

Environment and Climate Change Canada Transparency Report on Misconduct and Wrongdoing

2024-2025



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Message from the Deputy Minister and Associate Deputy Minister

We are pleased to present the Department's first annual Transparency Report on Misconduct and Wrongdoing, a milestone in sharing our ongoing efforts to foster a workplace grounded in integrity, respect, and accountability.

This report reflects more than just a commitment to openness and transparency; it reflects the core values that guide our work at Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC). As public servants, we all play a vital role in our departmental [Values and Ethics Code](#) and contributing to a culture where all individuals can thrive and fully contribute their talent and expertise.

At ECCC, our **Culture of Care**, rooted in humility, compassion, courage, and collaboration, guides us in creating an environment where employees feel safe, supported, and comfortable to raise concerns. Our **Community and Collaboration** values support our organization in building equitable and inclusive workplaces that eliminate barriers, prevent discrimination and harassment, and embrace diverse perspectives. Our **Professional and Scientific Excellence** values uphold our commitment to providing the robust, impartial evidence and advice to inform policy, programs, and services that make a difference for people and the environment in Canada. These values are not just aspirational, they must be lived every day and are essential to our mission and to the wellbeing of our workforce.

Creating a safe and respectful workplace also means ensuring that employees can report misconduct and wrongdoing with confidence and that their concerns will be taken seriously and addressed fairly. A workplace where raising issues is protected and respected allows us resolve issues early and uphold the standards all public servants and Canadians deserve.

We also acknowledge that not all employees experience our workplace in the same way. Findings from the 2022 [Public Service Employee Survey](#) (PSES) for example reveal that Indigenous and racialized employees and persons with disabilities report disproportionately higher rates of harassment, discrimination, and fear of reprisals when raising issues. ECCC has undertaken numerous actions to address issues like these, as outlined in the [Report on the Diversity, Inclusion and Employment Equity Strategy for 2023-2024](#). Actions include mandatory training on preventing harassment and violence in the workplace, senior management facilitated discussions to address anti-racism and unconscious bias, and various other departmental and branch led initiatives.

Despite these efforts, we recognize more work must be done to continue to identify and address systemic barriers, such as racism, unconscious bias, and underrepresentation in leadership that may affect these groups' experiences and trust in recourse mechanisms. Addressing these challenges requires ongoing dialogue, reflection, and action, which is central to ECCC's initiatives to build a foundation for long-term organizational success.

We would like to thank everyone who supports the work to create a healthy, respectful, and inclusive workplace at ECCC.

Jean-François Tremblay
Deputy Minister

John Moffet
Associate Deputy Minister

Introduction

This first annual report aims to increase transparency on how misconduct and wrongdoing is addressed at ECCC. It presents a summary of the investigative processes and cases of misconduct and wrongdoing in the Department over the 2024-2025 fiscal year. It also provides information on the informal and formal recourse mechanisms available to employees and managers to address suspected misconduct and wrongdoing.

Your feedback is important to improve subsequent editions of this report. Please send comments and suggestions to ve@ec.gc.ca.

Departmental context

ECCC is the lead federal department responsible for delivering services and evidence-based advice to protect and enhance Canada's natural environment, forecast weather conditions, enforce environmental regulations, and implement national climate action commitments. Through engagement with Indigenous Peoples and collaboration with academia, all levels of government, international partners and Canadians, our work effectively addresses environmental issues at home and abroad. Our diverse workforce of over 9,000 dedicated professionals operates across Canada, working together from field sites, laboratories and office locations to achieve the Department's mandate and priorities.

Multiple formal and informal channels exist for employees to report concerns about misconduct or wrongdoing, as outlined in [Annex A](#). While employees should initially approach their manager with concerns, alternative recourse options are available if their manager is the source of the issue or if they feel their concerns haven't been adequately addressed.

What is misconduct and wrongdoing?

Misconduct is defined as any action whereby an individual willfully contravenes, notably, an act, regulation, rule, Departmental or Treasury Board policy instrument, approved procedure, the departmental code of conduct, or the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service. In short, when an employee contravenes any of the obligations they agree to abide by when becoming a public servant.

Examples of misconduct may include absence from work without authorization, insubordination, theft and tardiness.

Wrongdoing is defined in section 8 of the [Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act](#) as:

- a) a contravention of any Act of Parliament or of the legislature of a province, or of any regulations made under any such Act, other than a contravention of section 19 of this Act;
- b) a misuse of public funds or a public asset;
- c) a gross mismanagement in the public sector;

- d) an act or omission that creates a substantial and specific danger to the life, health or safety of persons, or to the environment, other than a danger that is inherent in the performance of the duties or functions of a public servant;
- e) a serious breach of a code of conduct established under section 5 or 6; and
- f) knowingly directing or counselling a person to commit a wrongdoing set out in any of paragraphs a) to e).

Categories of misconduct or wrongdoing

Within this report, investigative processes and founded cases of misconduct and wrongdoing are organized according to the departmental Directive on the Conduct of Administrative Investigations and include the following categories:

- **Misuse of public funds or assets** implies loss of public funds and/or Crown property. This may include but is not limited to suspected fraud; misuse, embezzlement or theft of government property or funds; contract or procurement fraud; contractor misconduct; and mismanagement or misappropriation of funds.
- **Harassment and violence in the workplace** refers to 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 to an employee, including any prescribed action, comment or conduct ([Canada Labour Code, Part II, subsection 122\(1\)](#)).

An act of harassment or violence can take the form of physical contact or non-physical behaviour. Either may occur as a single event or involve a continuing series of incidents. They may involve interactions between colleagues, visitors to the Department, external stakeholders and/or those in reporting relationships.

An act of harassment or violence can also include abuse of authority, as well as harassment based on the prohibited grounds within the [Canadian Human Rights Act](#) (i.e. race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, disability and conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or in respect of which a record suspension has been ordered).

