



STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Department	Administration	Policy No.	0340-014
Section	Human Resources	Date Approved by Board	October 24, 2013
Repeals	0340-20-17 Chairman Title 0340-20-37 Social Media Use 0340-20-51 Photocopying 0340-20-59 Respectful Workplace 0340-20-75 Impairment in the Workplace	Board Resolution #	RD/13/10/04(24)

Amended	June 25, 2020	Board Resolution #	RD/20/06/20
Amended		Board Resolution #	
Amended		Board Resolution #	

Repealed		Board Resolution #	
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the Staff Code of Conduct Policy is to recognize that individuals have the right to be treated by supervisors, coworkers, elected officials and the public with respect in the workplace.
- 1.2 The purpose is not to restrict the rights of staff, but rather, to assist in creating a [positive work environment](#) by establishing standards that allow staff to work in a professional and productive atmosphere at the Peace River Regional District (PRRD).
- 1.3 The standards established in this policy are intended to reinforce the responsibilities of all parties in achieving and maintaining a [positive work environment](#).
- 1.4 This policy is meant to augment the Collective Agreement and Exempt Staff Policy where required.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This Policy applies to all individuals that are employed by the PRRD, including but not limited to full-time, part-time, temporary, seasonal and union employees.
- 2.2 The responsibility for creating and maintaining a [positive work environment](#) rests with all persons sharing the work place. The PRRD in exercising its responsibilities, as the employer will endeavor, at all times, to provide a [positive work environment](#).



3. Definitions

- 3.1 *Bullying/Harassment*: refers to conduct that may be verbal, non-verbal, physical, deliberate or unintended, unsolicited or unwelcome, as determined by a reasonable person. This behavior may be part of one event or a series of events. Behaviour includes, but is not limited to:
- i. Actions or comments that are directed at no person in particular but that create an intimidating, demeaning, or offensive work environment.
 - ii. Any objectionable comment, act, or display that demeans, belittles, compromises, or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment and any act of intimidation or threat.
 - iii. Offensive behaviours.
- 3.2 *Discrimination*: refers to the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people based on race, colour, ancestry, place or origin, religion, family status, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, political belief, or conviction of a criminal or summary conviction offence unrelated to employment.
- 3.3 *Drugs*: this term includes narcotics and illegal drugs, cannabis whether used or obtained legally or illegally, legal prescriptions, over-the-counter medications and drugs that cause or have the potential to cause impairment and render an employee not [fit for duty](#).
- 3.4 *Fit for Duty*: refers to the physical and mental state that allows individuals to perform their job safely and effectively. Not under the influence of any illicit [drug](#), alcohol, illegal or legal cannabis, or medication that will hinder job performance or compromise the safety of the staff member or others.
- 3.5 *Legal Cannabis*: All employees must understand that cannabis can be an impairing [drug](#) even if it is legal and that using it at work or coming to work while under the influence of or intoxicated by cannabis renders them not [fit for duty](#) in violation of this policy.
- 3.6 *Positive Work Environment*: refers to a work environment that is free from offensive remarks, materials, or behavior, in which professional and productive working relationships are maintained, and in which staff provide courteous and efficient service to the community in a friendly and professional manner.
- 3.7 *Threatening Behaviour*: intentional behavior that would cause a person of ordinary sensibilities fear of injury or harm. It can include acts of aggression such as yelling at a coworker, pounding on desks, slamming doors, blocking or cornering, and/or sending threatening voicemails, e-mails, or other written threats. Behavior is not considered threatening if the person receiving it only finds the behavior to be rude or offensive.



- 3.8 *Violence*: refers to the use of physical force on an individual that causes or could cause injury, and includes an attempt or threatened use of force.
- 3.9 *Workplace*: refers to all locations, physical and virtual, in which PRRD business is being carried out. This includes, but is not limited to, PRRD offices and buildings, during business travel, work-related social gatherings, virtual/internet communications, or any other locations that may have impact on the work relationships, environment, or performance of any person to whom this policy applies.

4. Policy

- 4.1 The PRRD recognizes that staff have the right to be treated by supervisors, coworkers, elected officials, and the public with respect while in the workplace.
- 4.2 The PRRD will not, and employees should not, condone behavior in the workplace that is unacceptable and likely to undermine work relationships or productivity.

