

# Memorandum

## Re: Policy Statement on Freedom from Harassment

**Date:** March 7, 2019  
**To:** CAUT Council  
**From:** David Robinson, Executive Director

Council considered a proposed revision to the draft Policy Statement on Freedom from Harassment at its November 2018 meeting. Following some debate around the definition of harassment in the Policy Statement, Council referred the document back to the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee consulted with CAUT legal counsel on the matter and is recommending that the definition of harassment in paragraph 2 of the Policy Statement be amended to conform with the language in the Canada Labour Code. The Code defines harassment as "any action, conduct or comment, including of a sexual nature, that can reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or other physical or psychological injury or illness."

Council also debated adding language to paragraph 4 of the Policy Statement to make it explicit that an employer has an obligation to deal with a complaint of harassment in an expeditious manner. CAUT legal counsel is recommending the following sentence be added to paragraph 4: "This requires a timely response to any complaints or issues brought to the attention of the employer."

The final proposed change, in the second sentence of paragraph 2, is editorial and is to replace "harassment can come in the form of" to "harassment may arise from".