- **Breach of the departmental Values and Ethics Code** covers a very wide range of behaviours that contravene the Code that employees must adhere to and uphold. Examples can include the inappropriate use of influence or access to resources for personal gain, misrepresenting or providing false information, threatening or intimidating a coworker, not disclosing a conflict of interest, discrimination, etc.
 - **Conflict of interest** is any situation where a public servant has private interests that could improperly influence the performance of their official duties and responsibilities or where a public servant uses their position for personal gain. A conflict of interest may be real (existing at the present time), apparent (perceived by a reasonable observer to exist, whether or not that is the case) or potential (reasonably foreseen to exist in the future).
- **Unacceptable use of government devices or electronic network** refer to violations of the Government of Canada's [Policy on Service and Digital](#) or misuse of the Department's equipment, electronic networks and associated devices.

- **Security incident** refers to a range of inappropriate activities in the workplace, such as theft, unlawful or illegal use of GC assets, breach of trust, break and enter, vandalism, sabotage, subversive activity, espionage, destruction or concealment of information.
- **Unauthorized disclosure or privacy breach** means the improper or unauthorized access to, creation, collection, use, disclosure, retention or disposal of personal information. The importance of preventing inappropriate disclosure is directly related to classification of GC information, including its storage and transmittal.
- **Breach of the ECCC Policy on Scientific Integrity** is a failure to abide by any of the provisions of s.6 or s.7 of [ECCC's Policy on Scientific Integrity](#) (SIP). The SIP describes how ECCC conducts, delivers and communicates ECCC science and research, and sets out the ways in which ECCC employees are responsible for upholding integrity when designing, conducting, managing, reviewing, communicating and using research or science. While most cases of alleged breaches are resolved through informal means, the Policy also affords investigations of allegations of breach of scientific integrity by ECCC's Science Integrity Lead, where informal resolution is not possible or appropriate.
- **Other misconduct** refers to a range of inappropriate behaviour(s) in the workplace, such as theft of time, tardiness, absenteeism, unauthorized leave and/or personal activities during work hours, insubordination, failure to carry out duties, specific tasks or follow instructions.

Addressing misconduct and wrongdoing

General approach

Employees who suspect or witness misconduct or wrongdoing may access several formal recourse processes, as detailed in [Annex A](#), which includes information for managers and employees on what each mechanism addresses, associated timelines, and possible outcomes in founded cases. Managers remain available as a first point of contact to raise concerns and resolve issues. Employees can also reach out to the departmental Ombuds Office for confidential, impartial and informal services to explore options for resolving issues constructively and at the lowest possible level.

The department addresses all suspected cases of misconduct and wrongdoing by following the guidance provided by the Treasury Board Secretariat's [Policy on People Management](#) and [Guidelines for Discipline](#) as well as internal policies and directives. This includes conducting fair and objective investigative processes as needed and as expeditiously as possible, taking all measures to protect the confidentiality of the information collected and the privacy of individuals involved, and ensuring procedural fairness for all.

The determination of whether allegations of wrongdoing or misconduct are founded is made following an administrative investigation process. Management is responsible to ensure the allegations are investigated with the support and guidance of Labour Relations and/or Values & Ethics. Sometimes an external investigator who has knowledge of the laws, policies and procedures applicable to the federal

public service is hired. Rules of procedural fairness, the applicable collective agreement, along with relevant Treasury Board Secretariat policies and guidance, are respected at all times.

In conducting administrative investigations, the goal is to establish whether the employee's behaviour or actions were culpable, and whether the misconduct warrants the imposition of discipline and/or administrative measures. There must be sufficient evidence on a balance of probabilities that misconduct occurred, prior to imposing discipline. An investigation is therefore a means of establishing factual and documented findings on the basis of which an informed decision can be made. An internal administrative investigation is conducted independently of any criminal or judicial proceedings even though it may involve the same incident. The investigation into alleged misconduct cannot be replaced by judicial or criminal investigations by police. Allegations of criminal behaviour outside of the workplace are investigated when the nature of the behaviour appears to meet the legal test of the Millhaven criteria (Millhaven Fibres Ltd. v O.C.A.W., Local 9-670, 1967 CarswellOnt 789). The Millhaven criteria outlines five factors an employer is to consider when disciplining or terminating an employee for off-duty conduct. These criteria help determine if there's a connection between the off duty conduct and the employee's employment.

Definitions of disciplinary measures

The Treasury Board Secretariat's [Guidelines on Discipline](#) states: "The nature of discipline is to be corrective, rather than punitive, and its purpose is to motivate employees to accept those rules and standards of conduct that are desirable or necessary to achieve the organization's goals and objectives". According to the guidelines, in order of increasing severity, disciplinary measures are as follows: According to the guidelines, in order of increasing severity, disciplinary measures are as follows:

- **Oral reprimand** - A verbal disciplinary measure that includes a statement outlining to the employee the nature of the misconduct, the corrective action required, and the consequences should it not be corrected. No record of this measure is placed on the employee's personnel file.
- **Written reprimand** - A formal written notice that misconduct has occurred. It outlines the nature of the misconduct, the corrective action required, and the consequences should it not be corrected. If more severe disciplinary action should later become necessary, the record of the reprimand or reprimands on the personnel file demonstrates that the employee was made aware of the consequences of further misconduct.
- **Suspension** - The temporary removal of the employee from the place of work, without pay, as a consequence of misconduct. The notice of suspension includes the nature of the misconduct, the corrective action required, and the consequences should it not be corrected.
- **Financial penalty** - An alternative to a suspension, where a financial penalty is considered preferable for operational or economic reasons. Financial penalties are appropriate in situations involving mass unlawful withdrawal of services, continuous shift operations, ships at sea, or isolated posts, where it may be difficult to schedule suspensions without the use of replacements and overtime. It may also be used to impose a definitive disciplinary measure for an act of misconduct. The notice of financial penalty outlines the nature of the misconduct, the corrective measure required, and the consequences should it not be corrected.

