



# CommunityWise Code of Conduct

JUNE 2023

CommunityWise has 5 core values that inform the operations at CommunityWise Resource Center. As a result, members are expected to live up to these values and utilise them in their day to day interactions within CommunityWise. These values are:

## Values

**Mutuality:** We cultivate relationships, connection and collaboration because of their shared benefits and because together we can withstand individual and shared challenges.

**Inclusion:** We respect and elevate diverse voices, practices and cultures, individual uniqueness and collective wisdom.

**Accountability:** We are responsible to our shared space, to each other, to the larger community, and to the planet.

**Trust:** We have confidence in the knowledge, experience, and ability of our members and partners, and actively work to keep their trust in us.

**Equity:** We recognize and redress historical and current-day inequities experienced by certain equity-seeking groups and strive for their barrier-free participation.

Community Wise Resource Centre (CW) provides offices, storage, and common areas, as well as other resources, to a wide range of member groups that serve a wide range

of communities. In addition, CW acts as a connection between many member organisations. As a result, CW staff and Board are responsible for the physical, emotional and mental safety of all those using CW facilities through CW or its members. As a result of this obligation, CW has a code of conduct and anti-harassment policy that all members, staff, clients, volunteers, and any people on CW premises as a result of a member's services or programming must follow.

## Purpose

The Code of Conduct is meant to foster an inclusive atmosphere within CommunityWise, as well as to ensure that environment is safe for people to engage in without fear of harassment. This Code is intended to prohibit harassment or discrimination of any kind on CW property or digitally, including use of derogatory words/slurs, sexual harassment, internet harassment, and so on. The Code outlines the procedure for dealing with reported cases of discrimination, intolerance, or harassment. The policy is applicable to all member organisations, member organisation members, and CW personnel.

## Member Responsibilities

The CW Code of Conduct provides guidelines and expectations for CW as well as its staff and members to handle complaints regarding behaviour that violates the code of conduct and anti-harassment policy.

**Definition of Discrimination:** Discrimination is defined as any action or decision that unfairly treats a person or group because of their race, gender, family, sexuality, appearance, income class, age, disability and much more<sup>1</sup>. An example would be

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<sup>1</sup> Canadian Human Rights Commission

asking individuals to identify as either male or female in a form or survey. All forms of discrimination will not be tolerated at CommunityWise **excluding** in the case of programming and services developed to historic systemic discrimination if the program or policy is reasonable and justifiable in the circumstances<sup>2</sup>. An example of this, would be a support group for women, refusing entry to men.

**Definition of Harassment:** Harassment is a type of discrimination. It encompasses any unwelcome physical or verbal activity that offends or humiliates anyone. Generally, harassment is a behaviour that persists over time. Serious one-time incidents can also sometimes be considered harassment<sup>3</sup>.

Examples of harassment that will not be tolerated are: verbal or physical abuse, threats, derogatory remarks, jokes, innuendo or taunts related to any of the above characteristics, display of pornographic, racist or offensive signs or images, practical jokes that result in awkwardness or embarrassment, and unwelcome invitations or requests, whether indirect, explicit, in-person or online.

**Sexual Harassment:** Sexual

harassment can include comments, behaviour, and unwanted sexual contact. It can take the form of jokes, threats, and discriminatory remarks about someone's gender or sexuality. It can happen in person or online<sup>4</sup>.

## Procedure

### Making A Complaint

Any member/client/volunteer of a member organisation who believes they have been harassed or discriminated against is advised to do the following:

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<sup>2</sup> Alberta Human Rights Commission

<sup>3</sup> Canadian Human Rights Commission

<sup>4</sup> Canadian Women's Foundation

1. Tell the alleged harasser that the behaviour is unwelcome and ask that the behaviour stop.
2. If the behaviour continues you are welcome to do any of the following;
  - a. Make a complaint to your member organisation
  - b. Make a complaint to CW staff with an email sent to [info@communitywise.net](mailto:info@communitywise.net). If the complaint is about CW staff, send an email to [board@communitywise.net](mailto:board@communitywise.net).

## Handling A Complaint

1. CommunityWise staff will immediately disclose the complaint to the CommunityWise Board of Directors (The Board).
2. Within two (2) business days, the board will form a Special Review Committee (SRC) of at least three(3) and no more than five(5) members;
  - a. The Board shall put forward two(2) of its members , one representing the CW membership committee and one representing the executive committee.
  - b. 1 to 3 individuals who do not have a direct connection to the complainant or the accused.
3. The SRC must collect and examine all relevant information, which must include interviewing both the complainant and the accused.
4. The SRC must assess whether or not the complaint has been substantiated once its review is completed. If the SRC determines that it has been verified, it may take any of the following actions:
  - a. Adopt a restorative justice strategy that prioritises the complainant's safety.
  - b. Require the accused to formally apologise to the complainant.

- c. Suggest that the accused seek training or counselling to address abusive behaviours or patterns.
- d. Limit the accused's access to CW premises to certain times and situations.
- e. Forbid the accused from having any access to CW premises at all, either temporarily or permanently.
- f. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the SRC's decision, they are free to express their displeasure. A month following the decision, the SRC will follow up with the complainant.

## Responsibilities of Member Organisations

In the event that a member of a member organisation is found by the SRC to have harassed the complainant, the member organisation shall ensure that the decision is upheld and any measures imposed upon the harasser are imposed by the member organisation against the harasser as a condition of remaining a member. If the member organisation does not comply, the CW Board may revoke the member organisation's membership, which would mean a cessation of all privileges as a member in CW. In the event that the member organisation's membership in CW is revoked, any representation of that organisation on the CW Board is revoked as well.

## General Provisions

Nothing in this policy prohibits a complainant from making a complaint of harassment to the Alberta Human Rights Committee and/or reporting any incident of assault to the police. All complaints shall be kept completely confidential.

I have read and I understand CommunityWise's Code of Conduct. I agree to abide by the rules described above and understand that a complaint and restorative measures may be brought against me if I violate any of these rules.

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Signature

Date

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Signature of Witness

Date