



# Camping Association of Nova Scotia

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## **POLICY ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUITY PROMOTION AND HARASSMENT & ABUSE PREVENTION**

### **Context**

The Camping Association of Nova Scotia is a voluntary organization that promotes and encourages excellence in organized camping, leadership development, and safe learning and play environments at member summer camps in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. We operate with voluntary board and committee members and officers and do not currently hire employees except on short-term contracts or as part of a summer student employment grant program.

Our Board of Directors meet approximately every month during the school year, and our committees meet at times to support the work of the Board.

### **Purposes of Our Policies**

We want to nurture an environment where volunteers and short-term staff members feel safe to participate, express themselves, and work for the good of our association and our camps, camp staff members, and campers in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. We desire wide participation and open relationships and communication in our organization. Accordingly, we endeavor to follow the law and the spirit of the law relating to human rights, employment equity, and personal and sexual harassment in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

We support the policies of affirmative action in hiring and encourage broad volunteer participation on our board, in our committees, and at our events and programs.

We seek to encourage safe and open environments by creating camp accreditation standards that foster the promotion of human rights and employment equity in camp hiring situations and with

camper recruitment and participation. We will encourage our camps to make discussions and learning opportunities about human rights issues in Canada and abroad a priority in their summer and off-season programming.

We recognize that the abuse and neglect of children and vulnerable persons has been a reality in our society and that abuses have most likely been perpetrated in camping programs in this province in the past. We seek to make every effort to ensure that children, youth, and adults participating in our programs and our members' programs are not subject to harassment, abuse, or neglect in any form, including emotional, physical, sexual, or other types of abuse.

We also recognize that we serve member camps made up of individuals or organizations reflecting the diversity of Canada and the world, including camps of differing faith backgrounds and camps serving persons with disabilities. We endeavor to work in ways that will help foster learning, understanding, and accommodation of these and other constituencies where at all possible.

### **Human Rights & Employment Equity Policy**

1. Our volunteers and staff members have the right to a safe, nurturing, and caring environment. We recognize that when one of our members does not feel supported or encouraged, it means that we have injured that person and are not doing everything within our power to make our environment safe, nurturing, and caring for all. We also recognize that further training and efforts to understand harassment issues and make appropriate changes to individual and corporate culture.
2. All positions within the Association, whether hired or voluntary, are to be open to every human being, regardless of any legal ground of discrimination or employment inequity. Significant efforts will be made to give priority in employment (affirmative action) to those members of various ethnic communities not currently represented in our hired staff to be offered employment where candidates have similar employment skills and/or experiences.
3. Members or officers hiring staff members for positions are to adhere where possible to the guidelines made by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission for hiring. Refer to: [For Employers: A guide for drafting job application forms and interview questions \(NS Human Rights Commission\)](#) on the Commission's website. Similar guidelines are to be following in P.E.I. when available.
4. Any staff member or volunteer of the association are to encourage people who feeling as if their human rights or equal employment opportunities have been violated to report the matter to the President (or other director where the action involves the President) for informal resolution, where possible. If a satisfactory resolution is not possible informally, the Association shall seek assistance from the Human Rights' Commission and shall encourage the person who feels they have suffered infringement to report the matter to the Human Rights' Commission.

5. Members are to take every opportunity educate themselves and to hold educational opportunities to increase sensitivity and awareness of human rights and equity issues and challenges, including at leadership development events, annual conferences, and training events.

### **Harassment Prevention & Reporting Policy**

1. Our volunteers and staff members have the right to a safe, nurturing, and caring environment. We recognize that when one of our members does not feel supported or encouraged, it means that we have injured that person and are not doing everything within our power to make our environment safe, nurturing, and caring for all. We also recognize that further training and efforts to understand harassment issues and make appropriate changes to individual and corporate culture.

2. Please follow the procedures outlined for preventing and reporting abuse (below) with the necessary changes.

3. The Association is open to participating in restorative, educational, or investigative processes and in mediation or arbitration, where appropriate, and will cooperate fully in all of these types of resolution activities.

### **Abuse Prevention & Reporting Policy**

1. All volunteers who will be visiting camps for any reason (including accreditation visits) or will be providing leadership and programming at one of the Association's events will need to provide the following information BEFORE they participate in a visit or program:

- (a) Evidence of Criminal Record Check not showing former abuse or charges of abuse concerning children or other vulnerable populations;
- (b) Evidence of a check of the Child Abuse Registry of Nova Scotia (if the person resides in, works in, or will be participating in a visit or event in Nova Scotia) that does not disclose evidence of abuse; and,
- (c) Two references that the coordinator of the visits or event can check to verify past work or volunteer experiences and personal character.

2. References must be checked by visit or event coordinators BEFORE volunteers or employees are eligible to participate in visits or events.

3. All disclosures of abuse or evidence of abuse must be reported immediately to the appropriate authorities: for children, the appropriate child welfare authority in Nova Scotia or P.E.I., and for adults, local police authority. Volunteers or staff members reporting abuse are to document their actions and information and to comply with the further instructions of the child welfare or policing authorities.

4. Volunteers or staff members reporting abuse are to report the incident or issue to the President of the Camping Association of Nova Scotia, or if the abuse involves the President, to the Vice-President or other member of the Board of Directors for internal disciplinary and/or further action.

5. When the President or other officer or director first receives a report of abuse, that person shall contact our insurance company to make them aware of the situation and to obtain further direction, if necessary.

### **Further Education & Policy Changes**

Members of the board of directors and officers of the association are to endeavor to make themselves aware of new and emerging issues in the effort to encourage human rights and employment equity and to work to make the Association a caring and open organization serving the needs of all of its members and constituencies.

This policy shall be reviewed on a bi-annual basis for changes and amendments and to evaluate our commitment and compliance with it.

### **Further Reading**

Please refer to the following websites for further information and education:

- Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission: [www.gov.ns.ca/humanrights/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/humanrights/)
- Prince Edward Island Human Rights Commission: [www.gov.pe.ca/humanrights/](http://www.gov.pe.ca/humanrights/)
- Labour Standards in Nova Scotia: [www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/)
- Labour Standards in Prince Edward Island: <http://www.gov.pe.ca/cca/>
- Human Rights, Equity, and Harassment Prevention at Dalhousie University: [hrehp.dal.ca](http://hrehp.dal.ca)
- Volunteer Canada: [www.volunteer.ca](http://www.volunteer.ca)

Approved: 2009 December 4  
(Russell Prime)