



**WORKPLACE HARASSMENT
AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION
POLICY**

December 2007

The systematic use of the masculine to refer to members of either sex is intended solely to facilitate reading.

1.1 STATEMENT FROM SENIOR MANAGEMENT

The Société des alcools du Québec (SAQ) recognizes the importance of preventing and putting an end to all forms of harassment and violence in order to provide all its employees with a workplace that is healthy, respectful and harassment- and violence-free.

To accomplish this, the SAQ undertakes to tolerate no form of harassment or violence, to use all reasonable means to prevent harassment and, when such behaviour is brought to its attention, to stop it by taking the necessary corrective action.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

Through its commitment to maintaining a work environment that is free from all forms of harassment and violence, the SAQ seeks to:

- Promote awareness, communication and training at the workplace in order to prevent any form or possible occurrence of work-related harassment or violence with reference to its employees;
- Set up effective assistance and complaint-handling mechanisms while providing the necessary support to the parties concerned to facilitate management of the problem;
- Take action in a proactive, swift and fair manner in response to any situation that could be a sign of or give rise to harassing or violent conduct or behaviour.

1.3 SCOPE

This policy applies to all SAQ employees, who are obliged to comply with it.

It also applies to any SAQ employee who, as part of his relations with his colleagues, superiors or subordinates, believes he is suffering harassment or violence at the workplace.

It is also intended to protect all employees from any and all instances of harassment and violence that may come from a third party.

The policy applies equally to behaviour that occurs in the workplace or that may arise in other circumstances and locations (customer and supplier relations, business travel, training courses, etc.).

1.4 DEFINITION (CF. ACT RESPECTING LABOUR STANDARDS)

Psychological harassment means all forms that the phenomenon may take, be it so-called discriminatory harassment (see section 10 of the *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*), sexual harassment, the abuse of power, or any form of intimidation or threat.

Psychological harassment is defined as any vexatious behaviour in the form of repeated and hostile or unwanted conduct, verbal comments, actions or gestures that affects an employee's dignity or psychological or physical integrity and results in a work environment that is harmful for the employee.

A single serious incidence of such behaviour that has a lasting harmful effect on an employee may also constitute psychological harassment.

It should be understood that “the presumed harasser’s intention does not need to be taken into consideration to conclude that there is psychological harassment. The words, gestures, actions or behaviour of the harasser do not have to be associated with a harmful intent; rather, it is the effects on the person concerned that are taken into account.”¹

1.5 ADMINISTRATIVE AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The person determined to be responsible for improper conduct must assume the consequences of his acts. He is liable to administrative or disciplinary action appropriate to the seriousness of the acts committed.

When disciplinary action is taken, it shall be based on the existing application rules and may include dismissal.

1.6 NON-REPRISAL CLAUSE

All persons are entitled to make use of this policy without fear of reprisal.

1.7 CONFIDENTIALITY

All information relating to a complaint or to the identity of the persons involved shall be handled in the strictest confidence by all parties concerned unless it is required for the handling of a complaint, the conduct of an inquiry or the taking of administrative or disciplinary action.

¹Extract from *A Work Environment Free from Psychological Harassment: It's Everybody's Business* published by the Commission des normes du Québec, 2004, page 3.