



**Builders
Code**

ACCEPTABLE WORKSITE POLICIES

MODEL POLICY "A"

FOR SMALLER EMPLOYERS

AND THOSE NEW TO WORKPLACE CULTURE



British
Columbia
Construction
Association



Northwest
Territories
& Nunavut
Construction
Association

builderscode.ca

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The Builders Code

Our Code for an Acceptable Worksite

At _____, we are fully committed to creating an Acceptable Worksite where all employees have the same opportunity to do their best work and are recognized as our most valuable assets. In alignment with **Builders Code, we define an Acceptable Worksite as being safe, productive, and free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and hazing.**

We expect all employees to comply with and contribute to Builders Code Acceptable Worksite.

This means that every employee has both a right and an obligation to be safe and productive at work. We know that the hazards to safety are not only physical, and safety protection is not limited to Personal Protective Equipment. Unwelcome, offensive, excluding, discriminatory and/or harassing language and behaviour also create stress and distraction that puts health, safety and productivity at risk.

We are committed to having an Acceptable Worksite strengthened through a diverse and inclusive workforce where all workers feel safe, valued and motivated to meet the highest standards in effective teamwork safety and quality customer service.

How We Commit to an Acceptable Worksite

With the overall goals of safety, productivity, quality, innovation—as well as seeing that our employees feel welcome, supported and valued—we commit to the following practices:

- **Recruitment & Hiring**
 - We attract and hire our people from a variety of sources
 - We hire and pay based on qualifications, ability and performance
 - We work hard to make employees feel welcome and safe right away
- **Retention**
 - We compensate employees at fair market value, based on their skills, experience, and relevant competencies and qualifications
 - We train and support employees to be successful in their job
 - We provide fair and objective feedback/performance reviews
 - We accommodate family/personal responsibilities whenever possible
- **Culture**
 - We expect and hold everyone accountable to complying with and contributing to Builders Code Acceptable Worksite
 - We don't tolerate behavior that violates Builders Code Acceptable Worksite, including discrimination, harassment, bullying, and hazing
 - We understand and value that our employees view things differently; so we measure the standards for our Acceptable Worksite by the impact of behaviour, not the intent
 - We provide training on Builders Code Acceptable Worksite to all employees
 - We work with employees to resolve issues appropriately, whether those issues are with a co-worker, a supervisor, customer, or a contractor/sub-trade/partner

- We educate employees about ongoing awareness of bias and provide a safe environment to bring concerns forward
- **Education, Awareness & Community**
 - We work with colleges, trades associations and other organizations to educate them on our trade and our company, and help new entrants to the industry get a strong start
 - We give back to/support the communities we work in

***“It’s 100% up to all of us to make or break this.
Do you want your co-workers to have your back?
Ask yourself... Do you have theirs?”***

Unacceptable Behaviour Isn’t Okay Here

Unacceptable behavior can take many forms, including the following:

- **Hazing** - Any action or situation (e.g. a “rite of passage” for apprentices and new employees) created with the intention of producing mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment or ridicule, regardless of the person’s willingness to participate.
- **Discrimination** - Treating a person or group differently from other people or groups based on perceived or actual differences/distinctions—when those differences/distinctions are irrelevant or based on stereotypes. All employees, customers, partners, and suppliers have a right to a work environment that’s free from any discrimination or harassment based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, political belief, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, unrelated criminal conviction, or any other ground that is in violation of the law.
- **Harassment** - Any conduct, comment, gesture, or contact that is objectionable and unwelcome and should *reasonably be known as* objectionable and unwelcome. There are many forms of harassment, including (but not limited to) bullying and harassment, sexual harassment, and harassment based on any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination listed above.
 - **Sexual Harassment** – Any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, including (but not limited to): unnecessary physical contact; propositions/threats in exchange for workplace rewards; derogatory or degrading remarks of a sexual nature or regarding gender or sexual orientation; unwelcome sexual flirtations/propositions, suggestive or obscene comments or gestures, giving unwanted gifts; displaying sexually suggestive pictures or objects; or any other such behaviour on the worksite or via digital communication including social media, email, texts.

Unsure whether it’s sexual harassment?

***Ask the person being whistled at, being continuously asked out, or having obscene gesture made towards how they feel about it. How would you feel if it was directed at you? How would your spouse or partner feel if it was them?
And how would you feel if it was them?***

If it’s unwelcome but it continues, it’s quite possibly sexual harassment.

