

# Principles of Respectful Conduct in Forestry



## Preamble

BC and Alberta employers in silviculture and consultant forestry commit to establishing and maintaining safe and respectful workplaces. These Principles of Respectful Conduct [The Principles] represent signatories who engage in the growing, planting, tending, protection, and management of forests and forest resources.

The Principles are a set of voluntary commitments developed by the Western Forestry Contractors' Association. Each signatory is solely responsible for upholding its commitments under the Principles and its obligations under the law. The Principles are intended to apply to all workplace parties, including owners, managers, supervisors, employees, visitors, and contractors. The Principles are intended to support equity of opportunity and experience for all workers, protect all workplace parties from mistreatment, and guide employers in the review and revision of policies and practices related to workplace conduct.

## **1) Fundamental Commitments**

- A. Protect the health, safety, and well-being of all members of the workplace.
- B. Enact policies and procedures to prevent and respond to bullying, harassment, discrimination, violence, mistreatment of workers, and other objectionable workplace conduct.
- C. Prevent harassment, including sexual harassment, and discrimination, as defined by Alberta and British Columbia human rights legislation. When combining human rights protections from both provinces, employers are prohibited from discriminating and harassing others, based on race, ancestry, political belief, marital status, sex/gender, physical disability, mental disability, colour, place of origin, religion, family status, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, source of income, and criminal conviction unrelated to employment. This includes any conduct, comment, sharing or publication of information or images, assignment of tasks or living quarters, or creation or tolerance of conditions in which such harassment or discrimination is likely to occur.
- D. Prevent violence or threats of violence against any member of the workplace, including physical violence, threats of violence, or the creation or tolerance of conditions in which such violence is likely to occur.
- E. Ensure equality of opportunities by recruiting, promoting, assigning tasks, and applying discipline without discrimination or prejudice against any individuals or groups.
- F. Implement systems and designate personnel in the workplace to receive complaints of bullying, harassment, discrimination, violence, mistreatment of workers, and other objectionable workplace conduct.
- G. Provide a timely process for the investigation and resolution of complaints that is consistent with applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to, human rights legislation and occupational health and safety legislation.
- H. Prevent retaliation or reprisal against any person that reports in good faith, any violations of the Principles, including providing assurance that their employment status or opportunities will not be negatively impacted through such actions.
- I. Encourage all members of the workplace to set and respect personal boundaries and engage in consent-based interactions.
- J. Demonstrate respect for communities by treating their residents, cultural practices, businesses, and traditional territories with respect when visiting them or using their services, including not damaging property and following bylaws and local conventions related to noise, health, and other requirements.

## **2) Specific Commitments**

- A. Do not use language that demeans, insults, embarrasses, ridicules, or otherwise negatively impacts other people based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, disability, conviction for which a pardon has been granted or a record suspended. This includes recognizing the effect that gender-specific language can have on shaping workplace inequality and striving to use inclusive terms and language whenever possible.
- B. Protect the dignity of workers by ensuring privacy in the use of employer-provided washing, changing, bathroom, and living facilities.
- C. Except in the case of emergency or authorized activities, prohibit entry to the personal living spaces of workers, including employer-provided living spaces and worker-provided living spaces, unless authorized through expressed permission from the worker occupying these spaces.

## **3) Implementation**

- A. Implement and enforce the Principles in keeping with principles of fairness.
- B. Ensure every member of the workplace is aware of policies to prevent bullying and harassment, discrimination, violence, mistreatment of workers, and other objectionable conduct.
- C. Train all staff with leadership roles, or the ability to exercise decision-making power over other employees, to understand the Principles and to fulfill their responsibilities in upholding and enforcing it.
- D. Establish procedures for workers to participate in the review and revision of policies designed to implement and administer the Principles.
- E. Provide the resources necessary to implement and enforce the Principles, including time, financial resources, participation, and support from all levels of management.
- F. Encourage instructors, trainers, consultants, suppliers, and those providing services in the industry to adhere to The Principles and to share it with their employees.
- G. Take all reasonable, practical, and legal steps to investigate and to take corrective action in response to all substantiated complaints of workplace bullying and harassment, discrimination, violence, mistreatment of workers, and other objectionable conduct. Such steps may include but are not limited to the following:
  - i. Mediation among affected parties, only by consent of all those directly involved in a report or grievance.
  - ii. Disciplinary action including verbal warning, written warning, suspension, reassignment, or termination of employment.
  - iii. Remedial action such as counselling, training, or education.
  - iv. Prevent retaliation or other employment penalties or loss of opportunities for any worker that pursues criminal, civil or human rights action as a result of workplace mistreatment that contravenes any of the Principles.
  - v. Support and access to services for victims and persons negatively impacted by workplace misconduct.
- H. Review the Principles on an annual basis, and make revisions when appropriate to follow changes in legislation and to recognize input from members of the silviculture and consultant forestry industry.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_