

Addressing misconduct and wrongdoing at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada: annual report 2024–2025



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Table of contents

- [Introduction](#)
- [Departmental context](#)
- [The difference between misconduct and wrongdoing](#)
- [Addressing misconduct and wrongdoing at AAFC](#)
- [Measures taken in founded cases of misconduct and wrongdoing](#)
 - [Harassment and violence cases](#)
 - [Harassment and violence cases resolution mechanisms](#)
 - [Harassment and violence formal investigation outcomes](#)
- [Disciplinary measures and cases](#)
 - [Disciplinary measures](#)
 - [Disciplinary cases](#)
- [Office of the Ombuds](#)
- [Science integrity](#)
- [External investigations](#)
 - [Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner](#)
 - [Canadian Human Rights Commission](#)
 - [Public Service Commission](#)
- [Conclusion](#)
 - [About the numbers](#)
- [Annex A – Definitions](#)
- [Annex B – AAFC employee resources for addressing misconduct and wrongdoing](#)

Introduction

This annual report aims to increase transparency on how misconduct and wrongdoing are addressed at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC). Now in its second edition, this report takes a more in-depth look at not only labour relations and harassment statistics but also broader organizational trends and themes across areas such as science ethics, security and other key aspects of workplace integrity.

Beyond presenting a summary of misconduct and wrongdoing cases deemed founded in the department over the 2024 to 2025 fiscal year (which runs from April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025), this report also provides details on how these issues were addressed, and the mechanisms, both informal and formal, available to employees to report ethical issues in the workplace.

Departmental context

AAFC is a vital organization with over 6,000 employees working across Canada, in regional offices, research centres and national headquarters, supporting the nation's agriculture and agri-food sector. The department provides services, research and policy development to foster a sustainable and innovative agricultural industry. AAFC collaborates with stakeholders, including farmers, processors, exporters, and provincial and territorial governments to address challenges and seize opportunities in the sector. As stewards of food security and sustainability, AAFC employees are key contributors to ensuring Canadian agriculture remains competitive and resilient in the global marketplace.

As a Department committed to excellence, AAFC promotes a culture of collaboration, innovation and accountability. Whether conducting groundbreaking research, supporting programs for producers or developing policies to support and improve the industry, all employees and managers play a crucial role in fostering a workplace that is physically and psychologically safe, healthy, respectful, inclusive and free from harassment and discrimination.

AAFC's Values and Ethics Code outlines clear expectations for integrity, stewardship, excellence and respect for people and democracy. As a condition of employment, AAFC employees are required to abide by the ethical standards outlined in AAFC's Code in their day-to-day responsibilities.

To maintain the highest standards of ethical behaviour in the workplace, employees are encouraged to report any misconduct or wrongdoing without fear of reprisal, confident that their concerns will be treated seriously.

The difference between misconduct and wrongdoing

Misconduct is defined as any action whereby an individual willfully contravenes an act, a regulation, a rule, a departmental or policy instrument, an approved procedure, a departmental code of conduct, a reasonable and lawful management request, and/or the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector. In short, it is when an employee contravenes any of the obligations, they agree to abide by when becoming an employee of the department.

Wrongdoing is strictly used to describe incidents addressed under the [Public Servant Disclosure Protection Act](#) (PSDPA). As per the PSDPA, wrongdoing is defined 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 the PSDPA
- b. a [misuse of public funds or a public asset \(PDF\)](#)
- c. [a gross mismanagement in the public sector \(PDF\)](#)
- 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 \(PDF\)](#) established under section 5 or 6 of the PSDPA
- f. knowingly directing or counselling a person to commit a wrongdoing set out in any of paragraphs (a) to (e)

Descriptions of specific categories of misconduct and wrongdoing are provided throughout the report.

Addressing misconduct and wrongdoing at AAFC

All AAFC employees should feel safe reporting any situation where they feel there may be misconduct or wrongdoing, without fear of reprisal. Several recourse processes are available to employees facing real or apparent misconduct or wrongdoing. More information on these processes is provided in Annex B, including details on available mechanisms and contact information.

To navigate the process and manage issues, managers always remain available as a first point of contact. Employees can also contact the [Human Resources Branch](#) or the Office of the Ombuds at AAFC.Ombuds.AAC@agr.gc.ca for informal services and assistance, or to navigate the various recourse options available to them.

AAFC addresses all suspected cases of misconduct and wrongdoing by following the guidance provided by policies and guidelines of the department and the Government of Canada. 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 that there is procedural fairness for all. This includes those who are under investigation as well as those who have initiated a formal process.

For all cases of potential misconduct, an investigative process is launched.

For cases of wrongdoing, when a disclosure is received, an admissibility analysis is undertaken, based on a number of criteria "to determine whether the disclosure meets the requirements contained in the Act." Investigations are conducted as informally and expeditiously as possible, with appropriate rigour throughout the process. [Procedures for the disclosures under the PSDPA](#) are available on AgriSource.

While all complaints and allegations are received and assessed to ensure they are addressed appropriately, not all allegations are subject to a formal investigation process. In some cases, the complaint or allegation may not be substantiated, or informal recourse mechanisms may be more appropriate. Either way, management plays a crucial role in maintaining a healthy work environment and services are available for all parties involved. AAFC's Workplace Wellness team provides various independent and confidential services, including the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and Informal Conflict Management Services (ICMS), to support employees and to help to restore the work environment. Additionally, the Labour Relations Centre of Expertise and Values and Ethics Policy Centre can support managers to promote and reinforce the importance of ethical conduct in the workplace and address inappropriate behaviours.

