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## **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE, HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION PREVENTION POLICY**

### **Purpose:**

Green Thumbs Growing Kids is dedicated to providing a healthy and safe working environment compliant with the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act to insure protection of workers from violence, harassment and discrimination.

### **Definitions:**

“GTGK” - means Green Thumbs Growing Kids

“Workers” – means Staff, Contractors, Volunteers, Co-op and Placement Students

“Chair” of GTGK – Chair or President of the Board of Directors of GTGK

“OHS Act” – means Occupational Health and Safety Act

### **Policy Statement:**

Green Thumbs Growing Kids (GTGK) believes that every person is unique and must be treated with respect and equity. GTGK believes that the diversity of its program participants, volunteers and staff are sources of enrichment and strength.

GTGK recognizes that people of non-dominant groups can face discrimination. Under the Ontario Human Rights Code, discrimination is the unfavorable treatment of a person based on factors including

- race
- ancestry
- place of origin
- colour
- ethnic origin
- citizenship
- creed (religion)
- sex (including pregnancy)
- sexual orientation
- gender identity
- gender expression
- age (18 and over, 16 and over in accommodation)
- marital status (including same sex partners)
- family status
- disability
- receipt of public assistance (in accommodation only), and
- record of offences (in employment only).

The management of GTGK is committed to the prevention of workplace violence, harassment and discrimination, and is ultimately responsible for worker health and safety. We will take whatever steps are reasonable to protect our workers from workplace violence, harassment and discrimination from all sources. Possible sources could be colleagues in shared workplace environments such as our office, school grounds, schools, social enterprise clients, co-workers, strangers and domestic/intimate partners.

Violent behaviour in the workplace is unacceptable from anyone. The OHS Act defines workplace violent behaviour as the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker. It includes an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker; and a statement or behaviour that a worker could reasonably interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker [section 1]. Examples of violent behaviour:

- verbally threatening to attack a worker;
- leaving threatening notes at or sending threatening e-mails to a workplace;
- shaking a fist in a worker’s face;
- wielding a weapon at work;
- hitting or trying to hit a worker;
- throwing an object at a worker;
- sexual violence against a worker;
- kicking an object the worker is standing on such as a ladder; or
- trying to run down a worker using a vehicle or equipment such as a forklift.

The definition of workplace violence is broad enough to include acts that would constitute offences under Canada's Criminal Code.

This policy applies to anyone encountered by our workers. Everyone is expected to uphold this policy and to work together to prevent workplace violence and harassment. Harassment and discrimination include such matters as:

- unwelcome remarks, jokes, slurs, innuendos, name calling, stereotyping, graffiti, insults or taunting about a person's sex, race, culture, class, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identification or disability
- threats, intimidation, avoidance, or exclusion
- display of derogatory or offensive material
- any comment or conduct that is unsolicited and known or ought to be known to be unwelcome and likely to cause offence or humiliation.

Harassment and discrimination may be intentional or unintentional, verbal or nonverbal, subtle, passive or overt in nature.

### **Program**

There is a workplace violence and harassment prevention program that implements this policy, the **Workplace Violence, Harassment and Discrimination Prevention (WVHDP) Program**. It includes further definitions of violence, harassment and discrimination and provides mechanisms to address incidents that fall under these categories. This document will be part of staff and volunteer orientation and training.

As a workplace with between 6 and 20 workers, we have a Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) consisting of the Executive Director representing management and a staff member representing workers.

### **WVHDP Program Document Outline/Overview**

- 1 Risk assessment by site (Violence and Harassment Prevention);
- 2 Worker Training: how workers will learn about the policies and procedures, and sign a document stating that they have read and agree to follow the procedures;
- 3 Procedures for summoning immediate assistance;
- 4 Procedures for reporting incidents or complaints of workplace violence, harassment or discrimination; and procedures for investigating and dealing with workplace violence incidents and complaints, if they occur. For example:
  - a) A person who has a complaint may deal with it informally by approaching the offending party and attempting to resolve the issue. A formal complaint may be brought where informal resolution has failed.
  - b) Except in the case provided for in paragraph (a), a formal complaint shall be directed to the Executive Director. The complaint shall be in writing, signed by the complaining person and shall contain a brief summary of the relevant facts. The Executive Director shall investigate the complaint, take appropriate action within her/his jurisdiction, and report to the board of directors, who shall take appropriate action if required.
  - c) If the Executive Director is the complaining person or the person against whom the complaint is made, the complaint shall be directed to the Chair of GTGK, and the Chair shall investigate the complaint or cause it to be investigated and shall report to the board of directors, which shall take appropriate action. If, however, the Chair is also the complaining person or the person against whom a complaint is made, the complaint shall be directed to any other board member.
  - d) It is recognized that making a formal complaint does not constitute a waiver of any other action, which may be available at law or under terms of employment.
- 5 JHSC Role: meet every 3 months or immediately if needed if an incident occurs under the Policy, or immediately after an event where a review or reassessment of risk indicates need.
- 6 Procedure for review and update policy/program annually.

**GTGK** as the employer, will ensure this policy and the supporting program are implemented and maintained. All workers and supervisors will receive appropriate information and instruction on the contents of the policy and program. Every worker must work in compliance with this policy and the supporting program. All workers are encouraged to raise any concerns about workplace violence and to report any violent incidents or threats. We wish to emphasize there will be no negative consequences for reports made in good faith.

Management pledges to investigate and address all incidents and complaints of workplace violence, harassment and discrimination in a fair and timely manner, respecting the privacy of all concerned as much as possible.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(President, Board of Directors)

Passed by Board of Directors: October 24, 2017

A copy of this policy will be posted on the GTGK website, [www.greenthumbsto.org](http://www.greenthumbsto.org)