



VIDEA
1923 Fernwood Rd,
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VIDEA – Anti-Harassment and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

1. Policy Statement:

VIDEA is committed to delivering harassment-free programmes, and fostering harassment-free workplaces and intern placements, where all programme participants, associates, volunteers, interns and staff are treated with respect and dignity. (Associates include all others who come into contact with VIDEA programmes, including, but not limited to, activity and event participants, staff and volunteers of overseas and partner organisations, contractors, and activity facilitators).

The *Canadian Human Rights Act* protects all employees from harassment based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability or pardoned conviction.

Harassment, abuse, or exploitation in any form, including emotional, physical, and sexual harassment, abuse, or exploitation, are not acceptable or tolerated at VIDEA or any of its affiliated projects. All allegations of harassment, abuse, or exploitation will be taken seriously by VIDEA staff and will be responded to immediately. Employees, volunteers, programme participants, or associates who are found to have harassed, abused, or exploited another individual will be subject to disciplinary action. This includes any employee, volunteer, programme participant, or associate who: interferes with the resolution of a harassment, abuse, or exploitation complaint; retaliates against an individual for filing a related complaint; or files an unfounded harassment complaint intended to cause harm.

VIDEA takes a no-tolerance approach to any forms of harassment, abuse, or exploitation. VIDEA also takes a victim-centred approach. Understanding that there is at times tensions between these two approaches, VIDEA will work sensitively, seeking legal advice as necessary, in order to create a balance in support of victims of harassment, abuse, or exploitation.

VIDEA recognises that everyone has the ability to exercise power, that power takes different forms, and that people exercise power in different ways, at different times. For the purpose of this policy, any person submitting a claim shall be known as a “claimant”, and any person with allegations against them shall be known as a “respondent”. We recognise that at any one time an individual may be both a claimant and a respondent.

VIDEA is a member of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC), and has signed on to [the CCIC Leaders’ Pledge on Preventing and Addressing Sexual Misconduct](#).

2. Application:

This policy applies to all current employees of VIDEA including full and part-time, casual, contract, permanent and temporary employees, as well as all volunteers, programme participants, and associates. This policy also applies to job applicants.

This policy applies to all behaviour that is in some way connected to VIDEA's work in Canada and overseas, including but not exclusive to off-site meetings, briefings and de-briefings, trainings, workshops, and any travel and business-related trips.

3. Definitions:

3.1 Consent:

- a) is agreement to do something or give permission to someone to do something;
- b) must be freely given, is reversible, informed, enthusiastic and specific (FRIES);
- c) must be respected. In instances where consent is not given, ie. asking someone to go for coffee, you can only ask once. If denied, you must not ask again;

3.2 Harassment is:

- a) offending or humiliating someone physically or verbally;
- b) threatening or intimidating someone; or
 - a. making unwelcome jokes or comments about someone's race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability or pardoned conviction.
- c) most often a series of repeated incidents or behaviours directed at an individual over a period of time but in extreme situations may be one severe incident that has a profound and lasting impact on an individual.
- d) VIDEA considers gossip or lateral violence directed against an individual, or a group, to be harassment;

3.3 Sexual harassment is:

- a) offensive or humiliating behaviour that is related to a person's sex;
- b) behaviour of a sexual nature that creates an intimidating, unwelcome, hostile or offensive work environment; or
- c) behaviour of a sexual nature that could reasonably be thought to put sexual conditions on a person's job or employment opportunities.

3.4 Sexual abuse is:

- a) undesired sexual behaviour by one person towards another including unwanted verbal or physical behaviours such as forcing a person to look at a naked body or naked genital area, watch or look at sexual pictures or videos, watch a sexual act, or be touched in any way that is objected to by the individual, This includes repeated incidents of unwanted touching repeated touching someone's shoulder after they have asked you to stop;
- b) sexual assault including coercive/forced oral sex or coercive/forced intercourse (rape);

3.5 Sexual Exploitation is:

- a) sexual abuse of children, youth, or any other person, through the exchange of sex or sexual acts for drugs, food, shelter, protection, other basics of life, and/or money;
- b) Involving children and youth in creating pornography and sexually explicit websites;
- c) Involving any other person (over the age of consent) in creating pornography and sexually explicit websites;
- d) The abuse of power through the exchange of sex or sexual acts for drugs, food, shelter, protection, other basics of life, and/or money.

As an organisation, we support the right of men and women to earn a living through sex work but this must be entirely their choice, free of coercion or intimidation;

4. Examples of Harassment:

4.1 The following are examples of harassment as recognized by the Government of Canada. These actions will not be allowed or tolerated by VIDEA.