Measures taken in founded cases of misconduct and wrongdoing

After reviewing the available facts and applying the standard of proof for administrative investigations (which is the balance of probability), an allegation of misconduct or wrongdoing is determined to be unfounded or founded. As an employer, AAFC is dedicated to taking appropriate disciplinary or administrative measures when misconduct or wrongdoing is determined to be founded. In some instances, a situation may warrant the application of both disciplinary and administrative measures.

Disciplinary measures are formal corrective measures that seek to correct behaviours and are generally progressive, increasing in severity with successive acts of misconduct. To determine the appropriate measure, the manager must consider all aggravating and mitigating factors. In some cases, the misconduct may be sufficiently serious to warrant severe action even on a first offence. Disciplinary measures range from oral reprimand, written reprimand, suspension (without pay), financial penalty, temporary demotion, up to termination of employment. Individuals who have been subject to discipline can file a grievance.

Administrative measures are measures that may be taken to make the necessary adjustments to a situation. Some situations may require the application of one or several administrative measures. In some instances, it may be determined that an administrative measure is sufficient to address the situation.

Administrative measures may include placing an employee on administrative leave without pay, temporarily removing human resources and/or financial delegation, or other measures as appropriate and depending on the situation.

Administrative measures can also be used to provide tools to the employee with a view to ensuring the misconduct does not happen again. For example, providing a letter of expectations, developing an action plan for them to change their behaviour, providing training or coaching, or scheduling regular meetings with management.

Harassment and violence cases

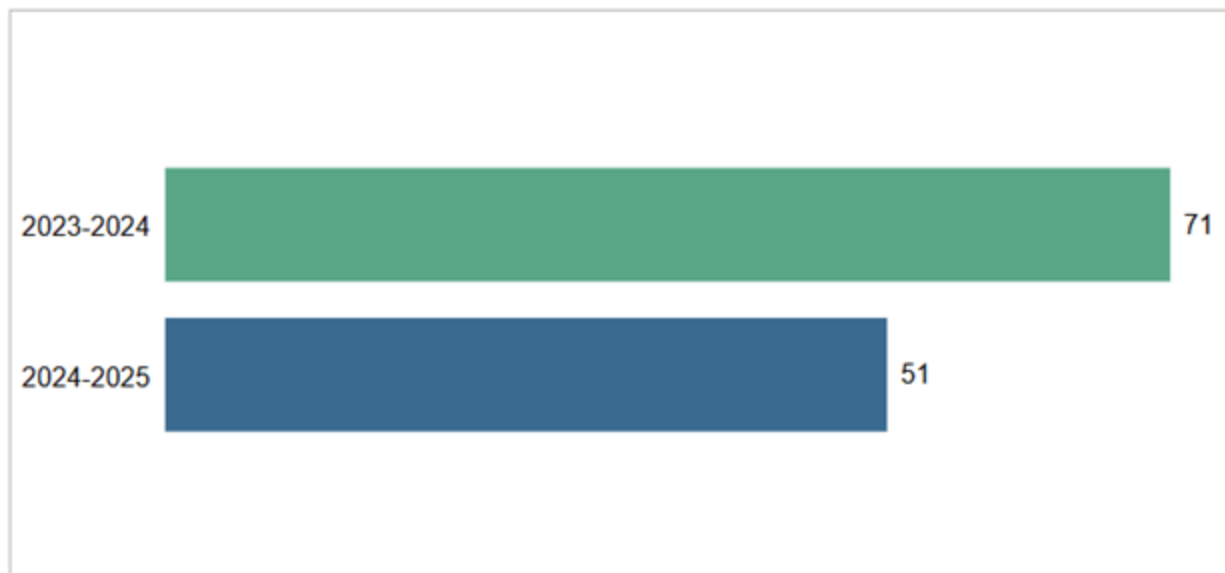
The *Canada Labour Code* defines harassment and violence as “any action, conduct or comment, including of a sexual nature, that can reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or other physical or psychological injury or illness to an employee, including any prescribed action, conduct or

comment.” This includes all types of harassment and violence, such as sexual harassment, physical violence and domestic violence, and can be a series of events or one single severe event.

The Harassment and Violence in the Workplace Prevention Program (HVWPP) focuses on preventing and resolving harassment and violence at AAFC, providing impartial information, options and guidance to support parties through the resolution process.

During the 2024 to 2025 fiscal year, AAFC managed 51 harassment and violence cases, which include both notices of occurrence and inquiries.

Harassment and violence cases from April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2025



Examples of workplace harassment and violence

- Sending or requesting inappropriate electronic communications
- Intentionally damaging, hiding or stealing someone’s belongings or equipment
- Making derogatory remarks about someone’s gender identity or sexual orientation
- Spreading malicious rumours or gossip about an individual or a group
- Intentionally socially excluding or isolating someone
- Criticizing, undermining, belittling or ridiculing someone
- Publicly ridiculing or disciplining a subordinate
- Interfering with a subordinate’s performance or promotion in an arbitrary manner

