

<b>Title</b>	<b>Zero Tolerance Policy</b>	CP-002
<b>Effective date</b>	June 14 <sup>th</sup> , 2019	
<b>Replaces</b>	New	
<b>Next review date</b>	June 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	

## 1 Purpose

The FPO must appropriately manage clients or others who exhibit aggressive, abusive, intimidating, threatening or violent behaviour when interacting with FPO staff. At no time are FPO employees expected to tolerate these types of behaviours.

## 2 Definitions

- a. "abusive behaviour" means behaviour that includes, but is not limited to, aggressive, threatening, intimidating, insulting, degrading, racist, sexist, hateful, obscene or violent language or action which can reasonably be expected to cause fear, distress, or anxiety in the person who is the target of the behaviour
- b. "interact" means any type of communication with FPO staff – in-person, phone, letter, email and website
- c. "individuals" means FPO clients as well as members of the public

## 3 Authority

Section 3.2 of the *Fair Practices Office Regulation*, Alta Reg 211/2018 provides authority for the Fair Practices Commissioner to establish any procedures that the Commissioner considers necessary.

## 4 Scope

This policy is applicable to all FPO employees.

This policy is applicable to any member of the public who interacts with any FPO employee.

This policy applies to discrete incidents of abusive behaviour, not to escalating or persistent behaviours.

## 5 Background / Rationale

Given the nature of the FPO's business operations, there is an ever-present possibility for emotions to run high.

Individuals may at times express themselves in a less than ideal manner. There may be profanity, insults and accusations. FPO staff have developed skills, and will continue to develop skills, that help them defuse such behaviour. It is anticipated that most individuals will eventually regain their composure and may even offer an apology.

There will, however, be times when an individual's behaviour is so egregious, and so surpasses the norms of acceptable social behaviour, that it crosses a line into abusive behaviour which will not be tolerated.

The response to such behaviour must be immediate and decisive and must be communicated quickly in a respectful, assertive and direct manner.

## 6 Steps for employees who are subject to abusive behaviour

Immediately notify your branch manager verbally.

Follow up as soon as practicable with an email to your branch manager outlining the incident in as much detail as possible including direct quotations. Do not include personal commentary or subjective opinions; stick to facts.

## 7 FPO Response to Abusive Behaviour

The branch manager will immediately notify the Executive Director verbally and by email.

Branch Manager and Executive Director will determine whether the behaviour meets the definition of abusive behaviour as defined in this policy.

If the behaviour does engage this policy, there will be a recommendation by the Branch Manager and Executive Director to the Commissioner for immediate and permanent refusal or discontinuance of all FPO services to the individual.

Branch Manager will prepare a brief memo and a breach of zero tolerance policy letter for the Commissioner's signature. The letter will include the right of review to the Alberta Ombudsman

The Commissioner will make the final determination as to whether the zero tolerance policy is engaged. If it is engaged, the Commissioner will sign the breach of zero tolerance policy letter. If not, the Commissioner will refer the matter back to the applicable branch for reference to the *Identification of Complex Clients and Response Guide*.

If the FPO has contact information for the individual, the letter will be sent to the individual the day of the incident if possible but in all cases within two business days.

If the FPO does not have contact information for the individual, the letter will be held by the Navigate the System branch until such time as the FPO does obtain contact information.

## 8 Disagreement with Commissioner's Decision

As the Commissioner's decision to refuse or discontinue a review is final, there is no right of review internal to the FPO. The complainant has the right to make a complaint to the Alberta Ombudsman in writing within 12 months of the decision, subject to the *Ombudsman Act*.

## 9 Follow Up

The branch manager will notify the Navigate the System manager of the zero tolerance breach and request the individual be flagged in CRM.

The Navigate the System manager will send out a template email to FPO-ALL notifying all staff of the breach and the refusal/discontinuance of services.

For WAAB or EAAB matters, the branch manager will place an unrestricted file note on the claim file in eCO under the category "Appeal" stating the WAAB is no longer representing the client - the reasons for not providing services will not be listed. This file note should be sent to the WCB claim owner and/or WCB supervisor if there is an active or postponed appeal on the claim. If there is an appeal filed with the Appeals Commission, the branch manager will notify the Appeals Commission via letter that WAAB no longer represents the individual.

If the individual attempts to contact the FPO in any manner, staff should not engage; voicemail, letters, faxes and emails should not be responded to; telephone calls should be terminated immediately with a brief explanation of the reason the call is being terminated.


Details about attempts to contact the FPO should be provided by the applicable branch manager to the Navigate the System manager who will document them in CRM.

The branch manager will discuss with the affected employee options available including the GoA employee assistance program.

## 10 Related Content

FPO Policy 4.1.10 - *Identification of Complex Clients and Response Guide*

## 11 Authorizing signature and date

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<b>Approved by</b>	Harold Robinson, Commissioner	
<b>Signature</b>		
<b>Date</b>	June 14, 2019	