- **Demotion** - An action taken by the employer to appoint an employee to a position at a lower maximum rate of pay. Demotion is an alternative to a disciplinary termination and may be used when the manager is of the opinion that, despite the misconduct, the employee is still suitable for continued employment, albeit in a position at a lower maximum rate of pay. Demotion could be used in situations where a manager is found guilty of harassment and is moved to a position with no managerial responsibilities.
- **Termination** - The separation of an employee from the core public administration for misconduct. Termination may be used after a series of acts of misconduct, when a culminating incident has occurred, or for a single act of serious misconduct. Termination is the most severe disciplinary measure, and the decision to proceed is taken only after careful consideration and when it is determined that the employee is no longer suitable for continued employment by reason of misconduct.

Administrative measures

Administrative measures refer to a wide range of actions that could be taken by management instead of or in addition to discipline, depending on the results of an administrative investigation. Administrative measures are not disciplinary in nature. Measures could include but are not limited to:

- Letter of expectations
- Recovery of funds
- Mandatory training and/or coaching
- Additional procedures to prevent misconduct and wrongdoing, such as a change in security protocols
- Cancellation/denial of flexible work arrangements, such as telework or compressed schedules
- Revocation of security clearance

Overview of cases of misconduct and wrongdoing in 2024-25

Misconduct investigations and resulting measures

During 2024-25, 17 allegations of misconduct were investigated. 16 investigations determined that misconduct occurred. One case was not founded.

Of the 16 founded cases of misconduct, 12 resulted in disciplinary and/or administrative measures. Three cases resulted in administrative measures only, and one case was not concluded as the employee resigned before the disciplinary process reaching completion.

Table 1. Employee misconduct investigations that resulted in disciplinary measures and/or administrative measures

Category	Number of Cases	Disciplinary measures	Administrative measures
Breach of the departmental Values and Ethics Code	5	Two employees received written reprimands for inappropriate behaviour and/or unwelcome physical contact in the workplace. In addition to the written reprimand, one of the three employee was required to complete/refresh online Values and Ethics training.	Three employees received a letter of expectations to address inappropriate behaviour and/or communications with other employees in the workplace. While misconduct was founded, mitigating factors were such that formal discipline was not warranted.
Other misconduct	4	Two employees received a suspension without pay for failing to report to work for extended periods and/or notify management as to their absence. One employee was later terminated for job abandonment. One employee received a suspension without pay for endangering another person's health and safety. One employee received a written reprimand for insubordination.	n/a
Unacceptable use of government devices or electronic network	2	Two employees received written reprimands for unauthorised use of Government of Canada devices abroad during their vacation.	One of the two employees had incurred roaming charges and was required to repay the charges to the department.
Harassment and violence in the workplace	2	Two employees' employment with ECCC was terminated following founded allegations regarding inappropriate comments and/or behaviour, including of a sexual nature.	n/a
Misuse of public funds or assets	2	One employee received a suspension without pay for falsifying a travel request to obtain personal financial benefit. In	n/a

		<p>addition to the suspension, the employee was prohibited from travel on government business for six months.</p> <p>One employee received a suspension without pay for operating a government vehicle while impaired.</p>	
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Wrongdoing

ECCC’s Senior Officer for Internal Disclosure received three disclosures of wrongdoing under the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act, which contained four allegations.

Two allegations related to the misuse of a public asset, which were determined not to meet the definition of wrongdoing. Senior management worked with the Values, Integrity and Disclosure Centre of Expertise to ensure that risks were well managed and employees clearly understood the expectations around using government property.

Two allegations related to breaches of ECCC’s Values and Ethics Code. One allegation was deemed to not meet the definition of wrongdoing and was referred to a values and ethics advisor to resolve the matter. The other allegation remains under review and is being carried forward into 2025-26.

Harassment and violence

General approach for employees

Employees who witness or experience harassment or violence in the workplace can notify their management and/or submit a notice of occurrence to ECCC’s Designated Recipient. Under the ECCC Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Policy, the Designated Recipient is the position or work unit responsible for receiving notices of occurrences and administering the resolution process in accordance with the Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations (“WPHVP Regulations”). This resolution process is aimed primarily at identifying and preventing systemic risk factors to eliminate or reduce a recurrence of a similar incident in the workplace. This process is not intended to find fault or determine discipline or compensation for any party. As outlined in the WPHVP Regulations, a principal party may request a formal investigation after reasonable efforts to resolve the occurrence informally by negotiated resolution have been explored and unsuccessful.

Parallel to any steps undertaken under the WPHVP Regulations, employees can also raise incidents of harassment or violence with their management, who can take steps to address misconduct allegations with the advice and guidance from ECCC’s Labour Relations advisors. Represented employees may consult their union representative for advice and guidance on other available mechanisms to address workplace issues, such as informal mediation services or the formal grievance process.

Investigations

Over the period, the Department conducted seven investigative processes related to allegations of harassment and violence in the workplace.

Five investigative processes were launched under the WPHVP Regulations for notices of occurrences of harassment and violence. Three investigative processes, including two launched during the 2023-24 period, were concluded. Two investigative processes concluded that harassment had occurred:

- An executive was found to have engaged in harassing behaviours towards their staff. The executive was also found to have requested unreasonable job demands and unfairly limited professional development opportunities, contributing to the findings of harassment and violence. The investigation recommended implementing practices to increase scrutiny in executive hiring, training for managers on encouraging a diversity of opinions and providing constructive feedback and adopting mechanisms for employees to raise concerns and provide feedback on management behaviours and practices. It was also recommended that the Department continue promotion and awareness of the Ombuds Office's informal conflict management services.
- An investigation launched in the previous fiscal year and concluded in 2024-25 found that an executive harassed an employee by being dismissive and failing to take their workplace concerns seriously. Recommendations included providing leaders with training on fostering trust, dignity and respect, professional communication and responding appropriately to employee concerns, particularly in highly charged or emotional situations.

