

Appendix A: Definitions

Definitions: Workplace behaviours

The following definitions help describe the types of behaviours in the workplace outlined in the Respectful Workplace Policy, in Appendix B: Workplace Behaviour Chart, and in the associated procedure documents for the Investigations Office and Conflict Management Services.

Abuse of authority	The improper use of power that flows from a supervisor or manager's position of authority over an employee; in particular, intimidation, threats, or coercion, which could reasonably be expected to endanger an employee's ability to perform their job, threaten the employee's economic livelihood, or significantly affect their physical or emotional well-being. It is not abuse of authority to exercise managerial responsibility legitimately.
Bullying	See harassment .
Conflict	Differences in values, beliefs, and ideas that make it difficult to understand one another and get in the way of being able to collaborate with colleagues.
Discrimination	Any form of adverse treatment based on protected grounds as set out in the Human Rights Act.
Harassment	Any vexatious behaviour in the form of repeated and hostile or unwanted conduct, verbal comments, actions, or gestures, which affect an employee's dignity and that result in a harmful work environment for the employee. A single serious incident of such behaviour that has a lasting harmful effect on an employee may also constitute harassment. Includes bullying.
Incivility	Unprofessional, careless, insensitive, and disruptive behaviour; less severe than harassment. May harm others, make them uncomfortable, and impact well-being.
Managerial authority (appropriate use)	Legitimate use of the powers and responsibilities that come with managing people. Appropriate use of managerial authority includes assigning work, communicating expectations for work, managing an employee's performance if they are not meeting expectations, and issuing progressive discipline. Exercising appropriate use of managerial authority is an important part of maintaining functioning, respectful workplaces.
Serious interpersonal misconduct	This term is used by the Public Service Commission to refer to matters that normally require investigation . It includes harassment , sexual harassment , bullying , abuse of authority , and workplace violence (see the definitions for these terms). It does not include incivility , unfriendliness, or behaviours regarded as 'poor taste' or 'impolite.' It also does not include serious misconduct that is not interpersonal in nature (e.g., theft of employer resources). On PSC's Workplace Behaviours Chart, behaviours in the red and black columns are typically examples of serious interpersonal misconduct, while behaviours in the yellow column typically are not.
Sexual harassment	Conduct, comments, gestures, displays, or contact of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected to cause offense or humiliation or that might reasonably be perceived as placing a condition of a sexual nature on employment or on any opportunity for training or promotion.
Workplace violence	Any of the following that occurs in a workplace or is work-related: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the threatened, attempted, or actual exercise of physical force by a person that causes, or is likely to cause, an injury to an employee; or a threatening statement made or any conduct engaged in by a person that gives an employee reasonable cause to believe that the employee is at risk of injury.



Definitions: Procedural terms

The following definitions outline procedural terms used in the Respectful Workplace Policy and associated procedural documents.

Allegation	An untested assertion, declaration, or statement made by at least one party (normally the Reporting Party) about actions or behaviour by at least one other party (normally the Respondent or Respondents). An allegation is declared a fact (i.e., it is determined that it did actually occur) when it is substantiated through an investigation .
Evidence	Information (including testimony, documents, and tangible objects) that tends to prove or disprove an allegation . For a workplace investigation , evidence may include testimony from the reporting party , the respondent , or witnesses , or other documentation such as emails or text messages.
Findings	The set of facts that are established at the end of an investigation .
Investigation	A fair, objective, independent and systematic process of gathering and analyzing evidence to determine facts or findings about an allegation or set of allegations. A “workplace investigation” concerns allegations about behaviour at work or related to the workplace.
Investigation report	A document outlining the results of an investigation, including findings. May also be referred to as a “final report.”
Report	This term is used by PSC to refer to concerns about serious interpersonal misconduct made to or referred to the intake function of the Investigations Office. A report should be documented on the reporting form.
Reporting party	The person who makes a report (or allegation) about serious interpersonal misconduct .
Reprisal	Any act or omission by the employer or representative of the employer that adversely affects an employee in respect of any term or condition of their employment. Reprisal includes, but is not limited to, lay-off, suspension, dismissal, loss of opportunity for promotion, demotion, transfer of duties, reduction in wages, change in working hours, coercion, intimidation, imposition of any discipline, reprimand or other penalty, and the discontinuation or elimination of the employee's job.
Responding party	A person who is alleged to have engaged in serious interpersonal misconduct . There may be multiple responding parties or a single responding party.
Witness	A person with information related to an allegation who is called to participate in a workplace investigation .



Appendix B: Workplace Behaviours Chart

This chart outlines a spectrum of behaviour in the workplace, ranging from positive, respectful behaviour to prohibited behaviours including harassment and violence. The behaviours listed in each column are **examples only** and do not include every situation. Depending on the context, the behaviour may shift between categories. For example, an isolated angry outburst may be an example of incivility in the “orange” zone. However, an angry outburst directed at an individual or a group that includes foul or discriminatory language may be an example of harassment in the “red” zone.

Employees are encouraged to **seek guidance from their supervisor, human resources or the Public Service Commission when using this chart**, particularly if they experience or witness a situation that is not listed.

Employees may choose to seek support

Serious interpersonal misconduct – prohibited behaviours under GAM 3.47

Respectful workplace behaviour*	Conflict	Incivility	Harassment	Sexual harassment	Workplace violence
<p>Examples of respectful, professional behaviour expected of all employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Listening and allowing others to speakBeing courteous and considerate towards each otherResolving differences constructivelyEngaging in spirited and respectful dialogue, acknowledging and welcoming diverse perspectives.Respecting professional boundaries. <p>Examples of appropriate use of managerial authority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Directly supervising, including setting performance expectations and providing constructive feedback about work performanceAssigning work and giving direction on how it is to be done; requesting updatesManaging leave requests according to operational requirementsProgressive discipline when required	<p>Examples of interpersonal conflict that require addressing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Loss of trust in a colleagueAvoiding or minimizing interactions with a coworkerFeeling judgmental, resentful, or frustrated toward a team member <p>While it is normal to experience interpersonal conflict at work, it is necessary to address the conflict when it begins to interfere with working relationships and getting work done.</p>	<p>Examples of incivility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Purposely excluding co-workersUsing unprofessional or rude languageMaking jokes that cause embarrassmentGossipingAngry outburstsRefusing to address conflict, or relying on unproductive responses to conflict that harm othersExhibiting other subtle disrespectful behaviours, including micro-aggressions.	<p>Examples of harassment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Displaying ongoing and targeted hostility or put-downs towards another individualMaking derogatory remarks, displaying offensive images, or sending emails that put down a protected characteristic outlined in the <i>Human Rights Act</i>, which include ancestry, religion, or disability (discrimination).Intimidating someone by yelling or invading personal spaceHumiliating an employee repeatedly or spreading rumours to ruin their reputationAs a supervisor, purposely and repeatedly withholding resources necessary for an employee to succeed, or sabotaging an employee (abuse of authority)	<p>Examples of sexual harassment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Making unwelcome remarks about a person’s gender, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, or sex lifeMaking unwelcome sexual advancesMaking unwanted and suggestive comments about a person’s body or clothingSending sexually explicit text messagesDisplaying sexually explicit materials at work	<p>Examples of workplace violence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Threatening or engaging in physical violence or sexual assaultStalkingSharing someone’s explicit images <p>Some instances of workplace violence may also be criminal offenses.</p>

*This category includes both respectful, professional behaviour that reflects the Values and Ethics Code and appropriate use of managerial authority.