Harassment and violence cases resolution mechanisms

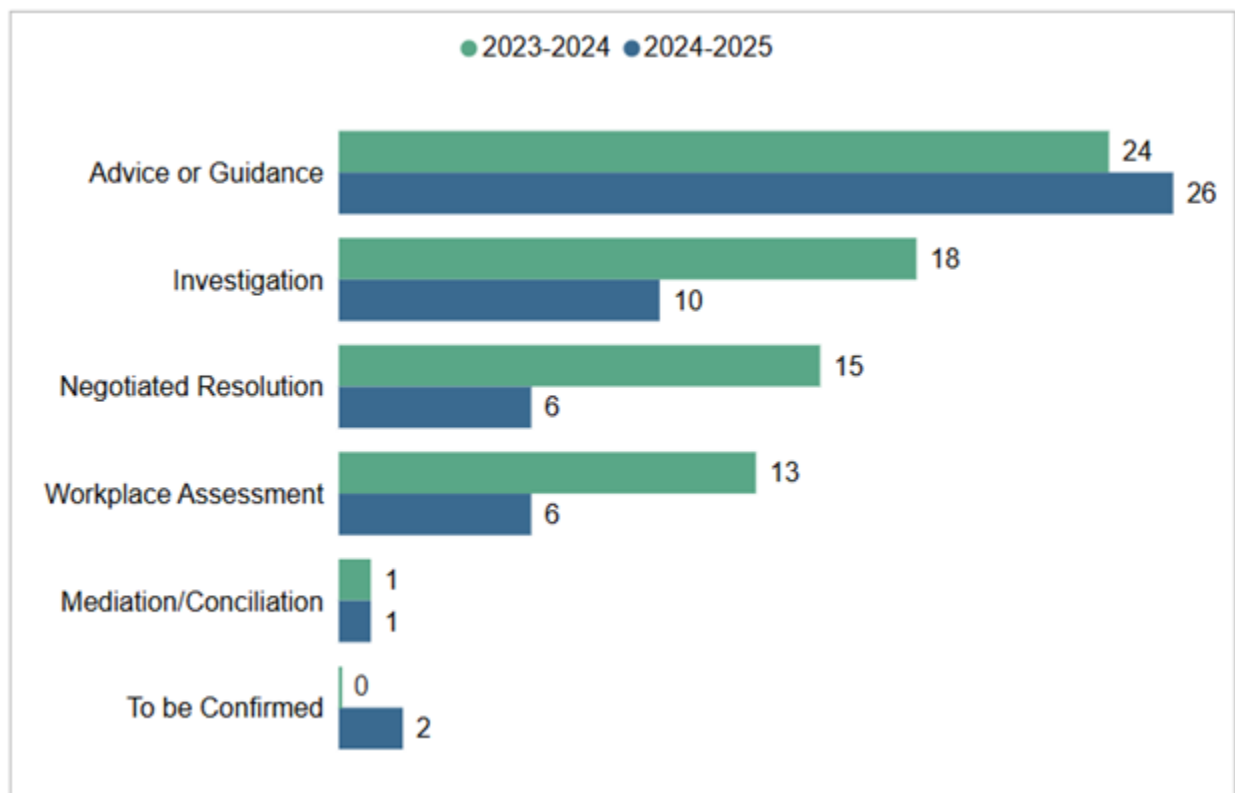
When an inquiry or notice of occurrence is received, the employer has an obligation to address it with guidance from the HVWPP, who is responsible for coordinating the harassment and violence resolution process.

The following chart provides statistical information on harassment and violence cases resolution mechanisms for fiscal year 2024 to 2025, compared to fiscal year 2023 to 2024. Data reflects cases opened in the specified fiscal year.

During the 2024-2025 fiscal year, AAFC managed 51 harassment and violence cases:

- 26 resolved through advice or guidance
- 10 resolved through an investigation
- 6 resolved through a negotiated resolution
- 6 resolved through a workplace assessment
- 1 resolved through mediation or conciliation
- 2 cases to be confirmed

Harassment and violence cases



Resolution mechanisms

- **Investigation:** Investigations are confidential and conducted by qualified impartial third-party investigators. Investigation reports put forth conclusions and recommendations to eliminate or minimize the risk of harassment and violence occurrences in the future
- **Negotiated resolution:** Confidential process undertaken to reach a mutually beneficial resolution between 2 or more parties involved in a conflict or disagreement through discussion, deliberation and compromise to resolve differences
- **Workplace assessment:** The Occupational Health and Safety Committee and management jointly identify workplace harassment and violence risk factors and root causes of conflict, develop an action plan to prevent future occurrences and restore the workplace
- **Advice or guidance:** Discussions between the HVWPP and the principal party to determine whether allegations meet the definition of harassment and violence and explore options that could resolve the issue before an official notice of occurrence is submitted
- **Mediation or conciliation:** Impartial third-party assistance in reaching a voluntary and confidential agreement or settlement between conflicting parties