One investigation was unfounded; however, the investigation made several recommendations to improve how management respond to short-term telework exemption requests, adapt leadership styles and practices to individual employees, communicate clear expectations for temporary assignments, and ensure fairness in the application of departmental rules and processes around travel.

Four of the investigations launched during the 2024-25 period were ongoing and carried forward into the 2025-26 period.

Two misconduct investigations resulted in disciplinary measures as outlined in Table 1.

Discrimination based on prohibited grounds

The Department received four notices of occurrence that included reference to matters of discrimination under the Canadian Human Rights Act's 13 prohibited grounds. The four notices of occurrence involved allegations of discrimination based on sex, family status, colour, and disability, respectively. One notice of occurrence was founded through a formal investigation; while the investigator employed gender-based analysis to carry out the investigation, the prohibited ground was not found to be a determining factor and recommendations related more broadly to fostering consensus-building and enabling the expression of a diversity of opinions. Another notice of occurrence was resolved through negotiated resolution. Two notices of occurrence were carried over to the 2025-26 period and were in the process of negotiated resolution.

Breaches of ECCC's Scientific Integrity Policy

General approach for employees

The [ECCC Policy on Scientific Integrity](#) (SIP) is a facilitative tool. Employees who suspect a breach of the SIP can submit an allegation of breach to the ECCC Science Integrity Lead (SIL), the Designated Recipient under the ECCC Procedures for Investigating Allegations of Breach of Scientific Integrity. The

ECCC SIL is responsible for ensuring that alleged breaches of this policy are promptly and thoroughly reviewed and addressed by ECCC using an impartial, confidential and respectful process. The SIP emphasizes informal dialogue as a means to resolve concerns and also identifies the SIL as a resource to help.

The nature and scope of scientific integrity breach as defined by the SIP (i.e. failure to abide by any of the provisions of s.6 or s.7 of this policy) consist of three main categories:

Misconduct (e.g., s.7.8.2): breaches that are potentially serious and likely subject to formal investigation.¹

Unethical/unprofessional behavior (e.g., s.7.2.2.1; s.7.3.1; s.7.3.2; s.7.4.1-7.4.4; s.7.4.6-7.4.9; s.7.5.1-7.5.4; 7.5.6-7.5.7; 7.8.1): failure to meet standards, most of which can be addressed through informal processes other than formal investigation, depending on severity of the breach.

Policy non-compliance (e.g. s.7.1; s.7.2.1; s.7.2.2.2-7.2.2.4; s.7.4.5; s.7.5.5; s.7.6.; s.7.7; s.7.9): gaps in policy implementation that would require organizational corrective measures (e.g., Action Plan, performance report).

Upon receipt of an allegation of breach, the SIL conducts a preliminary assessment to determine if the allegation is within the scope of the SIP and requires further actions; the alleged conduct should be addressed through an informal mechanism/process; or an investigation is required. If information contained in the allegation constitutes wrongdoing under the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act, it is referred to ECCC's Senior Officer for Disclosure. The disclosure process set out in the Act or the Internal Disclosure Procedures, as applicable, would take precedence over procedures for assessing an allegation of SIP breach. In the event of an investigation under the SIP, a potential outcome is recommendations to prevent such breaches in the future, for consideration by the Department, in addition to the identification of steps to correct the scientific record, if appropriate; such recommendations are corrective and never punitive or disciplinary.

ECCC's SIP came into effect on April 1, 2019. The SIP responds to an agreement between the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) and the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPSC). The ECCC policy is based on the [Model Policy on Scientific Integrity](#) co-developed by the [Office of the Chief Science Advisor](#) (OCSA), TBS and PIPSC. ECCC reports annually to OCSA on its compliance with SIP measures, and OCSA reports annually on the status of federal scientific integrity policies across 25 federal science-based departments and agencies.

Investigations

Over the period, the Department received one allegation of SIP breach, which is currently undergoing a preliminary assessment, according to ECCC's Procedures for Investigating Allegations of Breach of Scientific Integrity.

External investigations

This section describes the investigations conducted by external organizations as part of their mandate to investigate misconduct or wrongdoing within the Department.

¹ Breaches of s.7.8.2 include but are not limited to fabrication, falsification, destruction of research records, plagiarism, redundant publication or self-plagiarism, invalid authorship or contributions, mismanagement of conflict of interest, inaccurate grant and awards application, and inaccurate statement of collaborations.

Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner

The Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner of Canada is an independent federal organization that was established to implement the [Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act](#). The Office investigates wrongdoing in the federal public sector and helps protect whistleblowers, those who make a protected disclosure of wrongdoing, and those who participate in investigations from reprisal.

The Office contributes to strengthening accountability and increases oversight of government operations by:

- providing an independent and confidential process for receiving and investigating disclosures of wrongdoing in, or relating to, the federal public sector from public servants and members of the public.
- reporting founded cases of wrongdoing to Parliament and making recommendations to chief executives on corrective measures.
- providing a mechanism for handling complaints of reprisal from public servants and former public servants for the purpose of coming to a resolution, including through conciliation and by referring cases to the Public Servants Disclosure Protection Tribunal.

During the 2024-25 period, the Office investigated allegations relating to a serious breach of the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service and the departmental Values and Ethics Code. The Office found that wrongdoing did not occur.

Canadian Human Rights Commission

Under the [Canadian Human Rights Act](#), an individual or group of individuals may submit a Canadian human rights complaint to the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) related to any action or decision for which they have reasonable grounds to believe resulted in the unfair or negative treatment of a person under the prohibited grounds of discrimination, such as:

- race, national or ethnic origin, colour
- religion
- age
- sex
- sexual orientation, gender identity or expression
- marital status, family status
- genetic characteristics
- disability
- conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or in respect of which a record suspension has been ordered.

