

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK TEMPLATE

This is a template can be adapted to your organization and used when hiring new staff. The contents of this template follow Quebec’s *Labour Standards Act* closely and are meant to be a starting point for the creation of a practical reference document that your organization’s employees can consult at any time. The **EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK** is an essential tool for successfully onboarding and integrating new staff into your team!

**Recommendations for using the Employee Handbook**

A best practice in human resources is to give a copy of your organization’s *Employee Handbook* to your new hires on, or just prior to, their first day of work. Creating a document that presents clear and detailed information about the human resources practices of the organization gives your organization the opportunity to review the different topics it covers and establish the work environment. Once you have completed this review, your organization will will be well positioned to answer any questions employees might have about their new work environment; when you provide them with their copy of the *Handbook*, be sure to include a sample letter in which they acknowledge having read the document. There is a template letter on the last page of the *Handbook*, once it’s returned by the employee it should be kept in their personnel file.

In the event of a misunderstanding between the employer and employee, or legal proceedings, it is considered a best practice to have ensured that your organization’s employees have read and understood the *Handbook*; the letter should be updated for all employees if/when any changes or adjustments are made to the *Handbook*.

**A few hints on customizing your Employee Handbook:**

* Words highlighted in grey must be replaced by information specific to your company.
* *We have also included some optional tips; they are to be deleted before printing this document.*

It is important to review and update your *Employee Handbook* periodically to ensure it reflects any legislative, regulatory, and internal policy changes that occur over time. The team at RDN can assist you in modifying or supplementing this Handbook to that it corresponds to your organization’s needs and realities.

***This guide was inspired by RDN’s own HR Manual and a template created by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) that were adapted to reflect the composition of RDN’s membership. It is provided to you for information purposes only. RDN, or the CFIB cannot be held responsible for its final content nor for any subsequent use and/or interpretation by the member organization or a third party.***

*Please remove this introductory page when using the template to create your organization’s Employee Handbook.*

**INSERT YOUR LOGO HERE**

**EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

*Insert the date of the most recent changes made to this document.*

**Table OF CONTENTS**

*To update the Table of Contents below, right-click on your mouse; select “Update all fields” and then “Update entire table”.*

[LettER FrOM THE PRESIDENT /Executive Director 2](#_Toc90304004)

[NAME OF organization (SHORT FORM) 3](#_Toc90304005)

[OUR MISSION 3](#_Toc90304006)

[OUR VALUES 3](#_Toc90304007)

[WORKING CONDITIONS HANDBOOK 4](#_Toc90304008)

[PROBATIONARY PERIOD 4](#_Toc90304009)

[COMPENSATION 4](#_Toc90304010)

[EMPLOYEE BENEFITS 5](#_Toc90304011)

[TIME SHEETS 5](#_Toc90304012)

[WORK SCHEDULE, BREAK PERIODS AND MEALS 5](#_Toc90304013)

[ABSENCES AND LATENESS 6](#_Toc90304014)

[OVERTIME 6](#_Toc90304015)

[PAID STATUTORY HOLIDAYS 7](#_Toc90304016)

[VACATIONS 7](#_Toc90304017)

[MATERNITY/PATERNITY/PARENTAL LEAVE 8](#_Toc90304018)

[SICK AND SOCIAL DAYS - LEAVE WITH PAY 9](#_Toc90304019)

[OTHER CONDITIONS 9](#_Toc90304020)

[CODE OF ETHICS 10](#_Toc90304021)

[ORGANIZATION NAME RULES AND REGULATIONS 13](#_Toc90304022)

[policy on psychological and sexual harassment prevention 14](#_Toc90304023)

# LettER FrOM THE PRESIDENT /Executive Director

Dear Employee,

Welcome to the **name of organization** team.

The objectives of the EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK are to give you an overview of the organization and its human resources practices, and to ensure the smooth operations of our organization and the coherence of its team.

This Handbook contains the following:

* **Name of organization** (short form)
* Working Conditions Handbook
* Organizational Rules and Regulations
* Code of Ethics

All employees, whether seasoned or new, may occasionally need to consult this Employee Handbook.

This document is intended as a clear and direct reference tool containing the answers to your main concerns. If the information you are looking for is not found within the pages of this document, please refer your questions to me or your immediate supervisor and we will make every effort to supplement the information in this Handbook and provide you additional details.

