



UNION MATTERS

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*My local works
because I participate*

Date and time of
General Membership
meetings are posted
at each worksite and
at www.cupe1169.ca



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Vice President's Podium

Harassment-free Workplaces

On April 8 and 9, 2017, your union's Worksite Stewards and Executive Members attended the CUPE Calgary District Council Spring School. One of the sessions we participated in was on *Creating Harassment-Free Workplaces*.

What is harassment?

Harassment is considered to have taken place if a reasonable person ought to have known that the behaviour was unwelcome. Harassment can be anything from persistent teasing to verbal and/or physical assaults. It could also involve any of the following:

- Spreading malicious rumours or gossip.
- Criticizing or ridiculing.
- Showing offensive pictures.
- Undermining a person's work.
- Excluding or isolating a person.
- Calling someone derogatory names.
- Unwelcome physical contact.
- Removing areas of responsibility for no real reason.
- Making aggressive or threatening gestures.
- Conflict whereby no steps are taken to resolve the workplace conflict.

Harassment can come from your co-workers or a member of the public. Quite often the harasser may say that they were "only joking" or they "didn't mean to offend". Harassment usually involves repeated incidents; however, depending on the circumstances, it can be a one-time incident.

What is not considered harassment?

- Consensual workplace banter and interactions.
- Management's right to manage when carried out in a fair manner.

- Difficult conditions of employment, professional constraints, and organizational changes.
- A social relationship welcomed by both parties.
- Friendly gestures among co-workers such as a pat on the back.
- Work related stress. However, cumulative stress factors may increase the risk of harassment.

Here are some questions you can ask yourself to determine if you are being harassed:

- Would a reasonable person be offended or harmed by this conduct?
- Did the behaviour exceed the reasonable and usual limits of interaction in the workplace?
- Was the behaviour directed at me?
- Was this the first incident or is it a series of incidents?
- Are people doing or saying things to make me feel uncomfortable?
- Am I being singled out and treated differently than my co-workers, or being given the "silent treatment"?
- Is the incident related to my work performance?
- Am I being criticized regularly even though my standards have not changed and my performance has always been satisfactory or better?

What is the impact of harassment?

As the person being harassed, you may notice a deterioration in your physical and/or psychological health, drug or alcohol abuse may become a problem, and a rise in work absenteeism may occur.

The harasser can impact their work environment with low morale, fear, anger, and depression.

The employer will notice productivity declining, reduction in the quality of services, increase in staff turnover, and a lack

of interest in or commitment to work.

The union will see a decline in membership involvement.

What can we do about harassment?

Individuals who don't take part in, but observe the harassment and feel safe, can tell the harasser to stop this behaviour. Additionally, they should also inform the employer and the union about the harassment, for them to investigate the issue.

Educate yourself. Familiarize yourself with Clause 8.02 of your Collective Bargaining Agreement. Consult the Calgary Public Library's Standards of Conduct and Problem Situation Guide. Contact EFAP (Employee & Family Assistance Program). CUPE National also has several online resources, namely, *Stop Harassment: A guide for CUPE locals, Speak out! Stop*

Harassment and Examining Root Causes, which can be accessed from their website (<https://cupe.ca>).

Employers must do everything they can to prevent harassment by educating their supervisors and workers, and by following up with harassment situations.

The union must support harassed members by investigating their situation, by educating members, and by creating strong language in the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

To ensure a working environment free of harassment, we must **all** be observant to the impact of harassment and take action as we all have the right to work in a harassment-free workplace.

*Respectfully submitted by,
Elsa Watson, Vice President CUPE Local 1169*

Contract Corner: know your rights under the collective agreement



Clause 8.02 Personal Harassment

(a) The Board agrees that no employee shall be subjected to personal harassment. Personal harassment shall be defined as repeated, intentional, offensive comments and/or actions deliberately designed to demean and belittle an individual and/or to cause personal humiliation. This will not prevent Management from disciplining or terminating for cause.

(b) The President of Local 1169, or designate, may convene a meeting with the CEO, or designate, to discuss the allegations of personal harassment.

(c) Failing resolution under Section 8.02 (b), particulars may be communicated in writing to the CEO or design-

ate. The employee shall have recourse to the Board, whose decision shall be final and not subject to grievance.

What does this mean?

The Calgary Public Library has a diverse workforce and we are expected to work together respectfully and professionally. Harassment is a serious offense and is taken seriously by your union. If you have been subjected to harassment from a colleague, a supervisor or a manager, the union will work toward a resolution. This investigation will involve your colleagues, your manager, the union and Human Resources. If the issue cannot be resolved by this meeting, the complaint will be taken to the Calgary Public Library Board. The Board will determine a resolution and the decision will be final.

*Respectfully submitted by,
Terrill Budd, Chief Steward CUPE Local 1169*



SCHOLARSHIPS

Did you know that your union awards a \$1000 scholarship annually? To see if you qualify check out the application at www.cupe1169.ca under the Learn More tab. (Application deadline: June 1)

Our affiliates, Calgary and District Labour Council, and CUPE Alberta, also award scholarships. View their applications at www.thecdlc.ca under Education & Scholarships tab and <https://alberta.cupe.ca> under Members' Education tab.

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CUPE LOCAL 1169 AFFILIATES



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