Harassment and violence formal investigation outcomes

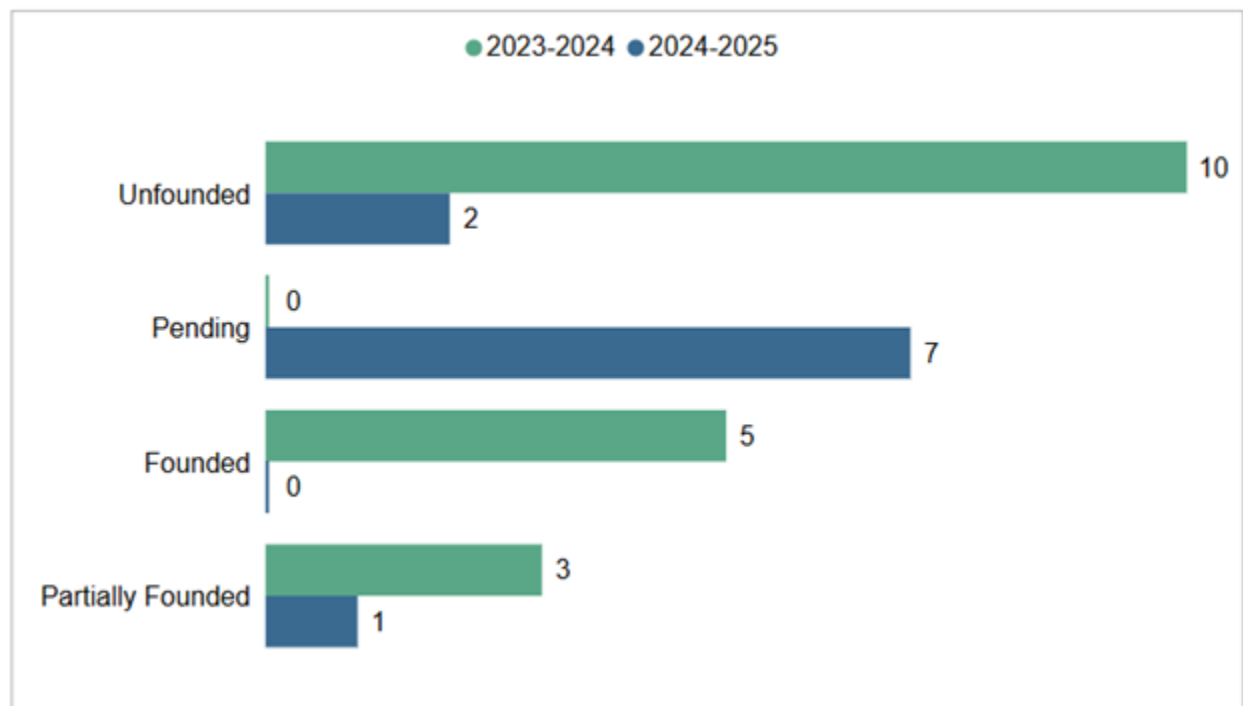
If the principal party (complainant) chooses to proceed with an investigation, AAFC must provide the responding party (respondent) with notice that an investigation will be carried out. The HVWPP supports parties throughout the process, ensuring procedural fairness and compliance with the Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations and the Canada Labour Code. The HVWPP will select an investigator from a pre-established list of qualified individuals, taking into consideration the nature of the allegations and the needs of the parties.

The following chart provides statistical information on the number of harassment and violence investigations and their outcomes for fiscal year 2024-2025 compared to fiscal year 2023-2024. Data reflects cases opened in the specified fiscal year.

During the 2024-2025 fiscal year, AAFC coordinated 10 harassment and violence in the workplace investigations:

- 2 unfounded cases
- 7 pending cases
- 0 founded cases
- 1 partially founded case

Harassment and violence in the workplace investigations



Possible investigation outcomes

- **Unfounded:** Insufficient supporting evidence to determine that harassment and violence did occur, or allegations do not meet the definition of harassment and violence as defined in the Canada Labour Code
- **Pending:** Awaiting final investigative report
- **Founded:** Investigator finds that on the balance of probabilities, the allegations put forth by a principal party constitute harassment and violence as defined in the *Canada Labour Code*
- **Partially founded:** Investigation concludes that some, but not all, allegations did constitute harassment and violence in the workplace

Disciplinary measures and cases

Disciplinary measures

Disciplinary measures within the federal public service are intended to be corrective rather than punitive. They are applied to address behaviours that violate policies or standards of conduct and are intended to assist employees in correcting their behaviours to meet the high standards required to deliver on AAFC's mandate.

Common disciplinary measures include:

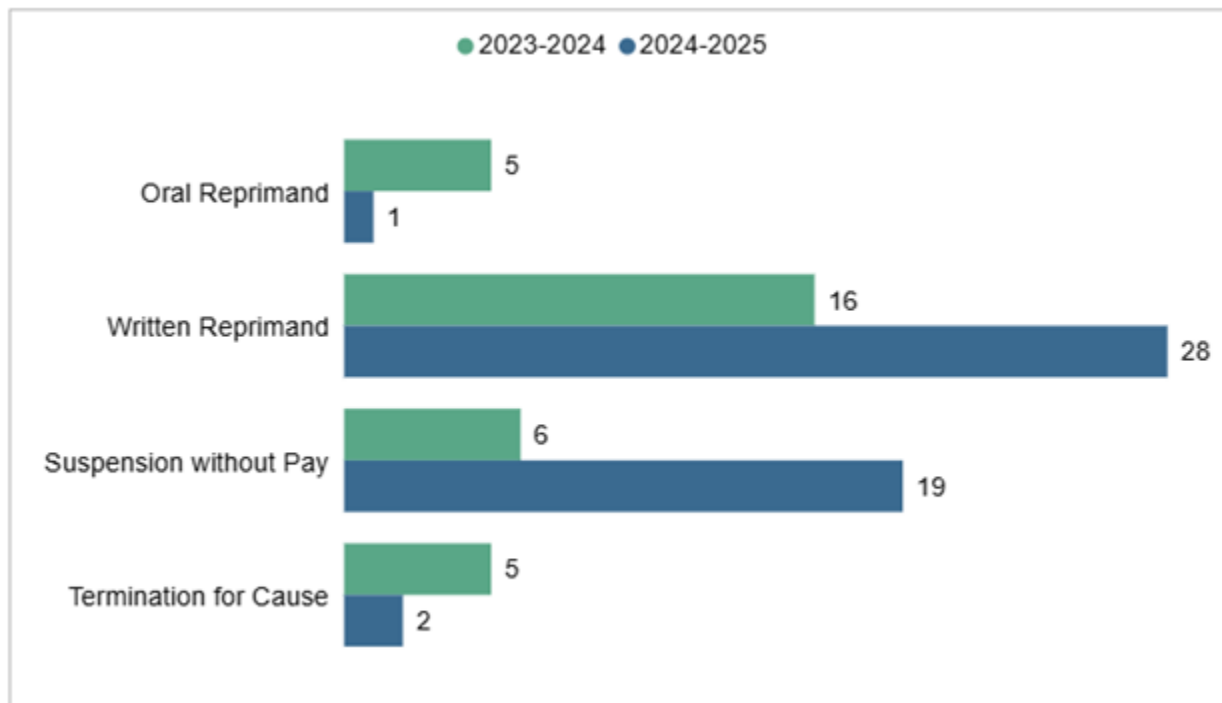
- **oral reprimand** — a formal verbal measure outlining the nature of the misconduct
- **written reprimand** — formal written notice outlining the nature of the misconduct
- **suspension** — temporary removal from duties without pay as a consequence of misconduct; duration varies based on severity
- **termination** — dismissal for serious or repeated violations

