POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY

[Organization Name] is committed to maintaining a professional and respectful work environment for all employees. [Organization Name] is also committed to fostering an inclusive workplace culture that values diversity of thought, opinions, and backgrounds, while also ensuring the rights, safety, and dignity of all people at the workplace.

The purpose of this policy is to outline guidelines and expectations to ensure that all discussions and activities within the workplace are conducted in a manner that respects the rights and beliefs of all employees.

Note: this policy is specific to internal interactions in the workplace, whether in-person or virtual. In all cases, employees are expected to avoid any political discourse with external clients while working or while at work events.

POLICY

[Organization Name] adheres to all applicable human rights legislation and is committed to creating a workplace environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, and bias, based on any of the protected grounds. We value open dialogue amongst employees and diversity of perspectives while maintaining a focus on the common goals and objectives of the organization.

[Organization Name] upholds a zero-tolerance policy for bullying, psychological harassment, threats of violence, or the condoning of violence against any individual or group of people. Our commitment to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and respectful workplace extends to all employees and clients, regardless of their political beliefs or affiliations.

**Political Discussions in the Workplace**

[Organization Name] encourages employees to share their thoughts, feelings, and opinions with their colleagues, when appropriate. Employees are permitted to engage in political discussions or discussions related to political events in the world provided there is always respect for differing opinions present.

Open dialogue is valued, provided it is conducted in a manner that fosters understanding and maintains a respectful environment. Employees are expected to adhere to the following guidelines when having political or politically-charged conversations during work hours or at the workplace:

* Employees must ensure that any discussions, conversations, or activities at the workplace are carried out with consideration to the time and place. Employees should avoid engaging in lengthy or disruptive conversations or debates during work hours or in areas where it may interfere with the productivity or concentration of others.
* Employees should recognize the diversity of personal and political beliefs and opinions within the workplace. When having these types of discussions, employees should be open to hearing and considering different perspectives, even if they do not align with their own. Tolerance and professionalism must always be exercised in any discussion at the workplace.
* Employees should refrain from attempting to coerce or pressure colleagues into adopting specific political or personal beliefs. Individuals have the right to their own opinions, and such discussions should remain voluntary, neutral, and respectful.
* In the event that political discussions or conversations escalate into conflicts or create a hostile work environment, employees are encouraged to seek resolution through appropriate channels, such as requesting mediation or conflict resolution from [Insert Name/Title].

Employee Responsibilities

* Employees are responsible for ensuring that they remain focused on their job duties during work hours and refrain from holding disruptive or distracting conversations that may hinder the productivity or concentration of themselves or others.
* Political discussions should not interfere with work responsibilities.
* Company resources, including email, communication tools, and meeting spaces, should not be used for the promotion or discussion of any political issues. The workplace, whether in-person or virtual, must remain an impartial and neutral area.
* Employees are expected to conduct themselves professionally at all times.
* When having political or other emotionally-charged conversations, employees are expected to engage with their colleagues with respect and courtesy, recognizing and appreciating diverse viewpoints.
* Employees are prohibited from using or demonstrating discriminatory language or behaviour based on any protected ground as outlined in the applicable human rights legislation.
* Employees may not bully, harass, or exclude any individual based on any protected grounds or based on political beliefs or affiliations.
* Employees should not attempt to coerce or pressure others into changing their personal or political beliefs, recognizing the importance of individual autonomy. Disagreements should be resolved respectfully and by agreeing to disagree.
* Employees must ensure that they respect the personal boundaries of other individuals by not asking personal or invasive questions and respecting what others are willing to share or not.
* Employees should reach out to [Insert Name/Title] in the event that a disagreement arises or a discussion escalates to create an unsafe or hostile work environment for any parties.
* While employees are entitled to engage in political activities outside of work, they should make it clear that their views are personal and not representative of [Organization Name].
* Employees must remember that their online presence, including social media, reflects on the company if they choose to link themselves to [Organization Name] on their social media or online platforms.
	+ Employees must exercise discretion when discussing political matters online, and refrain from making statements that may be perceived as representing the company's official stance.
	+ Employees should refer to the company’s Social Media Policy for additional guidance.
* Employees may not initiate or engage in discourse or discussions that incite violence or harm, discriminate against any individual or group, or violate applicable human rights laws. Examples of such discourse includes:
	+ Hate speech
	+ Displaying symbols associated with racism
	+ Quoting hate or racist speech
	+ Making reference to, or quoting another person who is advocating harm to or annihilation of a race, religion, or any other group protected under human rights

Employer Responsibilities

[Organization Name] (the “Employer”) is responsible for the following:

* Taking all necessary steps to ensure the workplace is safe, respectful, and inclusive, including addressing any instances of harassment or discrimination promptly and appropriately, as per the organization’s Anti-Harassment procedures.
* Providing training and resources to educate employees about the importance of maintaining a politically neutral and inclusive workplace, free from discrimination and harassment.
* Implementing appropriate conflict resolution procedures to address and resolve issues promptly and impartially.
* Investigating instances of divisiveness, bullying, discrimination, harassment, or threats of violence in the workplace promptly and taking all necessary steps to ensure the safety and dignity of employees.
* Taking appropriate disciplinary action in cases where employees violate this policy, display hostility, discrimination, or violence against others, or violate any other company policy.
* Fostering a workplace culture that promotes inclusivity and values diversity of thought, ensuring that all employees feel respected and supported.
* Monitoring the workplace atmosphere to ensure that political discussions and activities do not create a hostile or uncomfortable environment for any individuals or employees.
* Periodically reviewing this policy to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Updates will be made as necessary to address emerging challenges or changes in legislation and all employees will be informed of any changes as they are implemented.

Open Door Policy

As part of [Organization Name]’s commitment to maintaining an inclusive, respectful, and professional environment, we have implemented an open door policy to ensure that all employees feel comfortable and supported in the workplace. However, we recognize that instances of discrimination, harassment, or inappropriate behaviour can still occur, despite our best efforts. In such cases, we encourage employees who experience or witness any form of misconduct (including but not limited to: bullying, harassment, or inappropriate behaviour due to political beliefs, discussions, or opinions) to promptly report the incident to their manager or to [Insert Name/Title].

This reporting process is important for all employees to adhere to as it enables management to address concerns effectively, and take appropriate action to restore and maintain a safe and respectful work environment. [Organization Name] is committed to promptly investigating and addressing any concerns, complaints, or reported incidents with confidentiality, empathy, and fairness, in accordance with company policies and applicable laws.

[Organization Name] will continue to strive towards creating an inclusive and respectful environment for all individuals.

If employees have any questions, concerns or suggestions regarding this or any other policy at the [Organization Name], they are encouraged to reach out to [Insert Name/TItle].