



RESPECTFUL ENGAGEMENT & COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

Approved on: Feb 25, 2026

Introduction

At Coast Funds, we are committed to fostering respectful, inclusive, and accountable relationships with the First Nations we serve and all clients, partners, and stakeholders. This procedure outlines the steps external stakeholders can take to raise concerns—such as complaints about harassment, misconduct, or other inappropriate behavior by staff, leadership, or members of our Board of Directors, and the process our organization follows to address them.

We recognize that a meaningful commitment to respectful engagement includes creating safe and accessible channels for clients and stakeholders to speak up, and ensuring concerns are handled fairly, transparently, and without fear of retaliation.

This procedure complements Coast Funds' internal procedures for addressing internal grievances.

Scope

This document includes four components:

1. A respectful engagement procedure related to harassment or inappropriate behavior experienced by Coast Funds staff from clients.
2. A process to support clients that are dissatisfied with the outcome of a committee or board decision.
3. A complaint resolution procedure for external stakeholders to raise any concerns or complaints related to staff, leadership, or board conduct.
4. A complaint resolution procedure for external stakeholders to raise any concerns or complaints related to projects financially supported by Coast Funds.

This document applies to all external stakeholders, including clients, partner organizations, contractors, and others who interact with or are impacted by Coast Funds' work. Internal staff complaints are addressed through the Employee Guidebook.

Section 1 – Respectful Engagement

This procedure has been developed in accordance with the Coast Funds policy on anti-harassment contained in Coast Funds Employee Guidebook (the "Guidebook").

This procedure deals specifically with harassment of Coast Funds employees by external stakeholders.

Policy

Coast Funds is committed to providing a positive working environment that is free from all types of harassment. As such we operate a **zero-tolerance** policy towards harassment and any disregard for Coast Funds anti-harassment policy will not be tolerated.



Definitions

Harassment refers to any action, conduct, or comment which can reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation, intimidation, or other physical or psychological injury or illness to a team member. Such behaviour should reasonably be known as unacceptable and unwelcome. Harassment can also be personal.

Personal harassment is harassment not rooted in one of the above listed groups of characteristics. It includes objectionable conduct or comments, deliberate gestures, questions, representations or other behaviours directed towards a specific person or persons which are uninvited or unwelcome and ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. These behaviours serve no legitimate work purpose and have the effect of creating an intimidating, humiliating, hostile or poisoned work environment.

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination; it is any unwelcome conduct or comments of a sexual nature that may detrimentally affect the work environment or lead to adverse job-related consequences for the victim of the harassment.

Procedure if Employees are Harassed by Clients

- » In the event that a Coast Funds employee is subjected to harassment by an employee, official, or other representative of a Coast Funds client for any reason (including dissatisfaction with a Coast Funds application decision) the following steps are taken:
 - Immediately respectfully request the individual to stop the harassing behavior, explaining that while it is Coast Funds policy to provide support to Coast Funds clients that does not require staff to tolerate abusive or harassing behavior, and (if applicable) remind the individual of the correct procedure for making a complaint about a funding decision;
 - If the individual fails to stop immediately, explain to them that communication with that individual will cease until and unless they commit to refrain from harassing or abusive behavior;
 - If the behavior still does not cease, terminate the communication and report the incident immediately to the CEO;
 - If the harassment is of the CEO, he or she will report the incident immediately to the Chair of the PRC.
- » The CEO (or the Chair of PRC as the case may be) contacts the client to remind them of this policy and the correct procedure for complaints about funding decisions, and requests that the individual concerned refrain from further harassment of Coast Funds staff.
- » Employees are not required to communicate directly with any individual who does not commit to refraining from further harassing or abusive behavior.

Section 2 – Process If Clients are Dissatisfied by PRC or Board Decision

- » On occasion Coast Funds clients may feel dissatisfied with decisions made by the PRC or board, or with the application process.
- » If clients feel that a decision has been made in error or otherwise not in accordance with Coast Funds governing documents, policies, or procedures, they will be encouraged to set out the reasons for their dissatisfaction in a letter to Coast Funds staff.
- » Staff will respond in writing to the letter as soon as possible.
- » If Staff consider the issue should be brought to the PRC or board for further consideration before responding, they endeavor to do so promptly and let the client know that the matter is under further consideration and a response will be provided as soon as possible.
- » This procedure will be communicated to Coast Funds clients when acknowledging receipt of applications and again when the outcomes of application decisions are communicated to them.



Awareness of Procedure

- » Coast Funds clients are made aware of and reminded as appropriate on a regular basis about this policy and the correct procedure for making complaints about funding decisions

Section 3 – Complaint Resolution Procedure

Submitting a Complaint

- » Complaints can be submitted through:
 - Email: complaint@coastfunds.ca (monitored by the board’s executive administrator)
 - In Person or via Phone: by contacting the appropriate organizational representative (see below)

Submissions should include the complainant’s name and contact details (anonymous complaints are accepted but may limit our ability to respond), a detailed description of the issue, and the desired outcome.

Points of Contact Based on Reporting Party

Reporting Party	Point of Contact
Staff Member	Staff’s direct manager, or Executive Team (CEO and/or CFO)
CEO	Board Chair
Board Director (excluding Chair)	Board Chair and CEO
Board Chair	Board Treasurer and CEO

Procedure for Addressing Complaints

- » **Acknowledgement:** Complaints are acknowledged within 5 business days.
- » **Preliminary Review:** Conducted within 10 business days to determine scope and necessary actions.
- » **Investigation:** If required, an investigation is initiated, which may involve interviews, document reviews, or external review.
- » **Decision and Resolution:** A formal response is provided within 30 business days. Extensions are communicated.
- » **Appeals:** Dissatisfied complainants may appeal within 10 business days. Appeals are reviewed within 20 business days.

Documentation and Record-Keeping

All complaints and their resolutions will be securely documented. Access is limited to personnel involved in resolving the complaint. Non-identifiable data may be used for reporting or learning.

Monitoring and Review

This procedure will be reviewed annually to ensure effectiveness and alignment with best practices.