The following chart provides statistics on the disciplinary measures implemented during fiscal year 2024-2025 compared to fiscal year 2023-2024.

During the 2024-2025 fiscal year, AAFC implemented 50 disciplinary measures in relation to the disciplinary cases noted below, including:

- 1 oral reprimand
- 28 written reprimands
- 19 suspensions without pay
- 2 terminations for cause

Disciplinary measures



Disciplinary cases

In matters involving values and ethics violations, delegated managers are responsible for conducting thorough investigations with support from AAFC's Labour Relations Centre of Expertise. Upon reviewing

investigation outcomes with Labour Relations, managers are responsible for implementing appropriate corrective measures (as necessary) based on the nature and severity of the misconduct.

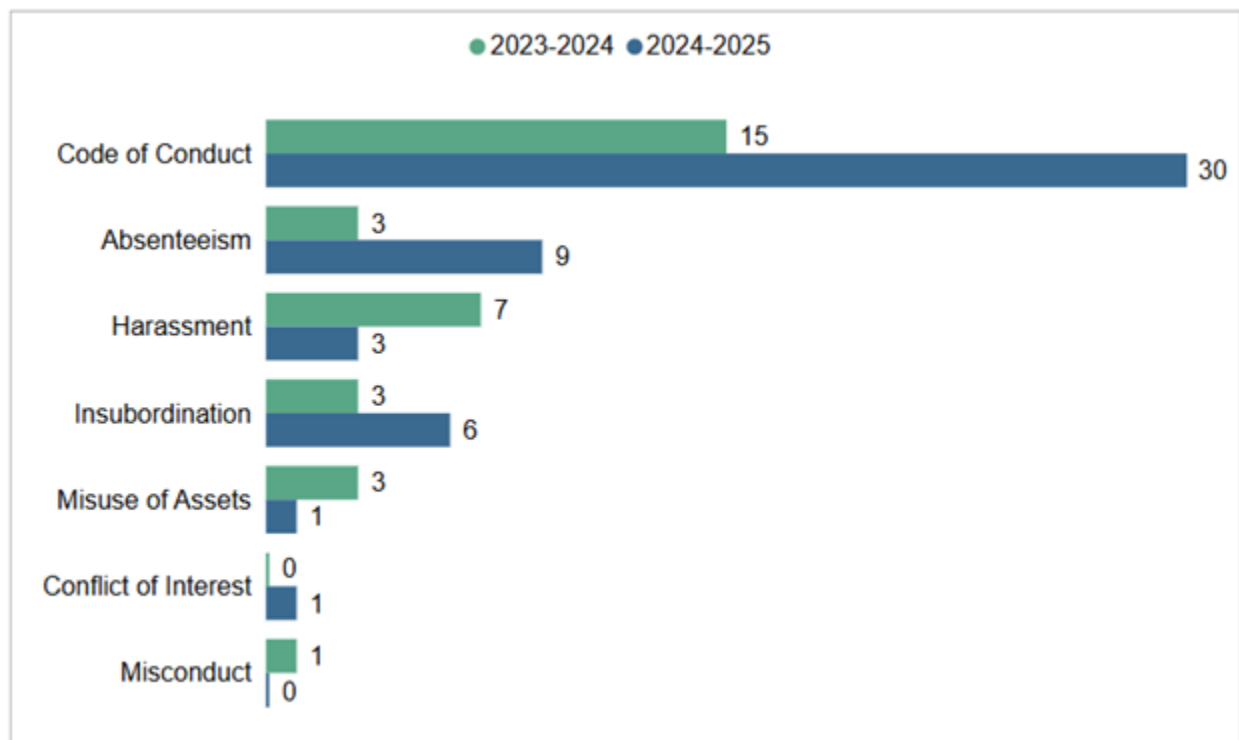
When it is determined that disciplinary action is necessary, the measures implemented are not intended to be punitive. They should be used as a means to address and correct behaviour or actions that are not in alignment with policies or standards of conduct.

The following chart provides statistics on the type of disciplinary cases identified by AAFC during fiscal year 2024-2025 compared to fiscal year 2023-2024.