4.3 Impairment in the [Workplace](#)

- a) See [Schedule A](#).

4.4 Addressing Board Members

- a) Staff are to refer to and/or address the Chair of the PRRD Regional Board as “Chair [surname]”.
- b) Staff are to refer to and/or address the Vice-Chair of the PRRD Regional Board as “Vice Chair [surname]”.
- c) Staff are to refer to and/or address all PRRD Directors as “Director [surname]”.

4.5 Political Influence

- a) No staff member shall use the prestige of their position on behalf of any political party, nor shall such staff member promise an appointment of any PRRD position as a reward for any political activity.

4.6 Dress Code

- a) Staff shall dress in attire appropriate for the staff member’s position, having regard to the nature of the staff member’s work and the importance of maintaining a professional work environment and image.

4.7 Outside Employment/Remuneration

- a) Staff may engage in outside employment and carry on business or receive public funds for personal activities provided that it does not place demands inconsistent with the staff member’s job, and, in particular, that:



- i. it does not interfere with the performance of the staff member’s duties;
- ii. it does not constitute a conflict of interest; and,
- iii. it does not involve the unauthorized use of PRRD premises, services, equipment, information, or supplies which the staff member has access to by virtue of the staff member’s employment at the PRRD.
- iv. Staff engaged in outside employment must inform their supervisor of their other position(s).

4.8 Conflicts of Interest

- a) The PRRD recognizes the right of public service staff to be involved in activities as citizens of the community, but staff must keep their role as private citizens separate and distinct from their responsibility as public service staff and avoid conflict-of-interest situations. This also includes virtual conflicts of interest on social media platforms and the internet. Refer to [Schedule B and C](#) for more information.
- b) Staff shall not accept a gift, favor, or service from an individual, organization, or corporation, in excess of a \$100 value, where the gift would, or might appear to, improperly influence the staff member in the performance of their duties. No staff member shall provide gifts, favours, or services to others where this might appear designed to improperly influence others in their relations with the PRRD. Staff shall not accept gifts from vendors outside of the parameters established in the [PRRD Procurement Policy](#).
- c) Staff who exercise a regulatory, inspectional or other discretionary control over others shall, whenever possible, disqualify themselves from dealing with relatives. Where it is not possible to avoid the exercise of discretionary powers in these circumstances, the matter must be brought to the attention of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) for a decision on to how to proceed.

4.9 Confidentiality

- a) Staff must safeguard information contained in the records of the PRRD against improper access, and may disclose it only to persons having a lawful right to such information.
- b) When a staff member is in doubt as to whether certain information is confidential, no disclosure shall be made without first asking a supervisor or department head.
- c) Staff shall not use confidential information obtained through their employment with the PRRD to further any private interests or as a means of making personal gains.



4.10 Public Relations

- a) Staff are expected to conduct themselves in a friendly, courteous and professional manner when dealing with the public in person or online. In the small number of cases when a member of the public may become abusive or persistently rude, staff may advise the person that if the behavior continues, the conversation will be terminated.
 - i. The PRRD's expectation is that the member of the public should be given the opportunity to cease this behaviour. If they are rude, the employee should not be rude back, but should be firm and explain that they are trying to help the person.
 - ii. The employee should attempt to end on a constructive and positive note. If this is not possible, it is appropriate to ask your supervisor for assistance
- b) Staff are reminded that they continue to act as representatives of the PRRD outside business hours and should always consistently represent the PRRD and themselves with professionalism, using the PRRD's Staff Code of Conduct as a benchmark.

4.11 Unacceptable Conduct

- a) The following list contains examples of the types of conduct, which the PRRD views as unacceptable and deserving of discipline, up to and including dismissal. This list is not exhaustive of the types of conduct that may give rise to discipline or dismissal.
 - i. Engaging in offensive behavior, swearing, or using obscene or abusive language while on PRRD premises or while on duty.
 - ii. Harassment or disrespect of fellow staff. [See Schedule D.](#)
 - iii. Discourteous, rude, aggressive, or disrespectful comments or actions towards the public or PRRD clients.
 - iv. Fighting, threatening, or intimidating others, or provoking or instigating a fight while on duty. For more information refer to [Schedule D.](#)
 - v. Refusal to follow instructions from a supervisor or any member of management without reasonable cause.
 - vi. Knowingly or negligently engaging in unsafe work habits, including violating safety rules or practices and endangering the safety of people while performing work.
 - vii. Purposefully not being truthful.
 - viii. Engaging in poor work habits, including:



- Stopping work or leaving the work area during work hours without notifying and obtaining permission from the supervisor or person in charge. This does not apply to emergency situations.
 - Repeated interruption of another staff member's work for reasons unrelated to the performance of the duties or responsibilities of either staff member.
 - Overstaying a leave of absence without prior written approval.
 - Being absent from work or failing to report to work without reasonable cause and without notifying the supervisor or person in charge.
- ix. Deliberate or willful destruction or damage of property, equipment, machinery, or tools belonging to the PRRD or fellow staff members.
- x. Theft of property belonging to the PRRD or fellow staff members.
- xi. Knowingly falsifying records of the PRRD.
- xii. Unauthorized use of any PRRD equipment, machinery, or tools.
- Minimal photocopying and printing for personal use is permitted on breaks and lunch hour, with advance approval from the exempt supervisor.
- xiii. Conducting personal business or personal matters unrelated to the staff member's duties and responsibilities during work hours, exclusive to lunch hour and coffee breaks. This does not apply to emergency situations. Please refer to the [PRRD Acceptable Use Policy \(AUP\)](#) for more information.
- xiv. Possession of dangerous weapons or illegal items while on duty.
- xv. Engaging in illegal conduct on PRRD premises while on duty.
- xvi. Using, possessing, consuming, or being under the influence of illegal drugs and/or alcohol while on duty. See [Schedule A](#).

4.12 Non Compliance

- a) Any staff member who does not comply with this policy may be disciplined. Disciplinary action taken is at the discretion of management, but will be commensurate with the gravity of non-compliance and other relevant



considerations. Disciplinary action for non-compliance with this policy may range from a warning to termination of employment.

- b) All employees have a right to report verbally, or in writing, any evidence of breach of the standards set out in this policy. Reports should be submitted to the employee’s direct supervisor or to the Human Resources Office. Employees have a responsibility not to be frivolous or vindictive in making such reports.
- c) Supervisors have an ongoing responsibility to respond immediately to stop any activity in the work place which undermines this policy, whether or not there has been a complaint.

4.13 Amendments

- a) This policy may be amended or revised at any time by the PRRD at its discretion. Staff will be notified of significant amendments and revisions to this policy.

** NOTE: It is vital that every PRRD staff member read through this entire document carefully. If there is anything that you do not understand, it is your responsibility to ask your manager to explain before you sign this policy.*

Affiliated Procedure(s)	Respectful Workplace Procedures Bullying and Harassment Complaint and Investigation Form
Affiliated Policies	Acceptable Use Policy Procurement Policy Exempt Staff Policy Collective Agreement (CUPE Local 2403)



Schedule A: Impairment in the Workplace

1. It is the Peace River Regional Districts expectation that all employees report [fit for duty](#). Employees who use or are impaired by [drugs or alcohol](#) while at work endanger not only themselves but others. This organization recognizes that addiction to [drugs or alcohol](#) is a serious health problem. The intent of this Schedule of the Staff Code of Conduct Policy is to accomplish the health and safety goal in a manner that is fair and consistent with employees' accommodation rights under [discrimination](#) laws. The ultimate goal is not to punish but help employees identify and get help for their substance abuse so that everyone can be healthy, safe and productive at work.
 - 1.1 Staff are to report [fit for duty](#) for scheduled and unscheduled work.
 - 1.2 Staff shall advise their supervisor(s) or Department Heads whenever they witness behavior that raises concerns about a coworker's [fitness for duty](#).
 - 1.3 The management team shall assist and accommodate staff who voluntarily disclose substance dependence.
 - 1.4 Staff needing rehabilitation for substance abuse shall be encouraged to seek professional care and support through the Employee Assistance Program or similar programs available.
 - 1.5 Staff who refuse to cooperate in rehabilitation and/or who continue to present as safety risks to themselves and/or others shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
 - 1.6 Staff are considered not [fit for duty](#) while under the influence of [legal](#) or [illegal cannabis](#), and are not permitted to use cannabis at work or come to work while under the influence of or intoxicated by cannabis.
 - 1.7 Staff who attend not [fit for work](#) due to use of [drugs](#) or alcohol shall be asked by their supervisor to leave the workplace. Safe transportation options will be available for any individual unfit for operating a vehicle on their own. The incident shall be reported to the management team immediately.
 - 1.8 Disciplinary investigations may be opened at any time to check whether a staff member is engaged in substance abuse or otherwise in violation of their [fitness for duty](#) obligations under this policy in response to:
 - a) complaints or concerns by coworkers, supervisors, heads of departments, customers, or the public;
 - b) involvement in safety incidents, including near misses;
 - c) arrests for impaired driving, [drug](#) offences, and similar violations; and/or
 - d) other indications that the staff member has substance abuse issues or is otherwise not [fit for duty](#).