The CHRC reviews the discrimination complaints and, if necessary, gathers information from the parties to determine the next steps and determine if the complaint will be submitted to the Canadian

Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) to decide if there has been discrimination. Please consult the [CHRC website](#) for more information on their review process.

The departmental Labour Relations team supports management with CHRC complaints. The last CHRC complaint the Department received was in the 2021-2022 fiscal year based on the protected grounds of age and disability. The complainant worked for a private company contracted by the Department. In 2024, the CHRC dismissed the complaint because it did not meet the minimum requirements for the CHRC to have jurisdiction.

Employment and Social Development Canada

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) investigations relate to the Department's occupational health and safety program and the workplace. They may include investigations into the Department's administration of the Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations and can be initiated after a complaint under the Canada Labour Code section 127.1 (Internal Complaint Resolution Process), where an employee believes that there has been a contravention of Part II of the Code and that an accident, injury or illness can or has occurred.

In these circumstances, ESDC can:

- request that the employer/employee submit an assurance of voluntary compliance (AVC). An AVC is the employer or employee's written commitment to a health and safety officer that a contravention of the Canada Labour Code will be corrected within a specified period.
- issue a direction, which is a legal written notice ordering the employer/employee to address a contravention of Part II of the Code within a specified period.

The Department received one AVC containing 10 infractions under Part II of the Canada Labour Code. All infractions were rectified by the AVC compliance date and details were reported to ESDC and TBS.

The Department also received one infraction in 2024-25 relating to a failure to conclude the work place harassment and violence prevention resolution process within the prescribed one-year time limit as outlined in the Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations. An AVC was issued to complete the resolution process in a timely manner after the conclusion of the investigation.

Public Service Commission

As part of its mandate to oversee the integrity of the staffing system and the political impartiality of the federal public service, the Public Service Commission (PSC) investigates concerns relating to specific appointment processes and allegations of improper political activities for organizations that are subject to the Public Service Employment Act.

In 2024-25, the PSC received allegations of improper political activities and found that an ECCC employee did not request the PSC's permission before registering as a candidate for an election. The PSC did not deem it appropriate to recommend corrective measures (such as attending training on political activities) and the employee later requested and received the PSC's permission to engage in political activities.

Regarding investigation requests for appointment processes in 2024-25, one investigation request to the PSC resulted in the decision not to investigate since the PSC was satisfied with the corrective

measures implemented by the Department to address the improper conduct. One request for investigation was at the jurisdiction stage and one was closed by the PSC as they determined that an investigation was not warranted.

Two investigation requests made by ECCC in the previous fiscal year (2023-24) are still ongoing and pending a decision by the PSC.

Continuing our efforts to strengthen accountability

Throughout 2024-25, in response to the Clerk of the Privy Council's direction, ECCC has implemented several key initiatives to strengthen the Department's ethical framework and increase awareness of our collective responsibility to uphold public service values and ethics:

- Renewed the ECCC Values and Ethics Code with specific departmental values developed through internal consultations and updated guidance on social media, artificial intelligence, misinformation and requirements for preventing conflicts of interest and conflict of duties.
- Engaged in extensive discussions at all levels about our shared responsibility to uphold our values and ethics in today's context.
- Revised mandatory Values and Ethics training with new case studies addressing modern ethical dilemmas and conflicts of interest and integrating a component on harassment and violence prevention.
- Regular communications on our ethical responsibilities, through all-staff messages and articles in ECCC News highlighting important changes to the Code.

In 2025-26, the Department will implement mandatory annual conflict of interest attestations for all employees and a practical self-assessment tool to help identify and prevent conflicts of interest and ethical breaches. ECCC will also continue to enhance transparency and trust with all equity groups by:

- Exploring the collection and reporting of disaggregated data on misconduct and wrongdoing by race, gender, and other identity factors, while safeguarding privacy;
- Engaging employee networks to further inform prevention efforts and improve policies;
- Ensuring diversity in investigators involved in the misconduct process;
- Promoting restorative and culturally appropriate options for resolution in addition to formal investigative mechanisms.

While the Department has made meaningful progress, we recognize that important work remains to advance our ongoing priority to strengthen consequential accountability at all levels and foster a workplace culture that is ethical, respectful, equitable, and inclusive for all employees.

Conclusion

This inaugural report marks a milestone in the Department's ongoing journey toward greater transparency and strengthened accountability in reporting on and addressing misconduct, wrongdoing, and other types of issues that affect employees in the workplace. This comprehensive picture also helps identify areas for improvement to enhance the mechanisms used to report, track, and prevent misconduct and wrongdoing, with a view to overall reduction and increased effectiveness in supporting employees in addressing such situations.

Reporting and recourse mechanisms are two of the key means that encourage adherence to our shared values and the expected behaviours outlined in the Department's Values and Ethics Code. As ECCC employees, we all share the responsibility of ensuring our workplace is ethical, safe, inclusive, and supportive for everyone.

Canadians depend on each of us to perform our duties with integrity. Both employees and the public expect transparency, accountability, and a commitment to continuous improvement in the workplace where it is needed. Every member of the Department, regardless of their position, deserves to work in a safe and inclusive environment where concerns about unethical behaviour or workplace safety are taken seriously and addressed promptly, without fear of reprisal.

We would like to thank everyone who supports the work to create a healthy, respectful, and inclusive workplace at ECCC. While we recognize that there is still work to be done, please know that the Department remains firmly committed to taking meaningful action to address areas that need improvement to continue to make ECCC an even better place to work.

Annex A – Recourse mechanisms for employees and managers

For all employees

You have a work place-related concern –
What are your options?

