



## Unifor Harassment Policy for Union Events

Unifor believes that every individual has the right to dignity and respect both within the union and in the workplace. The responsibility of creating and preserving a safe and harassment-free environment is a collective one assumed by all Unifor members. Unifor shall endeavour to provide leadership in setting standards of behaviour, which reflect our commitment to equality.

Unifor will not tolerate any form of harassment, bullying or violence within the union environment, whether it is at the Local, Regional/Québec or National level. Such actions may result in sanctions being taken against a member pursuant to Unifor's Harassment Policy for Union Events Procedures for Unifor members.

**Union environment** means any Unifor event and/or any event in which a member is participating on behalf of Unifor including but not limited to conventions, meetings, seminars, councils, courses and conferences whether it be at the Local, Regional/Québec or National level.

**Harassment** is an expression of perceived power and superiority by the harasser(s) over another person or group, based on their: sex, race, creed, colour, religion, ethnic origin, place of origin, sexual orientation, political affiliation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, family status, disability, language, age, conviction for which a pardon has been granted, social and economic class, or activism and participation in the union.

Harassment is unwelcome, unwanted, and uninvited; it may be expressed verbally or physically; it is usually coercive, and it can occur as a single incident or on a repeated basis. It comprises actions, attitudes, language or gestures, which the harasser knows, or reasonably ought to know, are abusive, unwelcome, or wrong. It may include but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendoes, taunts, or other discriminatory communication in any media;
- Insulting or malicious gestures or practical jokes which cause someone embarrassment or discomfort;
- Ridiculing, degrading or expressing hatred or intolerance, whether verbally, in writing or physically;
- Display of offensive or pornographic material/pictures, graffiti, or other materials;
- Placing unreasonable limitations on someone because of a perceived need (e.g., disability, pregnancy, etc.);
- Leering (sexually suggestive staring);
- Defamation of religious imagery;

- Mockery of religious practices, customs or religious wear;
- Demands for sexual favours;
- Unnecessary physical contact such as touching, patting, or pinching;
- Making comments about one's appearance or personal life; or
- Expressing or promoting racial hatred.

Bullying and personal harassment are defined as deliberate actions, mobbing, offensive, malicious and/or cruel behaviour with the aim to humiliate, intimidate, undermine, or destroy the character or confidence of an individual or group of individuals. Bullying and personal harassment may include an abuse of power or perceived power by one person or group over another that degrades an individual. Bullying behaviour is often persistent and part of a pattern, but it can also occur as a single incident. It is usually carried out by an individual, who ought reasonably to have known that her/his actions are unwelcome or unwanted. It can also be an aspect of group behaviour. The policy includes any member in any type of relationship, for example domestic, intimate, common law partnerships.

- Some examples of bullying and personal harassment include but are not limited to:
  - Abusive and offensive language;
  - Insults;
  - Teasing;
  - Spreading rumour and innuendo;
  - Unfair blame for mistakes;
  - Deliberate exclusion;
  - Practical jokes;
  - Belittling or disregarding opinions or suggestions;
  - Public criticism.

Context is important in understanding bullying, particularly verbal communication. There is a difference between friendly insults exchanged by long-time work colleagues and comments that are meant to be, or are taken as demeaning.

**Union environment violence** is defined as any physical assault or threat of physical assault occurring in the union environment. This policy covers any person accompanying a Unifor member attending a Unifor event.

Examples of union environment violence include, but are not limited to:

- Striking, punching, slapping, or assaulting another person;
- Fighting or challenging another person to fight;
- Grabbing, pinching, or touching another person in an unwanted way, whether sexually or otherwise;
- Engaging in dangerous, threatening or unwanted horseplay;
- Possession of firearms, explosives, or other weapons that are intended by their design to inflict fatal injury;
- Threatening harm or harming another person, or any other action or conduct that implies the threat of bodily harm;

- Stalking (i.e., the repeated following, calling or harassing of another person combined with making of a verbal, written or implied threat of harm); or
- Any other act that would arouse fear in a reasonable person in the circumstance.
- Harassment, bullying and violence complaints at Unifor events will be taken seriously and will be dealt with immediately.

If you believe you have any of the above issues, you can take action:

1. If possible, make it clear you do not welcome such behaviour. You can do so either on your own, verbally or in writing, or with the assistance of another party. Indicate that you will take further action if the behaviour continues.
2. If the inappropriate behaviour persists, approach one or more of the designated ombudspersons who will attempt to resolve the matter informally and quickly. You may ask the designated ombudsperson (s) for help right away - If you are unwilling to approach the harasser directly.
3. Each incident will be handled confidentially and quickly, with particular sensitivity for the complainant.
4. The resolution at this stage would include, but not be limited to, apologies, reprimands and possible expulsions from the event at which the incident/s occurred (including the expulsion of third parties). Where the safety of any individual is compromised or a criminal act is alleged to have occurred, the appropriate authorities shall also be contacted.
5. Where the matter cannot be resolved informally, the Complainant may file a formal complaint in writing to the National Anti-harassment Coordinator at the national office. The designated ombudsperson(s) will provide you with specific procedures to do so.

**For this UNIFOR function, your designated ombudsperson(s) will be:**

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**ALL MESSAGES WILL BE TREATED CONFIDENTIALLY**