Schedule B: PRRD Online and Social Media Use

1. All Peace River Regional District social media sites are subject to management approval prior to development.
2. Social media postings are created and managed by the Communications Manager and/or designated staff.
3. All posts made to the PRRD social media and website should reflect the PRRD values, mission, vision, and goals. When possible, posts should link back to the appropriate PRRD website pages.
4. Staff may remove any PRRD social media site articles and comments made that contain any of the following forms of content:
 - 4.1 Comments not topically related to the particular social medium article being commented upon.
 - 4.2 Profane language or content.
 - 4.3 Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates [discrimination](#) on the basis of race, creed, colour, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, and/or sexual orientation.
 - 4.4 Sexual content or links to sexual content.
 - 4.5 Solicitations of commerce.
 - 4.6 Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity.
 - 4.7 Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public, public systems, PRRD Directors, or PRRD staff.
5. The PRRD reserves the right to restrict the ability to comment or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable law. If any content is removed based on the established guidelines, a copy of the content removed, the time, date, and identity of the poster is to be retained.
6. All reasonable measures will be taken to protect the PRRD, Regional Board, and staff from [harassment](#) via social media and the PRRD website.
 - 6.1 Measures may include advising the messenger that the message is not condoned, the message is not condoned and will be removed, and/or the message is considered [harassment](#) and offensive, and will be removed.
 - 6.2 Other steps may be taken to contact the social media channel to report the harassing behavior with the intent of having the harasser's account terminated.



- 6.3 If any of the above steps are taken, a copy of the message(s), time and dates, and the identity of the messenger is to be retained.
7. When posting to the PRRD social media accounts while representing the PRRD, staff are:
 - 7.1 to be transparent, open, and honest with the public;
 - 7.2 to be helpful and friendly when commenting or replying to the public;
 - 7.3 to only write information that is known – assumptions and promises that cannot be kept are not appropriate;
 - 7.4 to get approval from department managers for responses;
 - 7.5 to correct mistakes and notify the Communications Manager and/or the Department’s General Manager immediately of the mistake and course of action taken;
 - 7.6 to perform grammar and spelling checks prior to publishing posts, and ensure all posts are written in plain language;
 - 7.7 not to post comments containing offensive or inappropriate language, personal or confidential information, political views, or religious views;
 - 7.8 not to post commentary, content, videos, or images, that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, and/or libelous, and that reflects negatively on the PRRD; and
 - 7.9 not to post confidential information or make commitments on behalf of the PRRD.
8. Staff must respect all laws, including fair use of copyrighted materials. DO NOT unlawfully download, use, reproduce, distribute or communicate information, software, videos, images, or any other form of intellectual property protected by copyright.



Schedule C: Personal Online and Social Media Presence

All PRRD staff will govern themselves in accordance with these four simple guidelines of appropriate “online” conduct:

- a) Use common sense and courtesy
- b) Have integrity – be transparent
- c) Protect PRRD’s image, brand and yourself
- d) Be respectful

It is crucial that all staff keep in mind that when online, whether using PRRD tools and/or during business hours or not, that you are representing the PRRD; the organization’s people, work, and values.