The **Ombuds Office** at Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) is a place where you can informally raise and discuss workplace related issues without fear of reprisal or judgement in a confidential manner. The Ombuds Office can help you explore options to address issues, provide information about available services and resources, and help you navigate existing systems. Its services include training, coaching, facilitated discussion and workplace dialogue. **1-833-201-4354**



Harassment and Violence

If you think you may have been the victim of, or a witness to workplace harassment or violence, visit the [Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention](#) page.

It has tools and information, such as:

- [Definition of harassment and violence](#)
- [ECCC Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Policy](#)
- [Occurrence Resolution Process Map](#)
- [Notice of Occurrence Form](#)
- [Training information](#)

Employees have up to three months after leaving ECCC to submit a [Notice of Occurrence](#).

Potential outcome: Recommendation on preventive/corrective measures to eliminate or mitigate the risk of a similar occurrence in the future.

This process is not intended for individual remedy nor disciplinary action.

destinairedesignate-designatedrecipient@ec.gc.ca



Grievance

If you think your [collective agreement](#) rights have been violated, you may want to consult your [union representative](#) to discuss if the grievance process is the right fit for your situation.

Visit ECCC's [Labour relations](#) page to find:

- [Grievance charts](#)
- [Guides on grievances](#)
- [Information on alternative work arrangements](#)

Grievances must be submitted in a timely manner after the occurrence, please refer to your collective agreement to ensure compliance.

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at an individual and/or organizational level



Health and Safety

If you wish to make a health and safety complaint, or if you are asked to perform dangerous work, consult [ECCC's Occupational Health and Safety](#) page to understand your options.

- [Complaint pertaining to occupational health and safety](#)

Ensure [Hazardous Occurrence Investigation Report](#) is filed within 10 days of occurrence

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at an individual and/or organizational level.

OHS-SST@ec.gc.ca



Whistleblowing

If you think you witnessed or experienced an ethical breach in the workplace, visit [ECCC's Disclosure of wrongdoing](#) page.

- [Internal disclosure form](#)
- [Procedural chart](#)
- [Guide for employees](#)
- [Guide for supervisors](#)

The Senior Officer will not investigate disclosures of wrongdoing alleged to have last occurred prior to the coming into force of the Act (i.e., before April 15, 2007).

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at an individual and/or organizational level and public reporting.

divelgation-disclosure@ec.gc.ca



Staffing

If you believe that an appointment or a proposed appointment may not have been based on merit or that an error, an omission or improper conduct may have affected the selection of the person appointed or proposed for appointment, please visit the:

- [Federal Public Sector Labour Relations and Employment Board's webpage](#)
- [Public Service Commission's Investigations' webpage](#)
- [Independent Recourse Mechanism's EC's page for SE-RE positions](#)

Complaints can be filed through a grievance or to the [Federal Public Sector Labour Relations and Employment Board \(FPSLRB\)](#). Complaints made to the FPSLRB must be made within 15 days of being informed of the appointment or proposed appointment, lay-off, or revocation of appointment.

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at the individual level.

staffingrecourse@ec.gc.ca



Human Rights

If you think you have been a victim of harassment and/or discrimination based on a [prohibited ground](#) under the [Canadian Human Rights Act](#):

- [About human rights | Canadian Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)
- [Online complaint form](#)

You should file a complaint within 12 months of the act or treatment that you are complaining about. The Commission does make exceptions.

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at the individual level.

1-888-214-1090



Science Integrity

The [Science Integrity Policy \(SIP\)](#) sets out the ways in which ECCC employees are responsible for upholding integrity when designing, conducting, managing, reviewing, communicating and using research or science. It is important that all employees adhere to the [principles of scientific integrity](#) outlined in the policy. If you suspect witnessing a breach of the SIP, visit the:

- [Process to Address Allegations of Breach of Scientific Integrity](#)
- [ECCC SIP guide for reporting on policy conflict or incompatibility](#)
- [ECCC Policy on Animal Care](#)

Although there is no limited timeframe to report a SIP breach, employees are encouraged to report any alleged breach to ensure it is dealt with efficiently.

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at an individual and/or organizational level as required.

integritescientifique-scientificintegrity@ec.gc.ca

Mental Health

A variety of information, tools and resources in support of mental health and wellness in the work place. santementalementalhealth@ec.gc.ca

Accessibility

Check out the information, tools and resources available to help create a barrier-free work place. Contact the Single Window of services on Accessibility at Work for more information on accessibility and accommodation at: ec.accessibility-accessibility@ec.gc.ca

Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) aims to improve the wellness of employees who are faced with personal or work-related problems. **1-800-268-7708**

Values and ethics

Get advice on public service values, managing conflicts of interest or participating in political activities: veconfid@ec.gc.ca

Performance Management

Learn about the performance management process, including resources and recourse available when there are disagreements between parties.

Security

If you suspect there may be a threat to the security of employees, assets or computer systems, contact the [Departmental Security Division](#) or the police. **819-918-8903**

Image description

This placemat outlines the mechanisms available for employees to report various workplace issues. Please note that many links are only available internally on the ECCC Intranet.

Ombuds Office

The [Ombuds Office](#) at ECCC is a place where you can informally raise and discuss workplace related issues without fear of reprisal or judgement in a confidential manner. The Ombuds Office can help you explore options to address issues, provide information about available services and resources, and help you navigate existing systems. Its services include training, coaching, facilitated discussion and workplace dialogue.

Contact: ombuds@ec.gc.ca.

By phone: 1-833-201-4354.

Harassment and Violence

If you think you may have been the victim of, or a witness to workplace harassment or violence, visit the [Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention](#) page.

It has tools and information, such as:

- [Definition of harassment](#)
- [ECCC Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Policy](#)
- [Occurrence Resolution Process Map](#)
- [Notice of Occurrence Form](#)
- [Training information](#)

Employees have up to three months after leaving ECCC to submit a [Notice of Occurrence](#).

