

Governance Policy:

POL #GP-0007



Policy: Harassment and Violence

Date of Creation: 29/03/23

Last Reviewed: 11/04/23

Next Review: April 2024

1.0 Authority

- 1.1 In accordance with the Students' Association of Olds College (SAOC) Bylaws, the powers and duties of the Board of Directors includes making policies and decisions regulating the conduct of the organization provided such policies and decisions are consistent with applicable legislation and SAOC bylaws.

2.0 Purpose and Scope

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to:
- a. Adopt a proactive approach for the prevention of Harassment and Violence in SAOC contexts;
 - b. Enhance the awareness of the rights and responsibilities of those who experience or become aware of Harassment or Violence;
 - c. Outline the process for individuals to access assistance and report incidents of Harassment or Violence;
 - d. Detail how SAOC will respond to incidents of Harassment or Violence if they occur; and
 - e. Fulfill SAOC's duty under applicable legislation respecting potential workplace Harassment and Violence.
- 2.2 This policy applies to the SAOC Board of Directors and any person who may be acting on the Board's behalf, including the Executive Director, staff, and volunteers, in all situations and contexts that are SAOC-related including:
- a. SAOC and Olds College premises;
 - b. Locations visited for meetings, events, and conferences;
 - c. Locations of SAOC-related social gatherings; and
 - d. Interactions that take place by means such as the telephone, email, social media, instant message, text message or other online or technology-enabled tools.

3.0 Definitions

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- 3.1 **Harassment** refers to repeated or single, serious occurrences of inappropriate, bullying, hostile, or unwelcome verbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct where it is known or reasonably ought to be known that the behaviour is unwelcome and:
- Is based on a Protected Ground;
 - Has the effect or purpose of abusing, disparaging, harming, threatening, demeaning, or intimidating an individual or group of individuals;
 - Negatively affects a person's psychological or physical wellbeing; or
 - Has the effect or purpose of significantly interfering with performance.
- 3.2 **Protected Grounds** means the grounds of discrimination defined in the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, including race, colour, age, ancestry, place of origin, religious beliefs, gender (including pregnancy and gender identity), physical disability, mental disability, marital status, family status, source of income, and sexual orientation.
- 3.3 **Sexual Harassment** means Harassment that is based on gender or sexuality such as unwanted remarks, behaviours, or communications of a sexual nature that creates an unwelcome, hostile, coercive or offensive environment. Sexual Harassment may affect or threaten to affect, directly or indirectly, a person's job security, working conditions, or prospects for promotion or earnings.
- 3.4 **Violence** means the threatened, attempted, or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical injury or damage to property.
- 4.0 General**
- 4.1 SAOC is committed to reducing and eliminating, to the greatest extent possible, risk of Harassment and Violence in the workplace.
- 4.2 In accordance with this commitment, SAOC will:
- Endeavor to prevent Harassment and Violence by identifying and assessing risks in the workplace;
 - Educate employees on preventative measures;
 - Warn and protect employees, contractors, volunteers, and the public when there is an issue, or potential issue, of Harassment or Violence in the workplace;
 - Investigate reported incidents of Harassment or Violence in an objective and timely manner;

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- e. Take necessary and appropriate action when Harassment or Violence has occurred or is likely to occur; and
 - f. Provide support for employees who are victim to Harassment or Violence in the workplace.
- 4.3 SAOC will develop and implement a workplace Harassment and Violence prevention plan, which will be reviewed every three years or more frequently if there is an incident of Harassment or Violence or as directed by the Board. This plan must include this policy, the Code of Conduct Policy, and prevention procedures, must be in writing and readily available for reference by employees and volunteers, either in paper or electronic formats.
- 4.4 All Board members, employees, and volunteers have a shared responsibility to prevent Harassment and Violence and must follow requirements detailed in the SAOC Code of Conduct Policy.
- 4.5 This policy is not intended to discourage any Board member, employee or volunteer or from exercising rights pursuant to any other law including the *Alberta Human Rights Act*.
- 5.0 Investigating Incidents of Harassment & Violence**
- 5.1 Individuals are strongly encouraged to report any concerns about Harassment or Violence, including Sexual Harassment to their supervisor, the Executive Director, or Board Chair.
- 5.2 Reported incidents of Harassment or Violence will be investigated and addressed in accordance with the SAOC Privacy Policy, Whistleblower Policy and Investigation Procedure.
- 5.3 Consistent with this commitment, SAOC will not disclose the circumstances related to an incident of Harassment or Violence or the names of the complainant, respondent or any witnesses except:
 - a. Where necessary to investigate the incident or to take corrective action;
 - b. To inform the parties involved in the incident of the results of the investigation and any corrective action to be taken to address the incident;
 - c. Where necessary to inform workers of a specific or general threat of Harassment or Violence or potential Harassment or Violence; or
 - d. As required by law.

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- 5.4 SAOC will only disclose the minimum amount of personal information under section 5.3 that is necessary to inform parties of a specific or general threat of Harassment or Violence or potential Harassment or Violence.
- 5.5 SAOC will retain investigation reports for at least two years, kept readily available, and copies will be provided to Alberta OHS on request.
- 5.6 SAOC will offer support to Board members, employees and volunteers who are negatively affected by an Incident of Harassment or Violence in the workplace. Affected individuals should consult a health professional of their choice for treatment or referral and are encouraged to access services through SAOC's employee health plan and the SAOC student health and wellness program.

6.0 Compliance & Enforcement

- 6.1 Individuals must comply with all elements of this policy and shall support others in doing so.
- 6.2 All concerns about potential violations of this policy will be investigated in accordance with SAOC policy and SAOC will take corrective action to address incidents.
- 6.3 Individuals who violate this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including removal or dismissal in accordance with applicable SAOC Bylaws and policies.

7.0 References & Resources

- [Students' Association of Olds College \(SAOC\) Bylaws](#)
- SAOC Code of Conduct Policy
- SAOC Whistleblower Policy
- SAOC Investigation Procedure
- SAOC Privacy Policy
- [Occupational Health and Safety \(OHS\) Act, Regulation and Code](#)
- [Alberta Human Rights Commission – Harassment as a Form of Discrimination](#)
- [Workers' Compensation Board – Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace](#)