1. Expectations

PRRD staff , including all contract employees, are encouraged to participate in the online social media space; however, they are urged to do so properly, using sound ethical judgment and common sense and must adhere to the following:

- 1.1 DO NOT use social media in a manner that is or might be seen to be disparaging, defamatory, incendiary, discriminatory or harassing to others.
- 1.2 Be mindful of what you post on social media as once it is on the internet it is there forever, no matter if you delete it. Social Media is not secure or private. Once you post information in any form (text, video, picture, etc.) you may lose control over how that information is used or disseminated. Posts can be taken out of context, re-worded, or misrepresented from their original intent and quickly re-distributed to a variety of unintended audiences.
- 1.3 Be consistent with your duty to the PRRD, including acting in the PRRD’s best interests and not in a manner that conflicts with PRRD’s mission, objectives and reputation or which might expose PRRD to criminal or civil liability.
- 1.4 NEVER represent yourself or the PRRD in a false or ambiguous way. All statements must be true and not misleading, so refrain from posting unsubstantiated or speculative information. If you’re unsure, then simply DO NOT post it.
- 1.5 Never misrepresent that you are accessing or using social media on behalf of PRRD (including expressing opinions or views as being on behalf of PRRD or using or reproducing the PRRD logo or PRRD copyrighted material).



- 1.6 Use common sense and common courtesy. Ensure that you are not violating the PRRD's confidentiality, or those of your colleagues, clients, and/or consultants.
- 1.7 When commenting on official PRRD posts from your personal social media account, make clear that the views being expressed are your own and not affiliated with the PRRD.
- 1.8 If you see something that has been posted/shared online relating to PRRD or any of its staff that you deem inaccurate or offensive, please DO NOT engage in any online communication to try and mitigate or correct the situation. Report this concern immediately to your supervisor and the Communications Manager or designate.
- 1.9 DO NOT use social media in such a way that it interferes with or negatively affects the productivity or efficiency of the PRRD workplace, its business operations or computer systems (including accessing corrupted links, malware, and computer viruses).
- 1.10 Never comment on anything that, to the best of your knowledge and understanding, relate to legal matters, litigation, or any parties the PRRD may be in litigation with.
- 1.11 Never participate in social media when the topic being discussed may be considered a crisis situation. Even anonymous comments may be traced back to you and/or PRRD's IP address. Refer all social media activity around crisis topics to the Communications Manager or designate; and
- 1.12 When in doubt, ALWAYS ask before you post!

2. Monitoring of Access and Use

Staff should be aware that the PRRD may monitor and record the access and use of social media including personal accounts, and the access and use of its systems and resources. The PRRD will only monitor and record such access and use when there is, in the PRRD's view, good cause or legal obligation to do so. The PRRD will ensure any monitoring or recording is limited to what is reasonably required in the circumstances. "Good cause" includes the need to protect the security and functionality of the PRRD's computer systems, to fulfill the PRRD's duties and obligations, to detect staff wrongdoing, to comply with legal process and to protect the rights or property of the PRRD. No staff member of the PRRD should have any reasonable expectation of privacy as to usage of the PRRD owned systems and/or resources.



Schedule D: Respect in the Workplace

1. This policy applies to face-to-face and electronic communications, such as email or social media.
2. The PRRD welcomes diversity and is committed to ensure that all staff will be treated in a fair and respectful manner.
3. The PRRD will not tolerate [bullying, harassment, discrimination, violence](#), or [threatening behavior](#) where engaged in by PRRD Directors, coworkers, supervisors, department heads, officers, contractors, or the public.
4. Notwithstanding this policy, every person who experiences [harassment](#) continues to have the right to seek assistance from the British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal, Worksafe BC, the BC Office of the Ombudsperson, or other similar source, even when steps are being taken under this policy.
5. All incidents of [bullying and harassment](#) must be reported immediately to a supervisor verbally and in writing through the completion and submission of a Workplace Bullying and Harassment Complaint Form (unless otherwise specified in the Collective Agreement for Union staff).
6. Should a staff member not wish to complete a complaint form, the person receiving the complaint will diarize the details of the incident for future consideration should it happen again. To confirm, no action will be taken if a complaint form has not been completed (unless otherwise specified in the Collective Agreement for Union staff).
7. Where the supervisor is the alleged bully, the Department Head, or if required, human resources or the Chief Administrative Officer will assist in receiving/following up on incidents/reports.
8. Most investigations at the PRRD will be conducted internally with the supervisor, human resources, union representative, or other designate being the lead investigator. A worker representative from the safety committee may also be involved. In complex or sensitive external investigator may be involved.
9. The PRRD will keep all records pertaining to investigations and findings in a secure and confidential manner.
10. Any staff member who conducts any behaviours that violate this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
11. Any staff member who misuses the this policy by making a false complaint in bad faith will be disciplined, up to and including dismissal, and may be liable for defamation and libel.