Potential outcome: Recommendation on preventive/corrective measures to eliminate or mitigate the risk of a similar occurrence in the future.

This process is not intended for individual remedy nor disciplinary action.

Contact: destinatairedesigne-designatedrecipient@ec.gc.ca.

Grievance

If you think your [collective agreement](#) rights have been violated, you may want to consult your [union representative](#) to discuss if the grievance process is the right fit for your situation.

Visit ECCC's [Labour relations](#) page to find:

- [Grievance charts](#)
- [Guides on grievances](#)
- [Information on alternative work arrangements](#)

Grievances must be submitted in a timely manner after the occurrence. Please refer to your collective agreement to ensure compliance.

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at an individual and/or organizational level.

Health and Safety

If you wish to make a health and safety complaint, or if you are asked to perform dangerous work, consult [ECCC's Occupational health and safety page](#) to understand your options.

- [Complaint pertaining to occupational health and safety](#)

Ensure [Hazardous Occurrence Investigation Report](#) is filed within 10 days of occurrence

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at an individual and/or organizational level.

Contact: ohs-sst@ec.gc.ca.

Whistleblowing

If you think you witnessed or experienced an ethical breach in the workplace, visit [ECCC's Disclosure of wrongdoing page](#).

- [Internal disclosure form](#)
- [Procedural chart](#)

- [Guide for employees](#)
- [Guide for supervisors](#)

The Senior Officer will not investigate disclosures of wrongdoing alleged to have last occurred prior to the coming into force of the Act (i.e., before April 15, 2007).

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at an individual and/ or organizational level and public reporting.

Contact: divulgation-disclosure@ec.gc.ca.

Staffing

If you believe that an appointment or a proposed appointment may not have been based on merit or that an error, an omission or improper conduct may have affected the selection of the person appointed or proposed for appointment, please visit the:

- [Federal Public Sector Labour Relations and Employment Board's webpage](#)
- [Public Service Commission's Investigations' webpage](#)
- [Independent Recourse Mechanism's](#) ECollab's page for SE-RES positions

Complaints can be filed through a [grievance](#) or to the [Federal Public Sector Labour Relations and Employment Board](#) (FPSLREB). Complaints made to the FPSLREB must be made within 15 days of being informed of the appointment or proposed appointment, lay-off, or revocation of appointment.

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at the individual level.

Contact: staffingrecourserecoursdotation@ec.gc.ca.

Human Rights

If you think you have been a victim of harassment and/or discrimination based on a [prohibited ground](#) under the Canadian Human Rights Act, refer to:

- [About human rights | Canadian Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Charter of Rights and Freedom](#)
- [Online complaint form](#)

You should file a complaint within 12 months of the act or treatment that you are complaining about. The Commission does make exceptions.

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at the individual level.

By phone: 1-888-214-1090.

Science Integrity

The [Policy on Scientific Integrity](#) (SIP) sets out the ways in which ECCC employees are responsible for upholding integrity when designing, conducting, managing, reviewing, communicating and using research or science. It is important that all employees adhere to the [principles of scientific integrity](#) outlined in the policy. If you suspect a potential breach of the [SIP](#), visit the:

- [SIP Intranet page](#)
- [Process to Address Allegations of Breach of Scientific Integrity](#)

Although there is no limited timeframe to report a SIP breach, employees are encouraged to report any alleged breach to ensure it is dealt with efficiently.

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at an individual and/or organizational level as required.

Contact: integritescientifique-scientificintegrity@ec.gc.ca.

Mental Health

A variety of information, tools and resources in support of mental health and wellness in the workplace.

Visit the [Mental Health and Wellness Centre Intranet page](#).

Contact: santementalementalhealth@ec.gc.ca.

Accessibility

Check out the information, tools and resources available to help create a barrier-free workplace.

Contact the Single Window of services on Accessibility at Work for triage of requests of accessibility and accommodation at: ec.accessibilite-accessibility.ec@ec.gc.ca.

Visit the [Accessibility Intranet page](#).

Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) aims to improve the wellness of employees who are faced with personal or work-related problems.

Visit the [Employee Assistance Program Intranet page](#).

Contact: 1-800-268-7708.

Values and Ethics

Get advice on public service values, managing conflicts of interest or participating in political activities.

Visit the [Values, Integrity and Disclosure Centre of Expertise Intranet page](#).

Contact: veconfid@ec.gc.ca.

Performance Management

Learn about the performance management process, including resources and recourse available when there are disagreements between parties during the performance management cycle (agreement, mid-year review and year-end assessment).

Visit the [Performance management Intranet page](#).

Security

If you suspect there may be a threat to the security of employees, assets or computer systems, contact the [Departmental Security Division](#) or the police.

By phone: 819-918-8903.

For managers

An employee raises a workplace-related concern —
As a manager what are your next steps?

The **Ombuds Office** at Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) is a place where you can informally raise and discuss workplace related issues without fear of reprisal or judgement in a confidential manner. The Ombuds Office can help you explore options to address issues, provide information about available services and resources, and help you navigate existing systems. Its services include training, coaching, facilitated discussion and workplace dialogue. **1-833-201-4354**



Harassment and Violence

As a manager, if you have been made aware that an employee feels they have been a victim of or witness to harassment and/or violence, you need to deal with the situation immediately. Visit the [Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention](#) page for tools and information, such as:

- [Definition of harassment and violence](#)
- [ECCC Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Policy](#)
- [Occurrence Resolution Process Map](#)
- [Notice of Occurrence form](#)
- [Training information](#)

Employees have up to three months after leaving ECCC to submit a [Notice of Occurrence](#).

Potential outcome: Recommendation on preventative/corrective measures to eliminate or mitigate the risk of a similar occurrence in the future. This process is not intended for individual remedy nor disciplinary action.

designatedrecipient@ec.gc.ca



Grievance

As a manager, if you receive a grievance form from an employee or a bargaining agent:

- Sign the acknowledgement portion and provide a copy of the signed form to the employee or bargaining agent.
- Never refuse a grievance, even if the employee does not report to you directly.
- Do not comment or discuss the merits of the grievance.
- Contact your [Labour Relations Advisor](#) for next steps.

