## APPROPRIATE USE OF GENDER PRONOUNS

[Organization Name] wishes to express its dedication to promoting inclusion and respect with regard to gender identity and expression, which are protected grounds under the *Human Rights Code of British Columbia*. We understand that personal pronouns hold important meaning for an individual’s identity and the expression of self, and that people should be addressed with the pronouns that validate their identity. We wish to promote diversity and inclusion by:

* Supporting diverse individuals, and
* Educating and encouraging employees to utilize the gender pronouns their colleagues and clients use for themselves.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions were sourced directly from the Government of BC:

“Gender Identity” is the internal and psychological sense of oneself as a woman, a man, both, in between, or neither. Only you can determine your gender identity.

“Gender Expression” is how one outwardly shows gender, including through name and pronoun choice, style of dress, and voice modulation.

COMMON PRONOUNS

* they/them/their/theirs/themselves
* she/her/hers/herself
* he/his/him/himself
* ze/hir/hirs/hirself
* ze/zim/zir/zirs/zirself

POLICY

It is the responsibility of the organization to support gender diverse people. One of the ways we strive to do this is through education and practice surrounding pronouns.

At [Organization Name], we recognize the importance of pronouns to a person’s identity and understand that a person’s appearance does not necessarily indicate the pronouns you should address them with. We strive to create a culture which encourages respect and openness toward using the pronouns each individual uses to describe themselves.

The management at [Organization Name] is encouraged to provide education about pronouns and how to use them appropriately. Some ways to promote inclusivity with respect to pronouns are:

* Tell others the pronouns you prefer to be addressed by when interacting with others, individually or in groups
* Add your pronouns to your email signature
* Use non-binary pronouns in writing, or when you don’t know someone’s pronouns (Example: them/they/their rather that she/he or him/hers)
* Ask for an individual’s pronouns when meeting someone new
* If you are hosting a group or meeting, ask each member to introduce themselves by their name *and* the pronouns they wish to be addressed by or use name tags to do the same
* Practice how to use pronouns you are not familiar with
* Insert any other methods in use at [Organization Name]

Managers and employees are asked to understand some people may not wish to share their pronouns. Others may prefer to only be referred to by their first name. Others may be learning about pronouns for the first time. Patience and understanding are encouraged all around as we work toward an environment where every person feels comfortable and included. Respect and privacy are to be maintained at all times.

Employees with questions or concerns about this policy or issues related to gender identity or gender expression, or those who experience any conflict with discussions on these topics are invited to address these with management. If you witness or experience any harassment or discrimination on the basis of gender expression or identity, please follow the procedures located in our Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Policy.