Finally, the Employee Handbook is an evolving document that will be adapted as appropriate to reflect cultural and organizational changes, as well as any modifications that are made to government regulations.

On behalf of the whole team, welcome to **name of organization.**

*Signature*

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Print the President’s name or the Executive Director’s name**

# NAME OF organization (SHORT FORM)

*Please adapt the following paragraph as appropriate for your company:*

Name of organization is committed to supporting the vitality of the English-speaking community living in its service territory.

We exist to serve our community, whose needs and priorities are at the heart of all our actions.

We are keenly aware that employee input and active involvement is vital to the effective operation of our community organization. It is important to keep in mind that we are all representatives of Name of organization when we are at work in the community and collaborating with colleagues and partners and that this is the basis for our reputation and our long-term survival as an active member of the region’s community development sector.

The respect that Name of organization has earned in the region is due to our team, i.e., an experienced team which takes pride in its contributions to the vitality of the region’s minority language community and in which the organization places its ongoing trust for a successful future.

## OUR MISSION

Describe your organization’s mission.

## OUR VALUES

*Below are some examples of values. Describe your company’s values.*

* **Teamwork:** Our organizational capacity is based on our employees’ involvement and collaboration; we establish structures that encourage dialogue as a way of implementing best practices.
* **Respect:** To ensure a climate that encourages workplace well-being, it is vital that we treat our colleagues and the organization’s volunteers with respect and fairness, while also being sensitive to each individual’s needs.
* **Innovation:** To remain effective in our work, we try to foster new ideas by maintaining an ongoing improvement process. We believe in human potential and in the constant development of our team.
* **Occupational health and safety:** As a responsible employer, we ensure that every member of the team is committed to promoting and creating a working environment that is safe at all times. This approach allows us to maintain ongoing improvement in workplace health and safety.

*You may add the organizational chart to this section, as well as telephone numbers for emergencies or reporting workplace incidents, etc.*

# WORKING CONDITIONS HANDBOOK

## PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Before being classified as a permanent employee of the organization, each new employee must work for a probationary period lasting **three or six (3 or 6)** calendar months. During this period, the organization reserves the right to terminate a worker’s employment without notice if their work is deemed unsatisfactory. The employee may also resign without giving prior notice. The probationary period may be extended an additional three (3) months if the employee fails to demonstrate possession of the skills required for their position.

During the probationary period, employees are not eligible for a salary review or for participation in the employee benefits program; however, they are compensated for any statutory holidays occurring during this period, starting with their first day of employment and based on a calculation establishing the compensation amount. The sole exception is Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day, which is a statutory general holiday for which all Quebec workers are paid. The only requirement for receiving this benefit is that the employee be employed on this date.

*The concept of a probationary period is not specifically recognized in the Act respecting labour standards of Quebec (Labour Standards Act). While potentially relevant for purposes of evaluation and monitoring, the probationary period is not legally required.*

*Three (3) months is the standard probationary period, but it may also be shorter. However, you need to set a time that gives new staff a fair opportunity to prove themselves and assimilate their duties. If you prefer to set a longer period, you will then need to give one week’s notice if the employee does not meet the job requirements.*

## COMPENSATION

Employee wages are determined before a team member is hired and management establishes the amount in accordance with the organization’s applicable pay scales, the tasks to be executed, and the employee’s relevant recognized experience.

The employee must provide a void cheque so that their pay can be deposited in the appropriate bank account. The pay is deposited in this bank account (insert the time, e.g.: Thursdays) and covers (insert the time period, e.g.: a one-week period) from (e.g.: Sunday to Saturday).

Each employee will receive a pay stub when their wages are paid. If the pay stub contains any errors or the employee has any questions about it, they must contact the payroll administrator.

An annual salary adjustment may or may not be made, depending on the employee’s performance review and the organization’s funding restrictions.

*If the organization implements an increase policy, it must be spelled out. Similarly, details may be provided here regarding performance reviews, e.g., frequency, who conducts them, etc.*

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

The employer contributes to all plans, insurance policies and other programs provided for by law, i.e., the Quebec Pension Plan (QPP), federal Employment Insurance (EI) and the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP).

Employees who wish to continue receiving benefits during a long-term absence such as a temporary layoff, sick leave, maternity/paternity/parental leave, or unpaid leave must continue to pay their portion of the costs (the employee and the employer must arrange a payment agreement in each of these cases).

Drug insurance in Quebec is required under the *Act Respecting Prescription Drug Insurance*.