Review the [Labour Relations page](#) under 'Grievances' for:

- [ECCC Grievance charts](#)
- [Guide on Investigating Grievances](#)

Grievances must be submitted in a timely manner after the occurrence, please refer to your collective agreement to ensure compliance.

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at an individual and/or organizational level.



Health and Safety

As a manager, if you have been made aware of a health and safety concern in the work place, it is imperative that the concern is dealt with immediately. If an employee makes an [Occupational Health and Safety \(OHS\) complaint](#) or exercises their right to [refuse dangerous work](#), as the manager you are required to follow the process outlined in Part II of the Canada Labour Code.

Please consult your OHS advisor to understand these processes. Ensure [Hazardous Occurrence Investigation Report](#) is filed within 10 days of occurrence.

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at an individual and/or organizational level.

OHS-SST@ec.gc.ca



Whistleblowing

Under the [Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act](#), employees may disclose wrongdoing to their supervisor. If an employee makes a disclosure to you, you must contact the [Senior Officer](#) to determine whether the matter involves possible wrongdoing. Consult the [Disclosure guide for supervisors](#) for information on the definition of wrongdoing and the role of supervisors in the process.

Visit the [disclosure of wrongdoing](#) Intranet page for more information and tools including:

- [Disclosure form](#)
- [Procedural flowchart](#)

The Senior Officer will not investigate disclosures of wrongdoing alleged to have last occurred prior to the coming into force of the Act (i.e., before April 15, 2007).

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at an individual and/or organizational level and public reporting.

disclosure-disclosure@ec.gc.ca



Performance Management

As a manager, a discussion with the employee is the first step to resolve a dispute regarding the performance management process. Additional resolution processes are in place:

- Assistance for informal resolution is offered by the Ombuds Office.
- A [Second Review Officer](#) can be requested if the integrity of the process is in dispute.
- The employee has the option to give their performance assessment through a formal recourse process.

Contact a [HR Advisor](#) for guidance. Visit the [Performance Management](#) page for more information, including steps to take if the employee refuses to sign.

Complaints can be filed through a [grievance](#) or to Federal Public Sector Labour Relations and Employment Board. Complaints made to the [FPSREB](#) must be made within 15 days of being informed of the appointment or proposed appointment, lay-off, or revocation of appointment.

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at the individual level.

Performance-Rendement@ec.gc.ca



Staffing

Employees have different recourse mechanisms should they believe that an appointment or a proposed appointment may not have been based on merit or that an error, an omission or improper conduct may have affected the selection of the person appointed or proposed for appointment:

- [Staffing complaint at the Federal Public Sector Labour Relations](#)
- [Staffing Investigation at the Public Service Commission \(PSC\)](#)
- [SE-RES Independent Recourse Mechanism \(IRM\)](#)

Should any recourse be received by ECCC, the Corporate Staffing Solutions' team will communicate with you, as the manager, in order to guide you through the [FPSREB staffing complaint process](#), the [PSC's Investigations' process](#) and the [SE-RES IRM process](#).

Staffing@corporatestaffingsolutions.ec.gc.ca



Science Integrity Policy

The SIP sets out the ways in which ECCC employees are responsible for upholding integrity when designing, conducting, managing, reviewing, communicating, and using research or science. It is important that all employees adhere to the [principles of scientific integrity](#) outlined in the policy. For more information related to the [Science Integrity Policy \(SIP\)](#), visit the [SIP Intranet](#) page.

- [SIP_supervisors_EN_May2024.pdf](#)
- [Breach process](#)
- [ECCC SIP guide for reporting on policy conflicts or incompatibility](#)
- [ECCC Policy on Animal Care](#)

Although there is no limited time frame to report a SIP breach, employees are encouraged to report any alleged breach to ensure it is dealt with efficiently.

Potential outcome: Corrective measures at an individual and/or organizational level as required.

intranet@scienceintegrity.ec.gc.ca

Mental Health

Employees may want to consult the information, tools and resources to support mental health and workplace wellness. santementalementalhealth@ec.gc.ca.

Accessibility

Find information, tools and resources to create a barrier-free workplace for employees with disabilities. Contact the Single Window of services Accessibility at Work for triage of requests for accessibility and accommodation. AAT-AAW@ec.gc.ca.

Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) aims to improve the wellness of employees who are faced with personal or work-related problems. **1-800-268-7708**

Values and ethics

For guidance on values-based leadership and managing employee conflicts of interest and/or political activities, seconfil@ec.gc.ca.

Diversity & Inclusion/ Employment Equity

Managers play a key role in ensuring the workplace is inclusive. For more information, consult this [overview](#).

Security

If you suspect there may be a threat to the security of employees, assets or computer systems, contact the [Departmental Security Division](#) or the police. **819-918-8903**

Image description

This placemat outlines the different mechanisms and supports available for managers to address workplace issues.

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Harassment and Violence

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Whistleblowing

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Potential outcome: Corrective measures at the individual level.

Contact: performance-rendement@ec.gc.ca.

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Should any recourse be received by ECCC, the Corporate Staffing Solutions' team will communicate with you, as the manager, in order to guide you through the [FPSLREB staffing complaint process](#), the [PSC's Investigations' process](#) and the [SE-RES IRM process](#).

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Policy on Scientific Integrity

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- [Process to Address Allegations of Breach of Scientific Integrity](#)

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Potential outcome: Corrective measures at an individual and/or organizational level as required.

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Mental Health

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Contact: santementalementalhealth@ec.gc.ca.

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Accessibility

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By phone: 1-800-268-7708.

Values and Ethics

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Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

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