

Harassment Doesn't Always Come from Inside Your Workplace



NOVA SCOTIA

Under Nova Scotia's Harassment in the Workplace Regulations (Part 27 of the Workplace Health and Safety Regulations), every provincially regulated employer must have a written harassment prevention policy and train workers on understanding the policy.

As an employer, your duty to protect workers applies wherever they do their work and whoever the harasser is.

That includes harassment from, but not limited to:

- Customers, clients, patients, students, or parents
- Tenants, members of the public, or people visiting your worksite
- Contractors, suppliers, or vendors
- A worker's own family member, ex-partner, or former employee

6 PRACTICAL STEPS TO ADDRESS THIRD-PARTY HARASSMENT

1. Know Where the Risk Lives Look at where workers interact with the public, work alone, work after hours, or could be reached by someone from their personal life. Identify the hazards just like you would for physical safety.

2. Make Your Policy Coverage Clear Clearly outline that the protections apply no matter who the harasser is, such as a coworker, supervisor, client, or someone from outside the workplace.

3. Set Expectations for Clients and Visitors

Use signage, codes of conduct, intake forms, and contract clauses to tell customers and visitors what behaviour is expected and what is not accepted.

4. Train for Real Situations Teach workers de-escalation, boundary-setting, and how to report. Train supervisors to take every complaint seriously and act quickly.

5. Make Reporting Easy and Safe Offer more than one way to report concerns, such as to a supervisor, human resources, or through an anonymous reporting channel. Keep it confidential and protect workers from retaliation. Update affected workers on preventive or corrective measures.

6. Act When It Happens: Removing the worker from the situation, banning the individual, increasing security, ending a business relationship, calling police, and offering supports like EAP or counselling.

Remember – Intimate Partner Violence Can Follow a Worker to Work

Threats, calls, or visits from a worker's current or former intimate partners or spouses are a workplace hazard. Create safety plans, adjust schedules or entry points, and coordinate with police when needed.

Need Help?

Visit preventworkplaceharassment.ca for resources and guides developed to support Nova Scotia workplaces, or call 1-800-9LABOUR (1-800-952-2687)

Everyone has the right to a workplace free from harassment.

Work SAFE, Home SAFE, Every DAY.