During the 2024-2025 fiscal year, AAFC identified 50 disciplinary cases:

- 30 related to the code of conduct
- 9 related to absenteeism
- 3 related to harassment
- 6 related to insubordination
- 1 related to misuse of assets
- 1 related to conflict of interest

Types of disciplinary cases



Several disciplinary cases identified were related to violations of AAFC's Values and Ethics Code, particularly the values of Respect for People, Stewardship and Integrity. The following sections outline misconduct grouped by these core values.¹

Respect for people

This value emphasizes treating all people with respect, dignity and fairness which contributes to an accessible, physically and psychologically safe and healthy work environment that promotes equity, inclusion, engagement, openness and transparency. Recognizing and valuing the diversity of ideas, perspectives, lived experiences and people — including gender identity, sexual orientation, ancestry, origins and ability — is fundamental to the department's work. Breaches in this category included inappropriate and aggressive remarks and communication.

- Oral and written reprimands were issued for making inappropriate or disrespectful comments during meetings, including aggressive language and disparaging remarks about managers and colleagues.
- Written reprimands were issued in cases where employees refused to complete required training, breached communication protocols, or addressed supervisors in a disrespectful manner.
- Suspensions were imposed in more serious cases, including sexually inappropriate remarks, discriminatory comments related to age or gender, threatening messages and the submission of vexatious harassment complaints.

Stewardship

Public servants are responsible for the proper stewardship of departmental resources, including time, resources and assets. Employees are expected to comply with financial policies, meet work obligations, and respect directives. Breaches in this category included misuse of acquisition cards, unauthorized research activities, and repeated or unexplained absences that disrupted operations and team productivity.

- Oral reprimands and suspensions were issued for instances of contract splitting and attempts to circumvent purchasing limits, in violation of the *Financial Administration Act* and Acquisition Card Policy
- Reprimands and/or suspensions were rendered in the following situations:
- Failing to procure critical equipment in a timely manner
- Failure to comply with management direction
- Inappropriate use of AAFC email system in relation to outside activities

¹ The following information contains summaries of situations as well as the disciplinary measures imposed following the investigative process. In order to maintain confidentiality, case-specific details — sometimes crucial in determining the severity of the measure — may have been omitted. As a result, the reader may find it difficult to understand why a particular measure was applied for each of the situations described.

- Inappropriate use of AAFC network to view non-work related websites/videos
- Failure to obtain management approval or provide appropriate notice of workplace absences or extended leave
- The conduct of research using AAFC equipment and resources without obtaining appropriate approvals
- Situations related to unauthorized absence

Integrity and conflict of interest

Employees must maintain the highest standards of integrity in all activities and avoid real or perceived conflicts of interest. Breaches in this category involved unauthorized engagement with foreign entities and the misuse of assets/resources. In these cases, AAFC's Departmental and Intelligence Services worked with Labour Relations and managers to investigate and review the cases and determine and implement the appropriate disciplinary measures.

- A suspension was issued when an employee personally benefitted from entering into agreements with a foreign entity through the department without proper approvals
- A termination of employment was issued when it was determined that signing of contracts with a foreign entity occurred without management's knowledge or approval

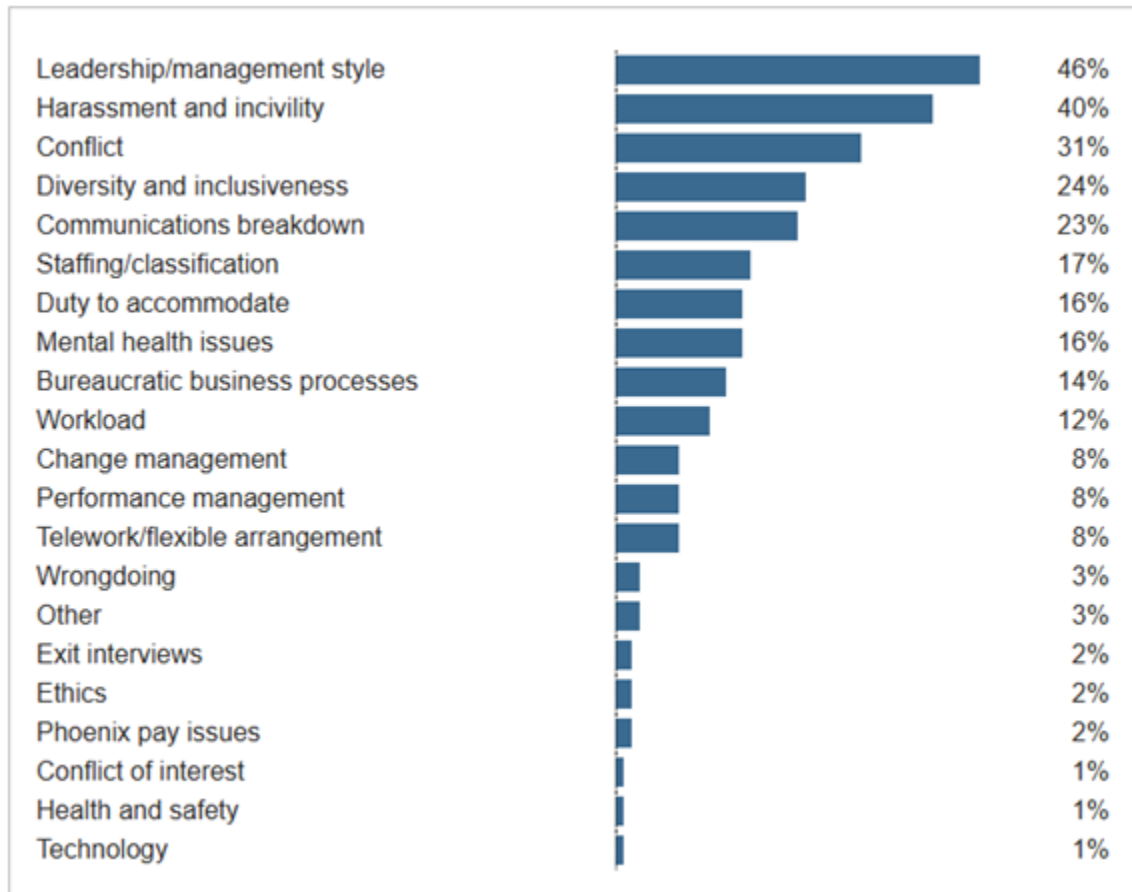
Office of the Ombuds

The Ombuds Office serves as a confidential and impartial resource where employees can bring forward workplace concerns and explore informal resolution options. This section summarizes the activities for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, based on voluntary employee outreach.

