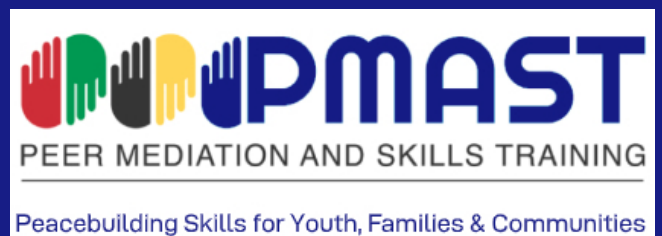


20/21

Multi Abuse Policy

Policy Type: Special Policies

Adopted: Ratified November 26, 2019



Our Commitment

Peer Mediation and Skills Training (PMAST) is committed to providing a respectful environment for Board Members, contractors, students, staff and clients alike and hereby outline expectations and responsibilities for our Board, contractors, volunteers and any staff.

PMAST will not tolerate any form of physical abuse including corporal punishment, sexual, emotional, verbal or psychological abuse, nor any form of neglect or harassment. PMAST prohibits and does not tolerate sexual abuse in the workplace or in any organization related activity. PMAST has a zero-tolerance approach for any form of abuse, including sexual abuse, committed by an employee, contractor, volunteer, board member or third party. No employee, board member, volunteer, contractor or third party, no matter his or her title or position, has the authority to commit or allow any abusive behaviour including sexual abuse.

PMAST provides procedures for employees, contractors, volunteers, family members, board members, victims of sexual abuse, or others; to report all forms of abuse including sexual abuse. Any incidents of sexual abuse believed to have occurred will be subject to disciplinary penalties and will be reported to appropriate law enforcement agencies and/or regulatory agencies.

Definitions of Multi Abuse situations which are considered inappropriate include contact of criminal nature for gratification of the PMAST's employee, board member, volunteer, contractor or third party who is in contact with PMAST's clientele, which could include senior, student or child, handicapped or otherwise, in the process of conducting PMAST's work.

- a) **Physical Abuse** is defined as but not limited to the use of intentional force, including corporal punishment, which can result in physical harm or injury to an individual. It can take the form of slapping, hitting, punching, shaking, pulling, throwing, kicking, biting, choking, strangling or the abusive use of restraint.

- b) **Sexual Abuse** is defined as but not limited to any unwanted touching, fondling, observations for sexual gratification, any penetration or attempted penetration with a penis, digital or object of the vagina or anus, verbal or written pornography. Sexual abuse, includes sexual molestation, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, or sexual injury.
- c) **Child abuse** is defined by the Calgary City Police as: Includes neglect, and/or the emotional, physical or sexual mistreatment of a child by any person, including a parent, guardian or caregiver, which may result in physical or psychological harm to a child. Any incidents which come to the attention of any PMAST employee, board member, volunteer, contractor or third party must be reported immediately to the Calgary City Police.
- d) **Emotional, psychological and verbal abuses** including sexual harassment are defined as but not limited to: Chronic attack on an individual's self-esteem. It can take the form of name-calling, threatening, ridiculing, berating, intimidating, isolating, hazing, habitual scapegoating, belittling, blaming and bullying.

Evidence of Abuse, Abusive Behaviour in the Workplace, and Why Reporting is Important

Evidence of Abuse

Physical and behavioural evidence or signs that someone is being sexually abused are listed below:

- Pain or itching in genital area
- Difficulty in walking
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear
- Bruises or bleeding of the external genitalia
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Reluctance to be left alone with a particular person
- Wearing lots of clothing especially in bed
- Fear of touch
- Nightmares or fear of night
- Apprehension when sex is brought up

Abusive Behaviour in the Workplace

- When the abuse comes from someone you work with, you may be tempted not to report it
- You don't recognize the incident as abuse
- You believe it's "part of the job" and that you "can handle it"
- Don't want to be seen as "weak" or a "complainer"
- You accept the abuse because "that's just the way he or she is"
- Fear of retribution from the perpetrator
- You are worried about repercussions—don't want to "rock the boat", or
- Don't believe anything will change if you report a problem

Why Reporting is Important

- a) Benefits the organization and all parties
- b) Allows the organization to get a more accurate picture of the nature and extent of the abuse
- c) Allows the organization to determine whether measures are making a difference
- d) Will nip issues in the bud
- e) People who have been involved in an incident receive prompt assistance

Complaint Procedure

Complaint Procedure

- a) Keep a record of incidents including times of occurrence, witnesses and details of the incidents
- b) Tell the individual the behaviour is unwelcome and ask him/her to stop:
 - i. "I'd like this behaviour to stop immediately"
 - ii. "Please stop doing or saying....."
 - iii. "It makes me uncomfortable when I am being....."
 - iv. "I don't find it funny when I"
- c) Board members, volunteers, contractors and employees of PMAST who do not feel comfortable approaching the alleged abuser on their own should feel free to contact either their supervisor, the Program Director, the President or Vice President, or any Board member for assistance.

The person contacted, who received the abuse complaint, shall:

- a) Assure the complainant that an objective examination of the complaint will take place
- b) Assist the complainant in completing the written report APPENDIX H
- c) Document the nature of the complaint by determining the facts
- d) Determine the pace of investigation and action depending upon the severity of the incident

What are my rights if I am accused of violence and harassment?