- a) Preventing a person from expressing himself or herself: yelling at the person; threatening; constantly interrupting that person; prohibiting the person from speaking to others.
- b) Unwanted sexual advances which may or may not be accompanied by threats or explicit or implicit promises.
- c) Making rude, degrading or offensive remarks.
- d) Making gestures that seek to intimidate.
- e) Engaging in reprisals for having made a complaint under this Policy.
- f) Discrediting the person by spreading malicious gossip or rumours, ridiculing him/her, humiliating him/her, calling into question his/her convictions or his/her private life, shouting abuse at him/her.
- g) Compelling the person to perform tasks that are inferior to his/her competencies that demean or belittle him/her, setting the person up for failure, name calling in private or in front of others.
- h) Isolating the person by no longer talking to him or her, denying or ignoring his or her presence, distancing him or her from others.
- i) Excluding a person from team social activities in the workplace, ie. Offering to make tea for all persons in the office except one;
- j) Destabilizing the person by making fun of his or her beliefs, values, political and/or religious choices, and mocking his or her weak points.
- k) Harassing a person based on a prohibited ground of discrimination (as described in [Canadian Human Rights Act](#)).

4.2 The following are examples of inappropriate behaviour in the workplace. While these behaviors do not constitute harassment, they are not appropriate and will be addressed.

- a) Talking loudly in the workplace.
- b) Always being in a bad mood.
- c) Slamming doors.
- d) Constantly interrupting colleagues in a meeting.
- e) Continually interrupting colleagues who are having a conversation.
- f) Dominating conversations and not allowing others to speak.
- g) Gossiping in the workplace or about work, intern, or volunteer-related activities.

5. Statement on sexual exploitation:

VIDEA strictly prohibits the exchange of sex or sexual favours for drugs, food, shelter, protection, other basics of life and/or money for all employees, volunteers, associates and programme participants. VIDEA works with multiple vulnerable persons and will not permit any form of sexual exploitation.

All allegations of sexual exploitation will be addressed immediately and may include immediate dismissal from any position at VIDEA or in VIDEA programming.

6. Responsibilities and Expectations:

6.1 VIDEA is responsible for:

- a) providing all employees, a harassment, abuse and exploitation-free workplace and providing all volunteers, associates, and programme participants with a harassment, abuse and exploitation-free programme environment.
- b) Providing all employees with training on consent, harassment, abuse, exploitation, and healthy workplace relationships.

6.2 The Executive Director of VIDEA is responsible for:

- a) ensuring that this policy is applied in a timely, consistent and confidential manner;
- b) determining what level of enquiry is called for, who should conduct the enquiry, whether external parties should be brought in to conduct the enquiry;
- c) assessing enquiry findings to determine whether or not allegations of harassment, abuse and exploitation are substantiated, and engaging the relevant legal expertise to assist with this task, as necessary;
- d) determining what corrective action is appropriate where a harassment, abuse, or exploitation complaint has been substantiated;
- e) ensuring that parties assisting with a complaint are not in conflict of interest.

6.3 The Executive Director and the Board Executive is responsible for:

- a) the administration of this policy;
- b) ensuring that this policy is adequately resourced;
- c) reviewing this policy annually, or as required; and
- d) making necessary adjustments to ensure that this policy meets the needs of the organization.

6.4 The Youth Programs Manager and VIDEA Country Coordinators are responsible for:

- a) delivering training and providing appropriate resources for all volunteers, associates, or programme participants on consent, harassment, abuse, exploitation, and healthy workplace relationships;
- b) fostering a harassment-free work and programme-delivery environment and setting an example about appropriate workplace and programme behaviour;
- c) communicating the process for investigating and resolving harassment, abuse, or exploitation complaints made by employees, volunteers, associates or programme participants;
- d) reporting any claims of harassment, abuse, or exploitation immediately to the Programme Manager and Executive Director, using the exact language that they claim was made in;

- e) making the Programme Manager and Executive Director aware of any claims of harassment, exploitation, or abuse and in consultation with them, dealing with harassment situations immediately upon becoming aware of them, whether or not a harassment complaint has been made;
- f) taking appropriate action during a harassment, abuse, or exploitation investigation, including separating the parties to the complaint, when appropriate; and
- g) ensuring harassment, abuse, and exploitation situations are dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner.

6.5 All VIDEA employees, volunteers, associates or programme participants are responsible for:

- a) treating others with respect in the workplace and programme environment;
- b) practicing consent in all interactions with other VIDEA employees, volunteers, associates or programme participants;
- c) familiarizing themselves with the Safeguarding Policy and learning what does and does not constitute harassment, abuse, or exploitation;
- d) reporting harassment, abuse, or exploitation to **the VIDEA Executive Director and or Programme Manager**;
- e) cooperating with a harassment, abuse, or exploitation investigation and respecting the confidentiality related to the investigation process;
- f) Reporting any situations where they find themselves in conflict of interest, and withdrawing from the situation;

6.6 All VIDEA employees, volunteers, associates or programme participants can expect:

- a) to be treated with respect in the workplace and programme environment;
- b) that reported harassment, abuse or exploitation, will be dealt with in a timely, confidential and effective manner;
- c) to have their rights to a fair process and to confidentiality respected during a harassment, abuse, or exploitation investigation; and
- d) to be protected against retaliation for reporting harassment, abuse, or exploitation or cooperating with an investigation.

