

Toronto Sustainable Food Co-operative (TSFC) Policy on Safe Space

Amended November 22, 2013.

Approved November 26 2012.

1. Purpose:

The Safe Space Policy outlines expected conduct with regards to behaviour, actions, and interactions with the public and within the Co-operative, including, but not limited to, personal conduct within the Co-operative space, the circulation of materials related to or within the Co-operative, Co-operative meetings, and any events and programming held by or in association with the Co-operative. This policy is to be adhered to at all times by all volunteers, members, employees, customers, individuals using the Co-operative space, and any third party service provider in face-to face contact with our clients, members, and/or the broader community.

The Safe Space Policy is intended to ensure that the Co-operative is an inclusive, non-oppressive, and non-discriminatory environment for all individuals and groups. We recognize the structural hierarchy and discrimination which exists in the broader university environment and beyond. Because of this, and in line with the co-operative principle of autonomy, we also recognize the need to work together as a community to build an alternative space without relying on external authority and institutions. We encourage all members and community members to challenge any behaviour which may be perceived as discriminatory and/or oppressive, and to constructively take action to help ensure that Harvest Noon is a safe, inclusive, and equitable space for all.

2. Sexual and Personal Harassment:

Sexual harassment includes:

- any unwanted or unwelcome conduct, comment, gesture or contact of a sexual nature;
- any implied or expressed promise of reward or threat of reprisal for complying and/or not complying with a sexually oriented request; and
- any sexually oriented remarks or behaviour that might reasonably be perceived as creating a negative working or social environment.

Personal harassment includes any conduct, whether verbal or physical that is discriminating in nature, including but not limited to that based upon another person's race, colour, ethnicity, ancestry, place of origin, language, political beliefs, advocacy activities or activist experience, religion, citizenship, family status, marital status, level of education, economic/social class, physical or mental (dis)ability, illness or other medical condition, age, appearance, self-expression, sex, gender identity or expression,

sexual orientation, or record of offenses except where it pertains to bona fide employment requirements.

Harvest Noon Café has a zero tolerance policy with respect to personal/sexual harassment. Personal/sexual harassment in any form is strictly prohibited and may be grounds for termination as a volunteer, member, or, in the case of an employee, immediate dismissal for just cause without notice or pay in lieu of notice. Offensive or threatening comments, whether or not amounting to harassment, are also strictly prohibited and may be considered to breach the terms of this policy.

3. Responsibilities of Individuals

All direct service program volunteers (those in face to face contact with the Café's clients and volunteers), Board members, volunteers, all employees (permanent full-time, hourly, fixed term contract, permanent part-time), and any other third party service provider in face-to-face contact with our clients must adhere to the Harvest Noon Cafe Code of Conduct Agreement. They will certify this by signing a Declaration that they have read and will abide by this Code.

In addition, all members of the Co-operative community are encouraged to keep in mind the following principles, in order to maintain a safe and inclusive space:

- Always act with fairness, honesty, integrity and openness; respect the opinions of others and treat all with equality and dignity without regard to gender, race, colour, creed, ancestry, place of origin, political beliefs, religion, marital status, disability, age, sexual orientation, or other such factors.
- Take responsibility for your actions and decisions, and be aware that your actions may have an effect on others despite what your intentions may be.
- Respect physical and emotional boundaries; check in before touching someone or crossing boundaries.
- Be conscious of and avoid wearing strongly scented perfumes, colognes or other substances for the comfort of others in the same environment.
- Be aware of the space you take up and the privileges you bring, including race, class, and gender privileges.
- Never assume the opinions or identifications of others, especially in relation to race, class, gender, and sexuality; respect the pronouns and names of everyone.
- Respect and maintain the confidentiality of information gained as a member, volunteer or employee, including, but not limited to, all computer software and files, Co-operative business documents and printouts, and all volunteer, employee, membership, donor and supporter records.
- Respect and maintain the confidentiality of individual personal information about

persons with special dietary or other needs gained through your role in Harvest Noon Café, for example, in support groups, meetings or in service programs.

- If you are challenging someone's behaviour, do it in a way which is constructive and respectful to them as a person.
- If called out for problematic behaviour, don't be defensive. Remember that it is your behaviour that is being challenged, not your intentions and character. Be open to understanding the role your behaviour has in other people's experience of oppression.
- When appropriate, follow the reporting and mediation processes outlined in section 4 of this policy to facilitate the effective resolution of problems.

4. Complaints

Complaints of harassment should generally be referred to the Internal Liaison on the Board of directors. If the complainant is uncomfortable bringing their complaint to the Internal Liaison for any reason, or if the complaint specifically regards the actions of the Internal Liaison, the complaint may be brought to any member of the Board of directors. If the complaint is regarding the Board of directors as a whole, or if they have any other reason for doing so, the complainant may request a mediator to address the complaint, following the mediation procedures as set out in the Mediation Policy.

In addition, members of the Co-operative community retain the right to bring a complaint directly to the Ontario Human Rights Commission in accordance with the provisions of the Ontario *Human Rights Code*. Persons may seek enforcement of this policy without reprisal or threat of reprisal by any person acting on behalf of the Co-operative for doing so.