Group life, health and wage insurance plans will be negotiated with the employee. Whenever a new employee joins a group insurance plan, the employer is required to pay 50% of the insurance cost. The employer offers the employee the opportunity to contribute to a payroll savings plan.

*If the organization offers a group insurance plan, e.g., RRSP or VRSP, provide details here about the plan’s benefits.*

## TIME SHEETS

*Adapt as appropriate for your organization.*

Every employee is provided with a time sheet. This sheet is required for calculating employee wages and for record-keeping. Time sheets must be filled in by the employee on a weekly basis and submitted to the payroll officer before 12:00 p.m. on the Friday before each scheduled pay day.

Salaried employees (management) are not required to keep and submit a time sheet.

## WORK SCHEDULE, BREAK PERIODS AND MEALS

Day schedule:

The standard work week is forty (35) hours, Monday through Friday. The standard workday starts at 8 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. Two fifteen-minute break periods are allowed each day, i.e., at 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Employees are entitled to one unpaid 60-minute lunch period per standard workday, i.e., from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.

*According to the Labour Standards, after a period of work of five (5) consecutive hours, employees are entitled to a 30-minute period, without pay, for their meal. They must be paid for this period if they are unable to leave their workstation. Break periods of 10 to 15 minutes may be granted during work shifts but are not mandatory. However, if such periods are granted, they must be paid.*

The work schedule may change temporarily and employees may be required to work some evenings and/or weekends to accommodate the organization’s activity or service delivery requirements.

The regular work hours may not be the same for all employees, depending on the type or location of the work that is assigned to them. In such instances, the working conditions are spelled out when the employee is hired or their job is modified.

Summer work schedule: add if applicable (for example, offices close at 12:00 p.m. Fridays and employees are paid for the afternoon between June 15th and August 30th)

##

## ABSENCES AND LATENESS

Employees are sometimes required to be absent from, or late for, work. The organization has provided a procedure for such cases to ensure that all staff are treated fairly.

Employees are responsible for advising *(indicate how – by telephone, email, text message, …)* their immediate supervisor of any absence or lateness as soon as possible before the start of their work shift so that the supervisor can make the necessary replacement arrangements and maintain good continuity of the organization’s activities.

If an employee is absent for more than three (3) consecutive days, the employer reserves the right to ask them for a medical certificate.

Unauthorized or excessive absences may result in the engagement of disciplinary measures by management, depending on the seriousness of the situation.

## OVERTIME

Employees may occasionally be required to work overtime in order to meet activity or service delivery schedules.

Employees are not authorized to approve their own overtime; therefore, all work which they perform outside their usual schedule must receive prior approval from the Executive Director.

*Hours worked in addition to the standard work week must be paid at one and a half times the standard hourly rate. Employees are entitled to a weekly minimum rest period of 32 consecutive hours. Employees may refuse to work more than two hours beyond their usual work hours.*

*You may reach an agreement with your employees to stagger work hours on a non-weekly basis. Although CNESST authorization is not required, certain conditions do apply:*

* *The agreement must be evidenced in writing;*
* *Hours may be staggered over a maximum period of four weeks;*
* *A work week may not exceed by more than 10 hours the standard provided for in the Labour Standards Act or its regulations. This means that, in the case of most employees, the work week cannot exceed 50 hours;*
* *An employee or the employer may terminate the agreement on staggered work hours after giving at least two weeks’ notice prior to the scheduled end of this agreement.*

## PAID STATUTORY HOLIDAYS

The paid statutory holidays are listed below: *(these are the minimum under the Labour Standards)*

* New Year’s Day (January 1)
* Good Friday or Easter Monday (at the employer’s option)
* National Patriots’ Day (Monday preceding May 25)
* National Holiday (June 24)
* Canada Day (July 1)
* Labour Day (first Monday in September)
* Thanksgiving (second Monday in October)
* Christmas Day (December 25)

Employees are entitled to an indemnity or a paid compensatory leave, at the employer’s option. This leave must be taken in the three (3) weeks preceding or following the statutory holiday, except for the National Holiday.

The indemnity for paid statutory holidays and for the National Holiday is computed as follows: 1/20 of the wages earned during the four complete weeks of pay preceding the week of the holiday, excluding overtime.

