



Office of Vice Provost EDI-AR  
Bruneau Centre for Innovation and Research- Room No. IIC-3057  
Memorial University of Newfoundland  
St. John's, NL, Canada, A1C 5S7  
[www.mun.ca/edi-ar/](http://www.mun.ca/edi-ar/)  
P: (709) 864-2088

## **Draft Human Rights Policy Brief**

### **Office of Vice Provost EDI-AR**

#### **Introduction**

On October 16, 2019, Donna L. Ball and Sheila M. Devine provided a report to then Provost and Vice President (Academic) Dr. Noreen Golfman about how to create a human rights and equity office at Memorial University. Following the basis of that report, the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism (EDI-AR) office began developing a Human Rights Policy in April 2023. A team of people from across nine different Memorial University departments and units were involved in drafting the Human Rights Policy. The team was used to make sure we thought about and included many perspectives thoroughly and fairly.

The EDI-AR office did specific things to get from thinking and talking about a Human Rights Policy to drafting one. The EDI-AR office first reviewed Memorial University's policies that relate to human rights, fairness, harassment, sexual assault, and accessibility. Then, we set up a Human Rights Policy Working Group led by the Dr. Mullings, the Vice Provost EDI-AR. This Working Group included Legal Counsel, Sexual Harassment and Assault Office, Vice President (Indigenous), Human Resources, Faculty Relations, Occupational Health, the Blundon Centre, and the Policy Office. The Working Group used their expertise to draft Memorial's first Human Rights.

The goal of the Human Rights Policy is to keep Memorial University's promise of having a university community where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, no matter their background. The Policy strengthens Memorial's commitment to fight all forms of discrimination because it follows guidelines from the Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Act 2010, Accessibility Act 2021, Employment Equity Act 1995, United Nations Declaration of Indigenous People's Act, and Labour Standards Act 1990.

## Principles

The Human Rights Policy at Memorial University is more than just rules. It is a reflection of our core values and it is also key part of creating a respectful and inclusive academic community. Here are the main principles that guide the Policy:

1. **Understanding Diverse Impacts:** The Policy recognizes that discrimination can affect people differently because of who they are, how they identify as people and the position they have at Memorial.
2. **Commitment to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism:** Memorial is dedicated to making sure that everyone across our campuses has fair access to all opportunities no matter their race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, nationality, or religious background. This means that Memorial removes barriers like racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination in university life, from teaching and learning, working and recreational activities.
3. **Addressing Power Differentials:** The Policy recognizes that people have different levels and kinds of power. It aims to balance those power differences at Memorial to make sure that everyone is treated fairly and has equal opportunities.
4. **Clear Complaint Processes:** The Policy has simple and clear process and instructions to handle complaints to make sure they are dealt with fairly and openly.
5. **Educational and Training Initiatives:** Memorial commits to giving regular training and educational programs to help everyone understand and work with the Human Rights Policy.
6. **Trauma-Informed Approach:** The Policy recognizes that individuals and groups of people may have past experience that caused harm such as discrimination, and war so we will ensure concerns are handled with care and sensitive.
7. **Bona Fide Occupational Requirements:** The Policy states when certain discriminatory practices might be legally allowed if they are necessary for a specific job.

## Responsibilities

The Human Rights Policy clear roles for leadership and administration to ensure effective enforcement and guidance:

1. **Decision-Making and Enforcement Authority:**
  - **Provost and Vice President (Academic) or delegate:** Responsible for decision-making and implementing those decisions at the St. Johns, Signal Hill, Harlow, and Labrador Campuses.
  - **Vice-President, Grenfell Campus, or delegate:** Handles responsibilities for the Grenfell Campus.

- **Vice-President (Academic) and Student Affairs and Services, or delegate:**  
Takes charge at the Marine Institute.

**2. Operational Administration:**

- **Vice Provost EDI-AR:** Acts as the Operational Administrator and lead for the Human Rights Policy.

**3. Point of Contact for Complaints and Concerns:**

- **Human Rights Advisor:** Provides Policy guidance and is the first place to contact if anyone wants to report a Human Rights violation concerns and complaints.