- **Bullying & Harassment** - Any form of harassment as defined above that causes someone to feel humiliated, intimidated, offended, or degraded, and that usually occurs as repeated incidents or a pattern of behaviour. It may include physical, verbal, or emotional abuse, such as (but not limited to): excessive yelling or profanity; public display of temper; constantly criticizing a person and/or undermining/deliberately obstructing work; making derogatory comments and belittling opinions; taking credit for work done by others; intimidating or humiliating through such things as sarcasm, ridicule, making someone the target of jokes; jokes that are obviously offensive; questioning or teasing about personal issues; interfering with belongings/work equipment; repeatedly excluding someone; or any other such behaviour on the worksite or via digital communication including social media, email, texts.

All employees, without exception, have a right to a worksite that's free from unacceptable behaviour. In the same way that you can refuse work if it is physically unsafe, you also have the right to refuse work if it's unsafe in the other ways outlined within this code. Accordingly, we expect all employees to act in line with Builders Code Acceptable Worksite. Any behaviours that don't align with these practices are not acceptable and won't be tolerated. Employees found to engage in unacceptable behaviour towards co-workers, customers, and anyone they interact with at work will be subject to corrective action up to and including termination of employment.

We like having fun at work too. But practical jokes and misguided humour (e.g. about sexual stereotypes, incompetence, or imitations of someone's accent) can be hurtful, humiliating and degrading.

Complying with our Acceptable Worksite doesn't mean not having fun at work, or always having to worry that you're going to say the wrong thing. It's about appreciating that we're not all the same, and making it okay for someone to call you on it if you DO say the wrong thing – and vice versa.

Addressing & Resolving Unacceptable Behaviour

We view all allegations of unacceptable behavior—especially hazing, discrimination, bullying and/or harassment - as very serious. If you feel that you've been the target of one of these practices – or if you've witnessed it on or off our customer's premises - we encourage you to either directly address it or let us know immediately, as follows:

- Keep in mind that sometimes people aren't aware they're being offensive until they're told.
- For one-off, possibly unintentional situations: if you feel comfortable and safe handling it one to one, let the person know of your disapproval/discomfort with what they've said or done and ask them to stop or not do so again.
- If you either don't feel comfortable/safe or you tried handling it directly without an appropriate outcome, let your supervisor (or another supervisor, the Foreperson, the Site Super, the Owner) know immediately – even if that means simply sending a text. **We'll address it with you immediately!**
- **Don't look the other way!** If you witness or are aware of an unacceptable behaviour that doesn't involve you, step in to stop it, or talk to your supervisor (or another supervisor, the Foreperson, the Site Super, the Owner) about it right away.
- Whether you choose to address issues on your own or need assistance, **we'll support you.**



"We all need to take a step back and look at how we should be treating one another, and appreciating how another's experiences are different from our own. This is so much more than a company directive ... it's a philosophy for how we live which we all benefit from."

Our goal is to work with employees to address and resolve matters before incidents become ongoing job site problems. We encourage and will support you to directly and safely handle issues on a one-to-one basis whenever possible. If/when that's not possible, a supervisor or manager will address and/or facilitate discussions between employees. If neither of those approaches are appropriate, or they don't result in an acceptable outcome, we may conduct an investigation. Investigations are fair, objective and fact-finding conversations with each employee and any witnesses, after which both the person who brought the issue forward and the person(s) alleged will be advised of the outcome and appropriate action will be taken as necessary.

Confidentiality - We know it can be difficult to come forward with a concern or complaint of unacceptable behavior. While we protect the privacy of everyone involved, a complaint cannot remain anonymous for it to be addressed as the person/people accused must be given an opportunity to respond, and we may need to involve witnesses in the process. Confidentiality will always be maintained to only the required persons in the investigation.

Retaliation & Intentionally False Accusations - Allegations that a complaint has been made in bad faith or that retaliation has occurred against a person who has brought forward a concern/complaint or participated in an investigation may be investigated using the same procedure as for other investigations. Anyone found to have retaliated or made deliberately false accusations will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Employee Acknowledgement & Agreement

I acknowledge that as an employee of _____, I am responsible for my knowledge of the information and practices contained within Builders Code Acceptable Worksite. If I have questions about the contents of this policy/program I will ask my supervisor, manager, the Superintendent, the Foreperson, the General Manager, or Human Resources for clarification. As an employee of _____, I understand that the contents of this policy/program as amended from time to time, form part of the terms and conditions of my employment and agree to respect and follow them.

Employee Name (Print) Signature Date