



## EXTENSION AND DISTRICT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

### EXTENSION AND DISTRICT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

#### POLICY

<b>SUBJECT:</b> Workplace Bullying & Harassment Prevention Policy	<b>POLICY NO.:</b> EXTFD-02
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> October 20, 2025	<b>CROSS-REF.:</b> Policy EXTFD-01 – Terms and Conditions of Service
<b>REVISION DATE:</b>	<b>APPROVED BY:</b> Extension Volunteer Fire Department Society Board

#### PURPOSE

EXTFD will take all reasonable steps to prevent or, where prevention is not possible, minimize workplace bullying and harassment to protect the health and safety of members and the public we serve. This policy applies to all EXTFD activities (incidents, training, hall work, events, and EXTFD-related online activity).

#### SCOPE & DEFINITIONS

- a) **Employer (for this policy):** The Extension & District Volunteer Fire Department Society Board (“Society Board”) and the Fire Chief acting on its behalf.
- b) **Supervisor:** Senior Officers and any officer or Incident Commander supervising others.
- c) **Worker/Member:** All EXTFD members (officers, active, probationary, junior\*, and senior members) while engaged in EXTFD business. \*Junior members are protected equally and report through designated supervisors.
- d) **Workplace bullying and harassment** includes any inappropriate conduct or comment by a person toward a worker that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause that worker to feel humiliated or intimidated. Reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the place of employment (e.g., justified coaching, assigning duties, IC's command decisions) is not bullying/harassment.

#### POLICY STATEMENT

Bullying and harassment are not acceptable or tolerated at EXTFD. All members must contribute to a respectful, safe workplace. This policy forms part of EXTFD-01 and is enforceable under 17.0 Corrective Action of EXTFD-01.



## EXTENSION AND DISTRICT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

### ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Employer (Society Board/Fire Chief) will:

1. Develop, implement, and annually review this policy and related procedures.
2. Inform all members of this policy and of reporting/investigation steps.
3. Train supervisors and members on recognizing, reporting, and responding.
4. Provide reporting channels, including where the alleged person is a supervisor/Chief.
5. Investigate incidents/complaints promptly and fairly; implement corrective actions; maintain records.
6. Not engage in bullying or harassment; comply with this policy.

Supervisors (Officers) will:

1. Take reasonable steps to protect members under their supervision; not engage in bullying/harassment; apply and comply with this policy; act on reports they receive and elevate promptly per the Reporting section; implement interim safety measures when required; and cooperate with investigations.

Members will:

1. Not engage in bullying/harassment; report if observed/experienced; cooperate with related processes; comply with this policy.

### EXAMPLES (NON-EXHAUSTIVE)

- Humiliating, demeaning, or hostile remarks; threats or intimidation.
- Unwelcome, targeted jokes/gestures; spreading malicious rumors.
- Undermining assignments or authority through coercion or “mobbing,” including attempts to improperly pressure others to remove a member/officer outside due process.
- Examples of retaliation include, but are not limited to: spreading rumors about a reporter, excluding a reporter from training, or removing pagers/alerting devices without cause.
- Offensive communications (including social media/electronic channels) connected to EXTFD activities.

*(Reasonable management direction, justified performance feedback, training assignments, and disciplined ICS command decisions are **not** bullying or harassment.)*

### REPORTING – HOW AND TO WHOM

Report as soon as practicable using any of the following:

- a) Primary: Fire Chief (or Deputy Chief).
- b) If a Senior Officer/Chief is implicated: report to the Chair of the Society Board.
- c) Alternative: any Captain or Lieutenant (who must elevate immediately to a Senior Officer), or a written report to chair@extensionfire.ca.



## EXTENSION AND DISTRICT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Reports should include: what happened, dates/times/locations, who was involved, witnesses, and any documents/screenshots. Anonymous reports will be reviewed to the extent possible.

**Non-retaliation:** Retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports or participates in an investigation is prohibited and may lead to corrective action under 17.0 Corrective Action of EXTFD-01, up to and including dismissal.

**False or Malicious Complaints.** Knowingly false or malicious complaints may themselves be subject to corrective action under EXTFD-01 17.0 Corrective Action.

### INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

- a) **Intake & Acknowledgment:** Within 5 business days, the Fire Chief (or Board Chair if the Chief is implicated) acknowledges receipt and outlines next steps.
- b) **Investigator:** A Senior Officer uninvolved in the matter, or an external investigator appointed by the Society Board when required for impartiality.
- c) **Process:** Gather statements; interview parties/witnesses; review documents, messages, and other evidence; assess against this policy and definitions.
- d) **Interim Safety Measures:** As needed to protect safety and preserve a fair process, temporary measures (e.g., separating parties, reassigning duties, temporary removal from specific activities) may be implemented without prejudice pending outcome.
- e) **Outcome & Corrective Action:** Findings are communicated in writing to the parties. Where substantiated, corrective actions may include education/coaching, written warning(s), temporary removal from duties, reassignment of roles, or dismissal decided by the Fire Chief with the concurrence of the Deputy Fire Chief in accordance with 17.0 Corrective Action of EXTFD-01. Appeals of suspensions or dismissals may be made to the Chair of the Society Board within the time limits set in EXTFD-01; the Board's role is limited to appeals (and the appointment/dismissal of the Fire Chief).
- f) **Confidentiality:** Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis to ensure a fair process and meet legal obligations.
- g) **Records:** Investigation materials and outcomes are retained by the Fire Chief (or the Society Board if the Chief is implicated) in accordance with EXTFD records practices and applicable privacy law (FOIPPA).

### TRAINING & COMMUNICATION

- **Onboarding:** Members sign the Code of Ethics Acknowledgement and receive orientation on reporting options, non-retaliation, and confidentiality.
- **Annual refresher:** Supervisors receive training on intake, interim safety measures, and escalation pathways.
- **Posting/Access:** This policy is available in the hall and on the EXTFD website; updates are communicated to all members. See EXTFD-01 10.0 (Respectful Workplace), 17.0 (Corrective Action), and 21.6/21.6A (Communications & Social Media).



## **EXTFD – Workplace Bullying & Harassment**

### **1-Page Onboarding Handout (Keep with your gear)**

#### **Who this covers**

All EXTFD members (officers, active, probationary, junior, senior) while engaged in any EXTFD activity: incidents, training, hall work, events, and EXTFD-related online activity.

#### **What is bullying & harassment?**

Any **inappropriate conduct or comment** toward a member that the person knew or **reasonably ought to have known** would cause humiliation or intimidation.

**Not bullying:** Reasonable direction and supervision (e.g., ICS command decisions, justified coaching/feedback, assigning duties).

#### **Your duties (everyone)**

- **Don't engage** in bullying/harassment.
- **Report** if you experience or witness it.
- **Cooperate** with fair investigations.

#### **Supervisor duties (officers)**

- Protect members under your supervision.
- Model respectful conduct.
- Act on reports; escalate promptly.

#### **Employer duties (Society Board & Fire Chief)**

- Maintain policy, training, reporting channels.
- Investigate promptly and fairly; keep records.
- Take corrective action where needed.

---

#### **How to report (choose any)**

**Primary:** Fire Chief

**If the Chief or a Senior Officer is implicated:** Chair, Society Board

**Alternative:** Any Captain/Lieutenant

**Confidential email:** [chair@extensionfire.ca](mailto:chair@extensionfire.ca)



## EXTENSION AND DISTRICT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

### Include in your report:

What happened, dates/times/locations, who was involved, witnesses, any documents/screenshots.

**Non-retaliation:** Retaliation for good-faith reporting or participating in an investigation is prohibited and may lead to corrective action under policy EXT-01 17.0 up to and including dismissal.

---

### What happens next (summary)

1. **Acknowledgment** within **5 business days** (Chief or Board Chair).
2. **Investigation** by an uninvolved Senior Officer or an external investigator if needed.
3. **Outcome in writing** to the parties.
4. **Action:** education/coaching, written warning(s), temporary removal from duties, role changes, or dismissal (per EXT-01 17.0). Appeal may be made to the Board Chair under EXT-01. Immediate revocation may be used for serious misconduct as defined in EXT-01.
5. **Confidentiality:** Shared only on a need-to-know basis.

---

### Examples (non-exhaustive)

- Humiliating, demeaning, hostile remarks; threats or intimidation.
- Targeted jokes/gestures; spreading malicious rumors.
- “Mobbing”: pressuring others to remove a member/officer outside due process.
- Offensive posts/messages tied to EXT-01 activity (social media/electronic).

---

### Training & acknowledgements

- **Orientation + annual refresher** on this policy.
- **Code of Ethics** must be signed at appointment (kept in your personnel file).

---

### Where to find the full policy

- Hall bulletin board.
- Website: [extensionfire.ca/policies](http://extensionfire.ca/policies)

**Questions?** Talk to the **Fire Chief** or email the **Society Board Chair**.

**If safety is immediately at risk:** follow ICS, notify the IC, and if needed call **9-1-1**.