WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS POLICY

<Organization Name> is committed to providing a safe working environment for its employees by ensuring that the workplace is free of harassment, including sexual harassment. As such, the purpose of this policy is to outline expectations for employee behaviour and disclosure relating to personal relationships in the workplace. This Workplace Relationship Policy provides guidelines our employees are required to follow when they’re romantically or sexually involved with a colleague.

DEFINITIONS

Sexual harassment is “unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that detrimentally affects the work environment or leads to adverse job‑related consequences for the victims of the harassment.”

In the context of this policy, “employee dating” includes consensual romantic relationships and sexual relations.

POLICY

In compliance with the Ontario Human Rights Code (the Code), <Organization Name> prohibits employment discrimination, sexual harassment, and other forms of harassment. This concept, without excluding other types of behavior also applies to actions such as repeatedly asking another person to date. It can also apply to public displays of affection in the workplace, depending on the circumstances.

Employees should also, before dating a colleague, consider any problems or conflicts of interest that may arise. Employees are responsible for disclosing any potential conflicts of interest in accordance with <Organization Name>’s Code of Conduct.

<Organization Name> understands that personal relationships may develop in the workplace. The organization therefore requires disclosure of personal relationships in which the two parties in the relationship are in different positions within the organization.

Behaviour Expectations in the Workplace

<Organization Name> expects that all employees will remember that the workplace is a professional setting. Employees are expected to treat each other with respect and avoid hindering others’ work. Employees may not express romantic interest in a colleague while at the workplace and may not do anything that could embarrass or expose them. Employees must always respect others’ time and choices.

**Unacceptable Behaviour**

Some examples of unacceptable behaviour relating to romantic relationships in the workplace include (but are not limited to):

* Arguing in the workplace
* Kissing or touching inappropriately in front of other employees or clients
* Exchanging an excessive number of instant messages or calls during working hours
* Oversharing with others in the workplace concerning a romantic relationship
* Violating the Code of Conduct, Human Rights Commitment, Harassment or Violence Policies, or any other <Organization Name>’s policy in relation to the romantic relationship

Unwanted Employee Advances

If an employee persists in flirting and/or asking another employee out for a date and becomes annoying and/or disturbs their work duties, the first step is to ask them to stop. If they continue, employees are to inform their supervisor, or another member of management with whom they feel comfortable bringing forward the concern. Behaviour such as this constitutes sexual harassment, and an investigation will be pursued. Sexual harassment is prohibited, including seemingly harmless actions.

Employees Dating in the Same Position Level

<Organization Name> will not interfere in the private lives of employees and their relationships, unless the behaviour in the workplace is such that it affects the professionalism or productivity in the workplace. Employees should always keep their personal issues and discussions out of the workplace; be productive and focused; and if they find that their work is affected by dating another employee, please speak with their manager for guidance.

Dating Situations involving a Member of Management

To avoid accusations of favoritism and the possible abuse of authority, we strictly prohibit supervisors from dating their direct reports, or those who report to their team members (directly or indirectly). Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Managers are not permitted to date anyone who is below their job title, even if they’re in another department.

If a relationship is discovered without disclosure, employees will not face demotion or any other detrimental effect to their employment. Managers will be subject to disciplinary action. Repeated violations of this policy may result in termination of employment.

Note: Relationships that existed and were disclosed prior to this policy being finalized, are not subject to this portion of the policy, only. All other behaviour expectations exist. However, relationships that are known by <Organization Name> management prior to November 2022 are legacied into this policy.

Hiring

Employees may not participate in the hiring of another person who is in a relationship with them, whether it is familial or romantic. Should a romantic partner or family member apply for a position, employees are required to disclose their relationship with the applicant and separate themselves from all hiring decisions.

Disclosure

If an employee or manager breaches this policy, they are required to disclose the breach as soon as possible to management. Disclosure (or lack of it) will play a factor in the eventual corrective action and any possible mitigation of the consequences.