

Policy: Non Discrimination

Policy # 9 **Number of Pages: 3** **Date of Approval:** Nov 2001

Approved By: Board of Directors, Management **Review Date:** June 2026

References: Special Works: Program Policies and Procedures
City of Toronto: Non Discrimination Agreement from Funders
General Personnel Policy # 2

Statement:

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, Greater Toronto Central Council (hereinafter referred to as the Society), faithful to its traditions, seeks to provide the fullest possible service in a fair and equitable manner to those seeking help, as well as to those who wish to be considered for employment or as candidates for volunteer opportunities.

The Society endeavours to provide:

- an environment that is supportive and enhancing to all employees, volunteers and clients; free of discrimination or racial intolerance.
- services, either directly or by way of referral, to anyone who requires assistance without regard to race, ancestry, colour, origin, sex, sexual orientation or creed.
- representation by the staff and volunteer members which reflects the racial diversity of the community.

In addition, the Society has agreed to abide by the City of Toronto's Anti-Racism and Non-Discrimination Policies which state in part:

“The Society upholds the City of Toronto's policy statement which prohibits discrimination and harassment and protects the right to be free of hate activity, based on age, ancestry, citizenship, creed (religion), colour, disability, ethnic origin, family status, gender identity, level of literacy, marital status, place of origin, membership in union or staff association, race, receipt of public assistance, record of offences, sex, sexual orientation or any other personal characteristics by or within the organization.”

Procedure

This procedure applies to incidents involving allegations of discrimination against employees, Board Members, Vincentians, volunteers and service users.

When a discriminatory incident happens or there is a perception of discrimination, it becomes the collective and individual responsibility of those involved and witnesses to the event to take action. A procedure to manage the complaint will be followed in an effort to resolve the situation.

These procedures do not preclude action by any individual to apply for a hearing through the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Reporting Procedures:

The Executive Director shall be informed of all alleged acts of discrimination. In the event that the alleged act involves the Executive Director, or a Vincentian, the Chair of the Board of Directors shall be notified.

In the event that satisfactory resolution to the complaint cannot be achieved, the Executive Director will report the incident to the Chair of the Board.

Step 1: Informal Resolution

Individuals may not be aware that their actions are hurtful or discriminatory. They should be informed of this and given the opportunity to stop the behaviour.

The person(s) directly involved if they are comfortable and/or a witness, could approach the person who has acted or commented in a way that was seen as discriminatory, ask them to stop their behaviour and explain why the action is seen as discriminatory.

If the problem is resolved through this informal action, no documentation or further action is needed. If the problem is not resolved and incidents are repeated, the process will proceed to Step 2 and the Executive Director will direct the process.

Step 2: Formal Resolution:

If the matter is not resolved at Step 1, the matter then escalates to an attempt to achieve a Formal Resolution as directed by the Executive Director. The process includes a written account of the incident recorded by the senior member of staff conducting the investigative meeting. The written account should contain facts, times, dates and a list of any witnesses. The written account shall be signed by both the complainant and the senior member of staff. This written account will then authorize the Society to initiate an investigation into the alleged occurrences.

The Executive Director will ensure that an investigation takes place within 5 working days of being made of the complaint in an effort to resolve the incident. The investigation may include meetings with the individuals directly involved, meetings with witnesses and meetings with other parties if determined to be necessary. During the course of the investigation, all information shall be treated confidentially. If the situation is not resolved satisfactorily at the conclusion of the Step 2 investigation, and depending on the severity, the situation may be referred directly to the Board of Directors by any parties involved.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the final decision will be communicated in writing to all parties involved. The review, proposed resolution and outcome will be documented as part of the record of incident(s). The record of the investigation shall be signed by all parties involved and the Executive Director.

In the event that the incident involves a Vincentian and the matter has been escalated to Step 2 in the process, the Chair of the Board will be notified.

In the event that the incident involves the Executive Director, the Chair of the Board shall lead the investigation.

The Board will take whatever steps are necessary to review and resolve the situation and will make the final decision.

Should it be found that discriminatory behaviour has occurred, actions taken by the Executive Director or the Board may include:

- specialized training
- program discharge (resident or clients)
- change or restriction of duties
- reassignment within the organization
- disciplinary procedures
- other actions as may be determined necessary