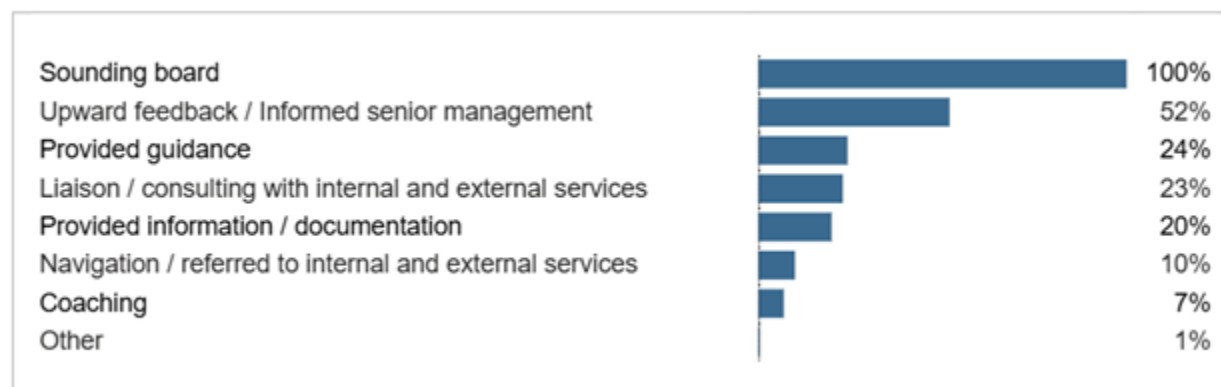
The data is presented under the table titled **Issues raised** captures the nature of concerns brought to the Office of the Ombuds and includes many employees raising more than 1 issue. The data presented under the table titled **Ombuds interventions** outlines the types of support or actions provided in response. The issues raised often require more than 1 intervention.

While not all concerns raised involved misconduct, the information provides valuable insight into emerging themes and areas where further attention or preventive efforts may be beneficial.

Issues raised



Ombuds' interventions



Science integrity

AAFC's Science Integrity Policy (SIP) sets clear expectations for ethical and responsible conduct in science. It applies to all employees and affiliates involved in the design, conduct, management, review or communication of scientific activities. A breach of scientific integrity is defined as any behaviour that could reasonably be viewed as inconsistent with the principles outlined in Section 6 of the Policy such as

honesty, objectivity, transparency and accountability. Breaches may also involve non-AAFC individuals, for example, contractors, students, visiting scientists who use AAFC facilities or contribute to AAFC-led research.

The SIP is supported by the [Breach of Scientific Integrity Guidelines](#) which outlines definitions, examples and procedures for reporting, reviewing and resolving alleged breaches.

The Science Ethics Committee (SEC) supports the operational implementation of the SIP. It provides advice on ethical issues, reviews potential breaches, and promotes a culture of scientific integrity. The SEC operates under the [Science Ethics Policy Framework](#) (SEPF), which defines its responsibilities and outlines procedures for addressing ethical concerns and formal allegations of misconduct.

In partnership with the SEC, the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) serves as AAFC's informal research ethics board, reviewing all research protocols involving human participants or human-derived materials. HREC's work is guided by the [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans](#) (TCPS2).

In cases of alleged breaches, employees are encouraged to seek informal resolution through dialogue or mediation when appropriate. If a formal allegation is submitted, the SEC conducts a preliminary review in accordance with the SEPF and the SIP guidelines. Where a breach is confirmed, consequences are based on the nature and severity of the violation and may include corrective measures or disciplinary actions.

If an allegation falls outside the scope of the SIP, the SEC will refer the matter to the appropriate channels, for example, the Values and Ethics Policy Centre, the Office of the Ombud, or Human Resources Branch.

For the 2024-25 fiscal year, the SEC received 2 allegations, neither of which resulted in a breach upon investigation. The 2 allegations involved:

- publication of inaccurate information: Concerns were raised about factual errors in a published paper. The SEC determined the errors were deemed unintentional and not indicative of misconduct. The SEC worked with management to recommend an informal resolution, with corrections made through appropriate journal processes. While not a policy breach, improved coordination and local guidance were advised to prevent future issues.
- dispute over data use and authorship: A disagreement arose regarding the exclusion of research data from a publication and concerns about co-authorship entitlement. The situation was reviewed under AAFC's Science Ethics Policy Framework and applicable publication guidelines. It was concluded that the decisions made were appropriate and consistent with ethical and contractual obligations, and no breach was found.

External investigations

Other Canadian entities also undertake their own investigations of federal organizations as part of their mandate. This section provides information regarding the types of investigations these organizations undertake, as well as a summary of any investigations completed concerning the alleged misconduct and wrongdoing of AAFC employees or vendors.