***List of additional statutory holidays that you might consider offering:***

* *New Year’s Eve (December 31)*
* *Day after New Year’s Day (January 2)*
* *Good Friday or Easter Monday*
* *Remembrance Day (November 11)*
* *Boxing Day (December 26)*

## VACATIONS

*Below are the minimum vacation times prescribed by the Labour Standards:*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Depending on hiring date* | Vacation | Indemnity |
| Less than 1 year | 1 day for each month of service performed in the reference year | 4% |
| 1 year to less than 3 years | 2 weeks | 4% |
| 3 years or more  | 3 weeks | 6% |

Annual vacation days must be earned during the reference year, that is, from April 1st to March 31st, and employees have 12 months in which to use them. Vacation days must be taken during the current year because they do not carry over from one year to the next and cannot be cashed out. You will be given a form that you must fill out prior to the summer period informing us of your desired vacation time. Although we will try to accommodate the preferences of all employees, vacation scheduling will be based on operational needs. Preference will be given to seniority to the extent possible.

When the organization opts to close part or all of its operations during the summer period, you must take your vacation during this same period.

*It is the prerogative of the employer to set the vacation dates. However, the employer must inform the employee of the date of his/her vacation at least four (4) weeks in advance.*

*The common practice of establishing schedules based on seniority is not required by law. In fact, the concept of seniority is not recognized as such in the Labour Standards Act and carries no legal weight when setting up vacation schedules.*

## MATERNITY/PATERNITY/PARENTAL LEAVE

The employer recognizes maternity/paternity/parental leave as continuous employment. For instance, an employee who has an uninterrupted year of service when she goes on a one-year maternity leave will be credited with two years of continuous employment when she returns from her leave.

Employees must give their employer written notice at least three (3) weeks prior to their leaving, indicating the date of their departure and the expected date of their return to work.

On return from maternity/paternity leave, the employee’s vacation time is calculated as specified in the Labour Standards. The employee will then be free to use his/her vacation time for a gradual return to work. Vacation days do not accrue under parental leave.

## SICK AND SOCIAL DAYS - LEAVE WITH PAY

Employees who have completed more than three months of uninterrupted service are entitled to two days of paid leave each calendar year (January 1 to December 31) for the following reasons:

* Illness
* To fulfil family obligations related to the care, health, or education of their child or their spouse’s child, or caregiver duties for a parent or other person whose health condition requires them
* Organ or tissue donation
* Following an accident, domestic violence, sexual violence, or a criminal offence

These paid-leave days are non-refundable and non‑cumulative.

For these days, the employee’s compensation will be calculated in the same manner as for statutory holidays.

*Note: At the employer’s discretion, you may take partial sick days.*

\*Medical appointments are not considered sick days, as they are planned.

## OTHER CONDITIONS

Using the Internet and social media

The Internet and social media may be used during work hours only for purposes of carrying out job-related requirements and responsibilities. When the Internet and social media are used for work purposes, employees must act in a professional manner while also abiding by the organization’s Code of Conduct. It is forbidden to play video games during work hours. The organization does, however, allow employees to use the Internet after work hours provided that another employee does not need to use the system to carry out their duties.

Using personal mobile devices

Using personal mobile devices during work hours is not allowed since doing so could adversely impact their productivity; employees may use personal mobile devices on their scheduled breaks.

Using computer software

Computer software must be approved by the management team and be compatible with the technological options chosen by the organization and must always be accompanied by a legitimate user license.

Travel expenses

When travelling on behalf of the Name of organization, outside your normal place of work, you must attempt to use the least expensive form of public or private transportation. When, in the interest of time and efficiency, private automobiles and other more rapid forms of transport can be used, you must have the approval of their supervisor prior to incurring such expenses.

Employees and board members required to use their own vehicle for organization business shall submit an expense form for reimbursement on a per kilometre rate (as indicated on expense forms). The rate is dependent on the Government of Canada and Quebec rates and may fluctuate. Parking costs are reimbursed based on the actual costs incurred.

Meal expenses

If the employee’s work requires that they have a business meal\*, the maximum amounts allocated are:

Breakfast: $20

Lunch: $20

Dinner: $50

Claims in excess of these rates will be reimbursed when warranted and pre-approved by the Executive Director.

\*Meals that are covered as part of activity or meeting attended are not eligible for reimbursement (i.e., a continental breakfast and/or lunch were provided at a conference the employee attended).

Accommodation expenses

When overnight stays are necessary for organizational business, you should choose an establishment that is reasonably priced, unless the choice of the hotel is dictated by the event. The cost of accommodations will be covered by the corporation. Employees are encouraged to opt for double occupancy whenever possible.