- a) Being informed that a complaint has been filed against you
- b) Provided with a copy of the written statement of the allegations against you
- c) Given the opportunity to respond to the allegations
- d) Accompanied by the person of your choice during the investigation
- e) Receive fair treatment
- f) Receive information related to the investigation
- g) Have the opportunity to appeal the decision
- h) Co-operate with the investigation during the review of the complaint.

Reporting Procedure for Sexual Abuse and for Other Forms of Abuse

1. Reporting Procedure for Sexual Abuse

- a) If you are aware of or suspect sexual abuse taking place, you are obligated to report it to your President, Vice President, or a Director of PMAST
- b) If the suspected abuse is to a child (under 18 years of age), the abuse must be reported to PMAST and to the Police immediately. PMAST must file a report and the police will take over the investigation
- c) If it is a child (under 18), you may also refer the family to resources such as Kids Help (Phone Hotline 1-800-668-6868)
- d) Appropriate family members should be notified of alleged instances of sexual abuse in a confidential manner by the Police
- e) PMAST will report the alleged sexual abuse incident to their Insurance Agent immediately upon receipt of a report
- f) Fill out the appropriate form found in APPENDIX H or on our website at www.pmast.org/reporting
- g) For PMAST personnel who received the complaint, please complete PMAST Serious-Incident Report Form found in APPENDIX I.

2. Reporting Procedure for Other Forms of Abuse

- a) If you are aware of or suspect any form of abuse other than sexual abuse taking place to anyone, you must report it to your President, Vice President or any member of PMAST Board of Directors
- b) Fill out the appropriate form as attached on our website at pmast.org/reporting, or in APPENDIX H
- c) For PMAST personnel, who receive the complaint, please complete PMAST Serious-Incident Report Form in APPENDIX

Investigative Procedure and Disciplinary Actions

3. Investigative Procedure

- a) It is PMAST's objective to conduct a fair and impartial investigation and will assign a minimum of two persons to conduct the investigation
- b) PMAST will take all allegations of abuse seriously and will promptly and thoroughly do an internal investigation as to whether any abuse has taken place
- c) PMAST may also use an outside third party to conduct an outside investigation
- d) PMAST will co-operate fully with any investigation conducted by law enforcement or other regulatory agencies
- e) PMAST may place the accused on a Leave of Absence without pay in the case of contractors or employees
- f) PMAST may place an accused Board member or volunteer on a Leave of Absence should the situation warrant such action
- g) PMAST will make every reasonable effort to keep the matters involved and all the allegations as confidential as possible while still allowing for a prompt and thorough investigation
- h) Should the accused feel this is a fraudulent claim, every effort will be taken to ensure a thorough investigation will assist in clearing this matter up without penalty to the person
- i) Upon completion of the investigation, disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or contract may ensue and the accused may be barred from any further volunteer opportunities.

4. Disciplinary Actions

PMAST will address an incident of abuse in an objective and consistent manner. When a complaint is substantiated, PMAST will consider:

- a) Impact of the abuse on the victim
- b) Nature of the abuse
- c) Degree of aggressiveness and physical contact in the abuse
- d) Period of time over which the abuse took place
- e) Frequency of abuse
- f) Vulnerability of the victim.

Possible Options for Substantiated Complaints:

- a) Discharge
- b) Apology
- c) Training
- d) Report to Professional body
- e) Further disciplinary actions may be taken

Retaliation, False Allegations, Human Rights Complaints, Media Releases, Financial Liabilities, and Implementation of Sexual Abuse Policy

5. Retaliation

PMAST prohibits retaliation made against any employee, volunteer, contractor, board member, or client who reports a good faith complaint of abuse or who participates in any related investigations.

6. False Allegations

PMAST prohibits making false and/or malicious allegations of abuse, as well as deliberately providing false information during an investigation. Any persons who violate this rule is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination and may be charged for falsifying information and defamation.

7. Human Rights Complaints

The complainant could result in filing a complaint to the Alberta Human Rights Commission.

8. Media Releases

Anyone who is approached by the media regarding abuse issues, is required to refer all such enquires to PMAST's "Media Representative".

9. Financial Liabilities

Any incidents and reporting of abuse will not result in any financial liabilities of all Board of Directors, Officers, Employees, Contractors of PMAST and any potential partnerships, work agreements related to PMAST.

10. Implementation of Sexual Abuse Policy

The President and/or Directors of PMAST will be responsible for implementing this policy throughout PMAST and ensuring all individuals are required to provide a signed copy of consent. They must be given the opportunity to read the policy and ask any questions pertaining to this policy. All documents will be kept in a confidential manner and stored in the custody of PMAST.

NOTE

NOTE:

PMAST's abuse policy is subject to change at the request of our Insurance carrier. PMAST agrees to comply with this change, when applicable.

Further, this policy shall be subject to annual review and resigning by all members of PMAST's Board of Directors and will be included in all contracts and employee agreements. Any work, current or future, with any agencies, partners, or working agreements will also acknowledge this Policy as part of the MOU.

Additional information and resources for Abuse in Alberta are available through:

- Ministry of Children's Services
- Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Council
- Section 8 of the Occupation Health & Safety Regulation
- Calgary City Police