7. Procedures for addressing a harassment, abuse, or exploitation complaint:

7.1 Filing a Complaint:

- a) An employee, volunteer, associate or programme participant may file a harassment, abuse or exploitation complaint by contacting the Executive Director, the Programme Manager, the Youth Program Manager or a VIDEA Country Co-ordinator. The complaint may be verbal or in writing. If the complaint is made verbally, one of the above VIDEA employees will record the details provided by the employee, volunteer, associate or programme participant.
- b) The employee shall then report the matter in writing, to the Executive Director and Programme Manager, using the exact language used by the claimant. The employee should be prepared to provide details such as what happened; when it happened; where it happened; how often and who else was present (if applicable).
- c) Complaints should be made as soon as possible but no later than within one year of the last incident of perceived harassment, unless there are circumstances that prevented the employee, volunteer,

associate, or programme participant from doing so.

- d) The Executive Director, the Programme Manager, Youth Program Manager or a VIDEA Country Coordinator will tell the respondent that the complaint has been made against them, in writing, and that a complaint has been filed. The letter will also provide details of the allegations that have been made against him or her.
- e) Every effort will be made to resolve harassment complaints within 30 days. **The Executive Director** will advise both parties of the reasons why, if this is not possible.
- f) As required by BC employment law, corrective actions that pertain to VIDEA as an organisation shall be shared with the complainant. Corrective actions that pertain to an employee, intern, volunteer, or programme participant shall be implemented by VIDEA, but shall not be reported to the claimant.
- g) If either party to a harassment complaint believes that the complaint is not being handled in accordance with this policy, he or she should contact the Executive Director, or Board Chair of VIDEA.

7.2 Mediation

- a) Wherever appropriate and possible, the claimant and respondent shall be offered mediation prior to proceeding with a harassment investigation.
- b) Mediation is voluntary and confidential. It is intended to assist the parties to arrive at a mutually acceptable resolution to the harassment complaint.
- c) The mediator will be a neutral person. The mediator will not be involved in investigating the complaint.
- d) Each party to the complaint has the right to be accompanied and assisted during mediation sessions by a person of their choosing.

7.3 Investigation:

If mediation is inappropriate or does not resolve the issue, an investigation will be conducted. All investigations will be handled by an individual, or individuals who have the necessary training and experience. In some cases, external consultants may be engaged for this purpose.

The investigator will interview the complainant, the respondent and any witnesses that have been identified. All people who are interviewed will have the right to review their statement, as recorded by the investigator, to ensure its accuracy.

The investigator will prepare a report that will include:

- a description of the allegations;
- the response of the respondent;
- a summary of information learned from witnesses (if applicable); and
- a decision about whether, on a balance of probabilities, harassment did occur.

This report will be submitted to **the Executive Director and Board of Directors**. Both parties to the complaint will be given a copy that takes into account VIDEA's responsibilities under section 7.1.f.

8. Substantiated Complaint:

If a harassment complaint is substantiated, the Executive Director and the Board Executive will decide what action is appropriate.

Remedies for the employee, volunteer, associate, or programme participant who was harassed, abused, or exploited may include: an oral or written apology; and any further compensation negotiated and agreed upon by all parties involved, or required by law.

Corrective action for the employee, volunteer, associate, or programme participant found to have engaged in harassment, abuse, or exploitation may include: a reprimand with training, additional supervision, and additional support; a suspension followed by new terms of employment, additional training and supervision, and support; a transfer including new terms of employment, additional training and supervision, and support; and/or dismissal.

Both parties to the complaint will be advised, in writing, of the decision within the parameters of section 7.1.f.

9. Other Redress:

An employee, volunteer, or associate who is not satisfied with the outcome of the harassment complaint process may appeal to the VIDEA Executive Director or Board, and/or file a discrimination complaint with the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

10. Privacy and Confidentiality:

All parties to a harassment complaint are expected to respect the privacy and confidentiality of all other parties involved and to limit the discussion of a harassment complaint to an immediate supervisor.

VIDEA and all individuals involved in the harassment complaint process, will comply with all requirements of the Personal Information Protection Act to protect personal information.

11. Review:

VIDEA will review this policy and procedures on an annual basis, or as required, and will make necessary adjustments to ensure that it meets the needs of all employees.

12. Enquiries:

Enquiries about this policy and related procedures can be made to the Executive Director of VIDEA at lthornton@videa.ca.

13. Additional resources:

Related Links and Resources on Harassment in the Workplace

<https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/healthy-workplace/prevention-resolution-harassment/harassment-tool-employees.html>

<https://www.worksafefbc.com/en/resources/health-safety/books-guides/a-handbook-on-preventing-and-addressing-workplace-bullying-and-harassment?lang=en>

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