Name of organization is responsible for booking the accommodations, except in extenuating circumstances where the employee needs to make arrangements at the last minute (example: travelling during a snowstorm, road closures etc.). The original hotel bill must be submitted along with the employee’s expense form for reimbursement.

If you benefit from the hospitality of an acquaintance, Name of organization will reimburse you $50 per night to compensate for a gift to your host.

Dress code

Name of organization requests that you wear appropriate clothing, according to the situation. Employees may dress casual at the office, but if you need to work directly with the organization’s partners or community members, you are asked to please present a professional image and dress appropriately.

# CODE OF ETHICS

Our organization has adopted values that will allow us to achieve our growth objectives while also promoting general workplace well-being. These values must be upheld by each and every one of us. Management cannot, therefore, tolerate any conduct that contravenes these organizational values. Below is the **Code of Ethics** by which all staff must abide. We encourage you to inform your supervisor of any conduct that is illegal or contrary to the Code of Ethics. The organization is committed to protecting employees and volunteers against all forms of reprisals.

*Examples of elements that may be included in your organization’s Code of Ethics.*

respect

* Treat all of your colleagues and supervisors the same way, with respect and equality.
* No vexatious conduct, words or actions shall be tolerated, in accordance with our policy on psychological and sexual harassment prevention.
* Show an interest in your colleagues and be a good listener.
* Be courteous, polite and straightforward with your colleagues.
* Respect other people’s work areas as well as their knowledge and skills.

HONESTY

* Honesty vis-à-vis all your workplace activities is essential.
* Theft is not tolerated and may lead to dismissal.
* It is important to avoid placing yourself in a situation of personal conflict of interest vis-à-vis your employment obligations.

professionalism

* Respect the confidentiality of information provided by community members, colleagues, or management.
* Project a positive corporate image; any work-related problems must be settled internally rather than outside the organization.
* Employees must pay particular attention to cleanliness and are expected to maintain a workplace-appropriate appearance. We rely on your good judgment to determine what is and is not acceptable, within the bounds of safety and the public image that goes with your responsibilities.

AUTONOMY

* Show initiative in terms of improving the workplace or the services provided to our members/community.

responsibilitY

* Look for solutions to work-related problems and submit these solutions to management.
* Admit your mistakes without looking for excuses.

WORK TeAM

* Know how to provide mutual support.
* Be sensitive to the needs and requests of your colleagues.
* Be ready to collaborate and offer constructive criticism.

commitment

* Show enthusiasm in the workplace.
* Strive to constantly improve your work methods.

structure AND organiZation

* Abide by management directives.

ATTENTIVENESS

* Respect the work schedule.
* Be vigilant in performing your tasks.

loyalty

* Refrain from saying anything that might damage the reputation of the organization or management, both within and outside the organization.
* Be vigilant in everything you say so that the people around you will see that you stand in solidarity with your employer and colleagues.

# ORGANIZATION NAME RULES AND REGULATIONS

**Name of organization** expects staff to abide by certain rules and regulations in order to create a positive working environment for everyone.

Employees are also required to follow the rules, regulations and guidelines laid out in this Handbook and communicated within the workplace.

*Examples of rules and regulations. You may also add sector-specific rules and regulations related to health and safety standards.*

Workplace health and safety. As an employee, you must:

* Follow the health and safety regulations.
* Observe the hygiene standards.
* Wear protective equipment when required.
* Immediately report a workplace accident to your immediate supervisor.
* Show respect for your work colleagues and/or not use abusive or disrespectful language.
* Avoid getting into fights or quarrels, running, or shouting.
* Refrain from having a weapon on the employer’s property.
* Refrain from having or consuming alcohol or drugs on the employer’s property and from working under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
* Adhere to our policy on psychological and sexual harassment prevention.

Respect in the workplace setting. As an employee, you are not allowed to:

* Smoke on indoor work premises and within nine metres of the outside doors and windows.
* Gamble on the employer’s property.
* Engage in insubordination, or refuse to work, as this will result in an employee’s immediate suspension for the remainder of his/her shift.

Work schedule. As an employee, you must:

* Respect the work schedule that has been assigned to you.
* Arrive on time for meetings and obligations and return punctually from breaks.
* Obtain authorization from your immediate supervisor before working overtime.

