personal/group consultation
- Education
- Respectful Workplace policy interpretation
- Developing group specific information/training tools
- Referral to other therapeutic or restorative programs
- Poisoned work environments
- Employee (all levels) coaching

Contact Information

Respectful Workplace Advisor
3rd floor – 55 Donald Street
Winnipeg, MB R3C 1L8
Telephone: 204-945-5501
Toll free: 1-866-669-4916 (ext. 5501)
Fax: 204-948-2298
TTY: 204-948-3401