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 2024-2025 fiscal year, 3 inquiries were received related to AAFC employees; however, none resulted in investigations, as they did not meet the threshold under the Act to proceed.

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 13 prohibited grounds of discrimination, which are:

- 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 [Canadian Human Rights Commission](#) for more information on their review process.

The Labour Relations Centre of Expertise is responsible for coordinating the departmental response to the CHRC complaints against AAFC. In fiscal year 2024-2025, the CHRC accepted 2 complaints against AAFC for review. No decision from the CHRT related to AAFC was issued in fiscal year 2024-2025.

Public Service Commission

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

The PSC initiated 2 investigations related to the integrity of AAFC's staffing system during the 2024-2025 fiscal year; both of which remain ongoing.

No political activity investigations were conducted by the PSC during the 2024-2025 fiscal year related to AAFC employees.

Conclusion

The Addressing Misconduct and Wrongdoing at AAFC: Second Annual Report marks another significant step in AAFC's ongoing commitment to fostering an ethical work environment that is transparent and accountable. It underscores the department's dedication to thoroughly investigating all allegations of misconduct or wrongdoing and taking appropriate action when required.

By outlining the resources, support services and recourse options available, the report seeks to empower employees to uphold AAFC's Values and Ethics Code in their daily work. This commitment contributes to a healthier, more respectful, inclusive, fair and trustworthy workplace.

All employees are encouraged to take advantage of the wide range of training available to support a respectful and ethical workplace. These include sessions focused on values and ethics, conflict of interest, appropriate workplace behaviours and ethical leadership, all designed to promote respect, integrity and excellence across the department. In addition, mandatory training ensures that all employees are aware of their responsibilities and equipped with the knowledge needed to uphold departmental values and standards.

Furthermore, employees who suspect or witness potential misconduct are encouraged to report it to their supervisor/manager without delay.

About the numbers

- Investigations are reflected in the statistics based on the year the case was opened
- The information in this report complies with the [Privacy Act](#)
- At the time of data collection, AAFC had approximately 6,440 employees

Annex A — Definitions

Investigation: the gathering and analysis of information related to an incident of alleged misconduct.

Conflict of interest: a situation, whether real, apparent or potential, in which the person employed has private interests that could influence the performance of their official duties and responsibilities or in which the person employed uses their office for personal gain.

Disciplinary process: a structured process following alleged misconduct intended to motivate the employee to accept and abide by the rules and standards of conduct that are desirable or necessary to achieve the organization's goals and objectives.

Discrimination: any action or decision that results in the unfair or negative treatment of a person under any of the 13 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 and conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or in respect of which a record suspension has been ordered.

Grievance: a written complaint that may be filed by an individual on their own behalf, by a bargaining agent representative on behalf of a group of individuals or, in the case of a policy grievance, by a bargaining agent or an employer.

Misconduct: any action whereby an individual willfully contravenes, notably, an act, a regulation, a rule, a departmental or Treasury Board policy instrument, an approved procedure, a departmental code of conduct, and/or the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector. 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 and tardiness.

Wrongdoing: the [Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act](#) (PSDPA) defines wrongdoing as one or more of the following:

- 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 the PSDPA;
- b. [a misuse of public funds or a public asset \(PDF\)](#);
- c. [a gross mismanagement in the public sector \(PDF\)](#);
- 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 \(PDF\)](#) established under section 5 or 6 of the PSDPA; and
- f. knowingly directing or counselling a person to commit a wrongdoing set out in any of paragraphs (a) to (e).

Annex B — AAFC employee resources for addressing misconduct and wrongdoing

All employees have the right, and the responsibility, to speak up when workplace issues occur.

Employees who have experienced, witnessed, or have been informed of an incident should: speak with:

- their manager if they feel comfortable doing so
- the Values and Ethics Policy Centre or the Office of the Ombuds as confidential safe spaces to raise concerns outside the formal reporting channels
- depending on the issue and the situation, contact Informal Conflict Management Services, a representative of one of AAFC's employee networks or speak to a union representative
- managers may contact their Labour Relations Advisor
- executive employees can also reach out to the Association of Professional Executives of the Public Service of Canada (APEX)

The following AAFC teams can help with the initiation of informal and formal mechanisms, including investigations into misconduct and wrongdoing. Contact points vary depending on the issue at stake:

- Values and Ethics Policy Centre: provides advice and guidance to employees and managers on values and ethics, conflict of interest and other ethical matters.
- Informal Conflict Management Services: provides AAFC employees and managers with options to help prevent, manage and resolve workplace conflict.
- Harassment and Violence in the Workplace Prevention Program: helps employees and managers navigate services and processes to address harassment and workplace violence.
- Labour Relations: provides managers with interpretation and advice on collective agreements, updates on collective bargaining negotiations, exclusion of managerial positions and guidance for managers regarding strike situations..
- Office of the Ombuds: provides employees with an independent, informal, confidential, and impartial space to address workplace issues.
- Science Ethics Committee: provides advice on ethical topics related to science, reviews and investigates allegations of ethical misconduct in scientific practices and non-compliance with established ethical guidelines.
- Human Research Ethics Committee: examines all experimental protocols involving human participants, provides recommendations and grants approval for the studies.
- AI Centre of Excellence: establishes standards, guidelines, and procedures for the responsible and ethical use of AI and reviews and approves AI digital initiatives from an ethical perspective throughout the initiative's lifecycle.

- Office for Internal Disclosure: provides a forum for all employees to report and disclose wrongdoing in the workplace and ensures that employees are treated fairly and with respect and are protected from reprisal.