Company equipment and assets. As an employee, you are not allowed to:

* Use the employer’s equipment for personal reasons during work hours. Permission to do so may be granted outside work hours.
* Falsify files, documents, or reports.
* Possess or transport any assets belonging to the organization off the employer’s property without written authorization.
* Break tools or equipment belonging to the organizations.
* Be on the employer’s property without authorization or invitation when not on the job.
* Park vehicles anywhere other than in specifically designated areas.
* Engage in fund-raising on the employer’s property without prior authorization.
* Post items on the organization’s social media accounts without authorization.

The employer expects staff and to exercise judgment with regard to appropriate work conduct. In order to ensure respect, harmony and safety for everyone in the workplace, employees who breach the regulations may face disciplinary action that could lead to dismissal.

Since it is difficult to anticipate and list all situations that might arise in the course of your work, this handbook makes broad reference to the *Labour Standards Act* and to other applicable employment legislation in Quebec.

# policy on psychological and sexual harassment prevention

**1) Objectives**

The purpose of this policy is to affirm the Organization name’s commitment to preventing and stopping any situation of psychological or sexual harassment within the organization, including any form of discriminatory harassment. It also aims to establish the principles of intervention that are applied within the organization when a complaint of harassment is filed, or a situation of harassment is reported to the employer.

**2) Scope**

This policy applies to all personnel, and at all hierarchical levels, including in the following locations and contexts:

* the workplace;
* common areas;
* any other place where people are required to be in the course of their employment (e.g. meetings, training, travel, social activities organized by the employer);
* communications by any means, technological or otherwise.

**3) Definition**

The *Labour Standards Act* defines psychological harassment as:

"Vexatious conduct in the form of repeated and hostile or unwanted conduct, words, actions or gestures that affects an employee's dignity or psychological or physical integrity and that results in a harmful work environment for the employee. For greater certainty, psychological harassment includes such conduct when it takes the form of words, acts or gestures of a sexual nature”. See Annex 1

A single serious act of conduct may also constitute psychological harassment if it causes such harm and produces a continuous harmful effect on the employee.”

The definition includes discriminatory harassment related to one of the grounds set out in the *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*.

The notion of harassment must be distinguished from other situations such as interpersonal conflict, work-related stress, difficult professional constraints or the normal exercise of management rights (management of attendance at work, work organization, disciplinary measures, etc.).

**4) Policy Statement**

Organization name does not tolerate or condone any form of psychological or sexual harassment in its organization:

* + By managers towards employees;
* Between colleagues;
* By employees towards their superiors;
* By any person associated with it: representatives, client, supplier, visitor, volunteer or other.

Any behaviour related to harassment may result in the imposition of disciplinary measures that may go as far as dismissal.

Organization name undertakes to take reasonable steps to:

* Provide a work environment free of all forms of harassment in order to protect the dignity as well as the psychological and physical integrity of individuals;
* disseminate the policy in such a way as to make it accessible to all its employees, by posting in a place accessible to all staff on the server; as well as in paper form if requested;
* prevent or, as appropriate, stop harassment by:
	+ Setting up a procedure for handling complaints and reports related to situations of psychological or sexual harassment;
	+ Ensuring that the policy is understood and respected by all persons;
	+ Promoting respect between individuals.

**5) Expectations of Staff**

It is the responsibility of all personnel to adopt behaviour that promotes the maintenance of an environment free of psychological or sexual harassment.

**6) Procedure for Handling Complaints and Reports**

Whenever possible, a person who believes they are being subjected to psychological or sexual harassment should first inform the person concerned that their behaviour is undesirable, and that the person must stop it. They should also note the date and details of the incidents as well as the steps they have taken to try to resolve the situation.

If this initial intervention is not desired or if the harassment continues, the employee should report the situation to one of the responsible persons designated by the employer so that the problem behaviours can be identified, and the means required to resolve the situation. See Annex 2

A complaint may be made verbally or in writing. The behaviour complained of, and the details of the incidents must be described as precisely as possible, so that action can be taken quickly to put an end to the situation.

The responsible persons designated by the employer are as follows:

Name of person (most often the Executive Director)

Telephone number & email address

The person who witnesses a situation of harassment is also invited to report it to one of the responsible persons mentioned above.

