

PACIFIC OPERA VICTORIA

Summary: Promoting a Respectful Workplace

Pacific Opera Victoria is committed to supporting the right of every individual to work in a professional environment that is equitable, respectful, and free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

Pacific Opera's Policy for Promoting a Respectful Workplace is in place

- to promote respect for everyone working for Pacific Opera;
- to set out the types of behaviour that may be considered offensive;
- to provide a process for addressing and resolving concerns about workplace behaviour.

Pacific Opera acknowledges its responsibility

- to support and assist any person subjected to workplace bullying, harassment, or discrimination by anyone, including coworkers, clients, volunteers, supporters, and others who conduct business with Pacific Opera;
- to respect the rights of all parties to a fair and equitable process, maintaining confidentiality to the extent possible.

Who the policy covers: all staff, artists, and volunteers, i.e., everyone, paid or unpaid, who is working for or representing Pacific Opera Victoria in any capacity and in any location.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality at every stage of the process is important to protect everyone involved, including the complainant, the person allegedly responsible for the conduct, and anyone reporting incidents of workplace harassment. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process to the extent permitted.

Bullying and harassment includes any inappropriate conduct and unwelcome actions by any person, whether verbal or physical, which humiliates, insults or degrades. This includes comments or conduct that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause that worker to be humiliated or intimidated.

Discrimination: The BC Human Rights Code prohibits discrimination in employment based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, age, or because that person has been convicted of an offence that is unrelated to the person's employment.

Examples of bullying, harassment, and discrimination:

- Verbal conduct, such as unwelcome attention of a sexual nature, unwarranted criticism, ridicule, derogatory comments, offensive remarks, malicious complaints, gossip, threats, shouting;
- Visual conduct, such as displaying or disseminating pornographic, sexist, racist or other offensive or derogatory material, leering, gestures, ostracism;
- Physical conduct, such as interfering with a person's normal movement, unwelcome physical contact, including touching and assault.

Examples of actions that are not bullying or harassment:

- Reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the place of employment;
- Mutually acceptable social interaction.

Options for making a complaint:

- **Document what happened:** It is important that the complainant create a written record of incidents of bullying, harassment, or discrimination.
- **Approach the person responsible:** The complainant is encouraged but not required to bring the matter to the attention of the person responsible for the conduct (the “respondent”).
- **Discuss with supervisor:** If the complainant is not comfortable bringing the matter directly to the attention of the respondent, or if an attempt to do so isn’t satisfactory, the complainant may approach a supervisor, such as a department head, the CEO, Equity deputy, stage manager, or shop steward.

At this time, the complainant may choose to initiate an informal or formal complaint.

- **Discuss with internal advisor:** If the complainant is not comfortable with the above measures or they don’t produce a satisfactory result, internal advisors are available to help to clarify options, answer questions, and explain the policy.
- **Contact external advisor:** The complainant may consult an external HR Consulting firm, which is on retainer for Pacific Opera, for professional guidance.
- **Informal Complaint:** The complainant may, with the assistance of an advisor, meet with the respondent to resolve the situation. If both parties are satisfied that they have achieved an appropriate resolution, the advisor will make a confidential written record to be signed by both parties. The advisor will follow up to ensure that the solution is working.
- **Formal Complaint:** If the complainant is not satisfied with the results of the informal procedure, or chooses not to utilize the informal procedure, the complainant may request the appointment of an investigator and make a formal written complaint.

Resources

- **Internal Advisors**
D. Heather Raven, QC, Brokenhead Ojibway First Nation, Member of the Board, Pacific Opera Victoria
Dr. Lydia Wingate, Vice President of the Board, Pacific Opera Victoria
- **External Advisor**
Engaged HR Inc.
Office 250.385.7784
hrhelp@engagedhr.com
- **Copy of Policy**
A copy of the complete Policy for Promoting a Respectful Workplace may be downloaded from Pacific Opera’s website: <https://pacificopera.ca/about-us/the-company/governance/>.