



Association of Community Legal Clinics of Ontario
Annual Conference and General Meeting
Anti-Harassment Policy and Procedure

1. Policy Statement

The Association of Community Legal Clinics of Ontario stands behind the following principles:

- A recognition of the diversity of the Ontario public;
- A commitment to inclusive legal workplaces in Ontario, a reduction of barriers created by racism, unconscious bias and discrimination and better representation of Indigenous and racialized licensees in the legal professions in all legal workplaces and at all levels of seniority;
- Our special responsibility as members of the legal profession to protect the dignity of all individuals, and to respect human rights laws in force in Ontario;
- A commitment to advance reconciliation, acknowledging that we are collectively responsible to support improved relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Ontario and Canada; and,
- An acknowledgement of our obligations to promote equality, diversity and inclusion generally and in our behaviour towards colleagues, employees, clinics and the public.

In recognition of these principles, all clinic staff and Board members, as well as ACLCO staff, presenters, facilities staff, and guests attending the ACLCO Annual Conference and General Meeting are entitled to participate, in all aspects of the Conference, free from discrimination, harassment and/or violence. This entitlement extends to social events and non-structured time during breaks, in the evening and overnight.

2. Definitions

Harassment is an expression of perceived power by the harasser over another person, usually for reasons over which the harassed person has little or no control, which may or may not be linked to a prohibited ground. Prohibited grounds under the Ontario *Human Rights Code* include race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, record of offences, marital status, family status, disability, or the receipt of public assistance.

Harassment can include but is not limited to: unwanted comments, slurs, racist or sexist jokes, pictures or posters, bullying or intimidation, graffiti, physical contact of any kind, remarks about a person's appearance or personal life, unwelcome sexual advances or demands and/or suggestive looks or gestures.

3. Process to Communicate Policy and Address Incidents and Complaints

The goal of this process is to ensure that all safety and harassment incidents that take place during the ACLCO Annual Conference and AGM are dealt with expeditiously and efficiently on-site, in order for all participants to feel safe.

- a. The ACLCO will appoint and authorize up to 3 members as "Equity Officers".
- b. The ACLCO will advise all participants in writing of the policy, as well as the names and contact information of the Equity Officers, in advance of the event. Further, all participants must acknowledge that they are aware of the policy and this process.
- c. If a participant feels they are the subject of unwanted behavior and/or feels unsafe, they can make a verbal complaint to a designated Equity Officer.
- d. The role of the Equity Officers is to ensure the safety of the complainant by making a safety plan that may involve separating the parties, and/or removing individuals from the event, depending on the severity of the allegation.
- e. The Equity Officers will meet with the parties (the complainant and the respondent) separately, and the Equity Officers will make a collective decision as to how to proceed. The ED's of the respective organizations of the parties shall be informed of the complaint but will not be involved in the decision making of the committee.
- f. It is not the role of the Equity Officers to carry out an in-depth investigation. Any in-depth investigations deemed necessary will take place after the event, and will be the responsibility of the management of the clinics where the parties are employed or on whose Board of Directors the parties sit.
- g. If either the complainant or the respondent is from one of the Equity Officer's home clinic or from the ACLCO, the Equity Officer will recuse themselves from the process, and the remaining Equity Officers will deal with the complaint.

The **Equity Officers** for the ACLCO Annual Conference and AGM are posted on the AGM page here: <https://aclco.org/members/annual-general-meeting/>

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- For in-person events they will be posted in the common areas of the venue and contact information for the Equity Officers will be distributed at the Conference registration table. The Equity Officers will wear identification while at the Conference. For online events, an announcement will be made during the plenary session to identify the Equity Officers and contact information will be published on the event's informatio page.