**7) Principles of Intervention**

Organization name undertakes to:

* Deal with the complaint or report as soon as possible;
* Preserve the dignity and privacy of the persons concerned, i.e., the person who made the complaint, the person who is the subject of the complaint and witnesses;
* Ensure that all persons concerned are treated humanely, fairly and objectively and that they are provided with adequate support;
* Protect the confidentiality of the intervention process, including information related to the complaint or report;
* Offer to meet with the persons concerned, with their agreement, to resolve the situation;
* If necessary, conduct a prompt and objective investigation, or assign responsibility for it to an external party. The persons concerned will be informed of the outcome of this process. If the investigation does not establish that unacceptable behaviour has occurred, all material evidence will be retained for two years and destroyed thereafter;
* Take all reasonable steps to resolve the situation, including appropriate disciplinary action.

Any person who commits a breach of the harassment policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. The choice of the applicable measure will take into account the seriousness and consequences of the action(s) as well as the previous record of the person who committed them.

A person who lays false accusations with the intention of causing harm is also subject to appropriate disciplinary measures.

In dealing with and resolving a situation involving harassment in the workplace, no one must suffer prejudice or be subject to reprisals by the employer.

**N.B.** A non-unionized person who believes that he or she is suffering or has suffered psychological or sexual harassment in connection with his or her work may also file a complaint at any time directly with the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST). The maximum time limit for doing so is two (2) years from the last manifestation of harassment. The complaint may be filed online at [https://www.cnt.gouv.qc.ca/en/in-case-of/psychological-or-sexual-harassment/you-are-an-employee/index .html](https://www.cnt.gouv.qc.ca/en/in-case-of/psychological-or-sexual-harassment/you-are-an-employee/index%20.html) or by telephone at 1 844 838 0808. The fact that an employee chooses to first contact their employer will not prevent them from also filing a complaint with CNESST.

###### Annex 1

**Recognising Psychological or Sexual Harassment**

The *Labour Standards Act* provides criteria for determining what can be considered psychological or sexual harassment either:

* vexatious (hurtful, humiliating) conduct;
* that occurs repeatedly or in the course of a single serious act;
* in a hostile (aggressive, threatening) or unwanted manner;
* that violates the dignity or integrity of the person;
* resulting in a toxic (harmful, detrimental) work environment for the person.

These conditions include words, acts or gestures of a sexual nature.

Discrimination based on any of the grounds listed in section 10 of the *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms* may also constitute harassment: race, colour, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation,civil status, age except as provided by law, religion, political convictions, language, ethnic ornational origin, social condition, disability or the use of any means to palliate a disability.

For example, the following conduct could be considered vexatious conduct constituting harassment if it meets all the criteria of the law.

**Behaviours that may be related to psychological harassment**

* Bullying, cyberbullying, threats, isolation;
* Offensive or defamatory words or gestures about a person or their work;
* Verbal abuse;
* Disparagement.

**Behaviours that may be related to sexual harassment**

* Any form of unwanted attention or advance with sexual connotations, for example :
	+ insistent solicitation;
	+ looks, kisses or touching;
	+ sexist insults, rude language.
* Sexual comments, jokes or images with sexual connotations by any means, technological or otherwise.

###### Annex 2

**Responsible Persons Designated by the Employer**

Organization name

* will ensure that the designated responsible persons will be properly trained and have the necessary tools at their disposal for the handling and follow-up of the complaint or report;
* free up working time so that the designated responsible persons can carry out the functions assigned to them.

The following persons are designated to act as persons responsible for the application of Organization name’s Policy on the Prevention of Psychological or Sexual Harassment at Work:

Person’s name, Executive Director

581-398-4098 - ed@regdevnet.ca

These responsible persons should mainly:

* inform staff about the company's policy on psychological or sexual harassment;
* intervening informally to try to resolve situations;
* receive complaints and reports;
* recommend the nature of the actions to be taken to put an end to the harassment.

**Commitment of those responsible**

I hereby declare my commitment to abide by this policy and assure that my intervention will be impartial, respectful and confidential.

Responsible person’s signature Date

**INSERT YOUR LOGO HERE**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HAVING READ THE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, attest that I have read the Employee Handbook and its various components, including the following:

* Working Conditions Handbook
* Organization name Rules and Regulations
* Organization name Code of Ethics
* Organization name Policy on Psychological and Sexual Harassment Prevention

I acknowledge having received all the relevant information that I needed in order to have a good understanding of the content or scope of this Handbook.

Employee’s signature Date

Executive Director’s signature Date

*Please sign this letter and give it to your employer.*