West Neighbourhood House	
Policy Title:	**Psychological Safety**
Approved By:	West Neighbourhood House Board of Directors
Approval Date:	April 2023
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Policy Statement

West Neighbourhood House recognizes the importance of psychological health and safety in the workplace.

West Neighbourhood House will promote a positive working environment where everyone collaborates to achieve goals while promoting the physical and mental health of all staff, participants, volunteers, and students.

West Neighbourhood House is committed to promoting mental health and psychological well-being and to preventing harm to psychological health through appropriate policies, programs and services.

All West Neighborhood House staff, students, and volunteers are responsible for maintaining a psychologically healthy and safe workplace for everyone.

The Psychological Safety Policy works in conjunction with other West Neighbourhood House policies including, but not limited to: Code of Conduct, Health and Safety, Respectful Workplace, Workplace Violence, and Workplace Harassment.

Applicability

- All Staff
- Program Participants
- Volunteers
- Student Placements

Definitions

Psychological/Mental Health

A state of well-being that enables individuals to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn and work well, and contribute to their community.

Psychological Safety

The absence of harm and/or threat of harm to mental health.

General Principles

West Neighbourhood House recognizes that workplace factors can contribute to psychological health. While some stress is inherent in work, West Neighbourhood House strives for a work environment where continuous improvement in work practices and processes address psychological safety and support mental health.

West Neighbourhood House commits to continuously improving psychological safety and supporting mental health in West Neighbourhood House workplaces by building on its current actions and strengths in each of the following areas:

- Actions to promote and enhance general psychological health (such as efforts to build resilience, create a respectful workplace, enhance mental health knowledge at all levels and eliminate stigma)
- Actions to prevent the onset or reduce the severity of psychological health issues in the workplace, such as improvements in:
    - Proactive actions to prevent psychological health issues (e.g. considering the psychological characteristics of work tasks and individual staff to ensure good job-person fit, providing stress management training, supporting work-home balance)
    - Identifying and addressing psychological health issues while at an early stage (e.g. providing self-care tools, providing supervisory training, providing early intervention through appropriate referrals.)
    - Supportive practices for individuals with an identified psychological health issue (e.g. providing support to stay at work, providing coordinated disability management, supporting access to psychological treatment)

Each West Neighbourhood House Program commits to regularly:

- Assess specific issues or risk factors affecting mental health and psychological safety within the program, consulting with employees and the joint health and safety committee/health and safety representatives in this process
- Determine whether improvements are needed
- Identify opportunities for change and/or current strengths on which to build, and record the findings
- Undertake mental health promotion/prevention actions to make any necessary changes and/or build on existing strengths
- Evaluate the effectiveness of actions undertaken

Responsibilities

Management shall lead in creating a psychologically healthy and safe workplace by:

- modeling respect, dignity and compassion in their interactions with each other, staff, volunteers, students and program clients and participants
- fostering an organizational culture that promotes psychological health and safety
- ensuring that a psychological health and safety management system is in place to provide a work environment that is free from psychological harm
- ensuring compliance with relevant occupational health and safety laws ensuring that staff are trained in recognizing and responding to situations involving psychological harm
- ensuring that every reported incident of psychological harm is investigated, in an objective and timely manner, and potential areas of improvement are identified
- ensuring that any affected person is advised to consult a health professional if they report psychological injuries or adverse symptoms from psychological harm
- maintaining the confidentiality of the individuals concerned, except where disclosure is necessary for the purposes of investigating the complaint, preventing harm, or is otherwise required by law
- providing appropriate support for affected staff.

Staff, students, and volunteers shall:

- treat each other and program clients with respect, dignity and compassion
- know and follow the procedures that are in place to protect psychological health
- participate in the instruction on psychological hazards and prevention
- report all violations of this policy to their supervisor as soon as possible
- cooperate in the investigation of complaints.

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Executive Director Date