



HARASSMENT POLICY

The **West Coast Institute for Studies in Anthroposophy (WCI)** is committed to ensuring that its learning environment promotes the respectful and fair treatment of all students. WCI endeavours to realize this commitment by establishing employment and educational practices that respect the dignity of individuals and make it possible for everyone to live, work, and study in a positive and supportive environment, free from harmful behaviours such as bullying and harassment.

The best possible environment for working, learning and living is one in which respect, civility, diversity, opportunity and inclusion are respected. All WCI community members are required to conduct themselves in a manner that upholds these principles in all communications and interactions with fellow WCI community members and the public in all WCI-related settings.

While at training sessions on the premises of **Sunrise Waldorf School** or **Vancouver Waldorf School** or any other premises rented by WCI and/or during activities or events hosted by the West Coast Institute the following activities are prohibited:

- **Bullying:** Any act of persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating or insulting behavior, abuse of power or unfair penal sanctions which causes the recipient to feel threatened, humiliated or vulnerable, which undermines their self-confidence and which may cause them to suffer stress.
- **Discrimination:** Intentional or unintentional treatment, which can be individual or systemic, that imposes burdens, obligations, or disadvantages on or limits access to opportunities, benefits and advantages to specific individuals or groups as defined by the *B.C. Human Rights Code* and for which there is no *bona fide* and reasonable justification.
- **Harassment:** Any comment or conduct that one knows or ought reasonably to know is unwelcome, that creates a negative impact for the recipient, and that is related to one or more of the prohibited grounds of discrimination as set out in the *B.C. Human Rights Code*.
- **Retaliation:** Any act of vengeance or retribution, directly or indirectly, against any individual who, in good faith, complains, gives evidence or otherwise participates in a process under this Policy. WCI considers retaliation to be a serious matter as it prevents potential complainants, witnesses, and administrators from acting on their concerns.
- **Systemic Discrimination:** Any pattern of behavior, policies or practices that are part of the structures of an organization, and that create or perpetuate disadvantage related to one or more of the prohibited grounds of discrimination as set out in the *B.C. Human Rights Code*.
- **Violence:** Any act or treatment in which physical force or verbal aggression is exerted for the purpose of causing harm or injury.

If, under any circumstances, a prohibited activity occurs, the following outlines the process for addressing the activity:

General Procedures

1. In the event that a Program Director, faculty member, Administrator or staff member receives a report of or observes an occurrence of conduct in conflict with this policy, that person shall take appropriate action, dependent upon the severity of the occurrence. The occurrence must be first reported to the Administrator or Program Director.
2. Members of the WCI community having any concerns or a complaint regarding violations of this policy may contact a representative of WCI for assistance and advice. In the event that anyone observes an occurrence of conduct in conflict with this policy, he/she has the right and responsibility to report the incident to a WCI representative without fear of reprisal.

Reporting Procedures

1. If the situation warrants, emergency services should be called by dialing 911 from any facility telephone.
2. A complainant may ask for support from any WCI representative to communicate his/her concerns to the respondent and attempt to resolve the situation or incident.
3. If the situation cannot be dealt with in this manner, a complainant may follow the process of filing an informal or formal complaint.

Complaint Procedures

1. **Informal Complaint:** The complainant should contact the Administrator or the Board President who will attempt a mediated resolution of the complainant's concerns. This may involve meeting with both the complainant and the respondent in order to achieve an informal resolution of the complaint. A brief written record signed by both parties should be kept in their respective files.
1. **Formal Complaint:** The complainant may file a formal, written complaint with the Administrator or the Board President who will then refer the complaint to the Board of Directors. In order for a complaint to be investigated, the written complaint must be filed within sixty (60) calendar days after the most recent alleged incident. .

The complainant should attempt to make a written record of the incident(s), including the name of the respondent, dates, and names of witnesses and particulars of the alleged improper conduct. The complaint should also document any previous attempts to have the respondent cease the unwanted behaviour.

In the event the complainant initially elects to proceed informally and efforts to resolve the complaint are unsuccessful, the complainant retains the right to proceed with a formal written complaint, provided it is filed within the above-noted time limit.

Investigation of a Formal Complaint

Records concerning the investigation of a formal complaint will be maintained in a separate confidential file under the jurisdiction of the Administrator. To the extent reasonably possible, the complaint, the names of the relevant parties and witnesses, and the circumstances surrounding the complaint, will be kept confidential.

Investigation may be conducted, where appropriate, by a Special Committee that will consist of five (5) of the following, to be determined by the Chairperson, depending on the complaint and whether the complainant is an employee or a student of WCI:

- WCI Board Chairperson or delegate from the Board of Directors
- Administrator
- Program Director
- 1 student selected by WCI Students
- 1 faculty member selected by WCI Program Directors

If any member of the Special Committee is party to the allegations under consideration, they will absent themselves from the investigation. The constituent group of which this person is a member shall then arrange for an alternate to sit on the Special Committee for those proceedings. All appointments to the Special Committee are reviewed annually and will be in effect for a minimum of one (1) year.

Upon receipt of the filed written complaint, the Special Committee will provide the respondent with a copy of the written complaint, as well as a copy of this policy.

The Special Committee's role is to attempt to determine if a violation of this policy has occurred, and if it has, to recommend appropriate action to the Administrator.

Following completion of the investigation, the Special Committee shall report in writing, with recommendations for disposition of the complaint, to the Administrator for WCI. A copy of the letter shall be provided to both the complainant and the respondent. Unless circumstances otherwise reasonably warrant, this letter will be issued within thirty (30) calendar days from the time the formal complaint was initially filed. The complainant and the respondent may submit written representations to the Chair of the Special Committee with respect to the Special Committee's letter.

The WCI Board of Directors shall review the letter of recommendations, and render a decision with regard to the complaint. Unless circumstances otherwise reasonably warrant, the WCI Board of Directors shall issue a decision within fifteen (15) calendar days from receipt of the Special Committee's letter.

All records relating to the complaint shall be filed separately from employee's files and will be maintained in the office of the Administrator. All records related to a formal complaint will be kept on file for a period of not less than three (3) years and will be destroyed thereafter as per WCI policy regarding records management. The decision of the Board of Directors is final and binding.

Disciplinary Procedures

1. Violations of any provisions of this policy may be subject to actions as follows:
 - a) employees – disciplinary action up to, and including termination and/or legal sanctions
 - b) other members of the WCI community – possible loss of privileges of participation in any programs, access to the facilities or removal from any volunteer position and/or legal sanctions
2. Allegations that prove to be unsubstantiated and made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense, and dealt with appropriately.

A complainant who has acted in accordance with the requirements of this policy and the related procedure is protected against reprisal.