

ANNUAL REPORT

Equity, Diversity and Human Rights Office

For the period: May 1, 2024, to April 30, 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Annual Report is provided in accordance with Laurentian University's *Policy and Program on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment*, *Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence*, *Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities*, and related legislation. The report provides details as to the number, type, and disposition of matters brought forward to the Equity, Diversity and Human Rights Office (EDHRO) as well as education, training and other initiatives completed by the EDHRO during the fiscal year.

A copy of this report is available to the members of the Laurentian University community by contacting the EDHRO or on the EDHRO's website at <https://laurentian.ca/services/equity-diversity-human-rights>

The EDHRO received 429 case contacts during the 2024-2025 reporting year, across all University constituency groups, reaffirming its role as an integral, highly-relied-upon resource for the entire Laurentian University community.

The EDHRO was also able to expand its training, awareness and education mandate during this reporting period, with a focus on targeted, preventative training, as well as several comprehensive campaigns to increase community engagement.

MANDATE

The mandate of the EDHRO is to lead the Laurentian University community in fostering an inclusive and respectful learning and working environment for all students, staff and faculty by providing expertise, guidance and counsel to members of the University community in order to ensure compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA), the anti-harassment sections of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1990* (OHSA), the *Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990* (Code), the *Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act (Supporting Survivors and Challenging Sexual Violence and Harassment)* (Bill 132), the *Strengthening Post-Secondary Institutions and Students Act, 2022* (Bill 26), the *Strengthening Accountability and Student Supports Act, 2024* (Bill 166), as well as Laurentian University's *Policy and Program on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment*, *Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence*, *Policy on Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*, the *Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities*, and any other related policies.

The key functions of the EDHRO during the 2024-2025 fiscal year included:

- 1) Assisting individuals with complaints of harassment, bullying, discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence and student rights and responsibilities to understand the range of options available for responding, and help them to pursue a resolution;
- 2) Providing information and training to the community to increase awareness about the importance of promoting a respectful workplace and learning environment;
- 3) Providing information and training to the community to increase awareness about human rights, student rights and responsibilities and sexual violence response and prevention.
- 4) Administering the Policy and Program on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment, the Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence, Policy on Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities.
- 5) Providing policy and procedural guidance to members of the Laurentian University community.

RESOLUTION SERVICES

A function of the EDHRO is to receive and provide guidance on concerns/complaints of discrimination, harassment/bullying, sexual harassment, sexual violence, accessibility and non-academic behaviour of students and assist individuals in understanding the range of options available for responding, and help pursue a resolution.

Not only does the resolution function minimize the potential for the externalization of complaints, the service also informs, in part, the EDHRO's education agenda. In turn, the abilities of the EDHRO staff to address areas of vulnerability across the institution based on the evidence from case services reduces the potential for unmanaged conflict.

Case Contacts

A case contact is an individual or unit who brings forward a complaint, consultation or enquiry to the EDHRO. In this context, the case contact does not need to have made a complaint to be named as such. "Case contact" is simply the term used for the individual, or group of individuals/unit who initially makes contact with the EDHRO, which includes contact for the purpose of an enquiry, consultation, or complaint.

Each case contact with the EDHRO can be broken down into the following three (3) categories:

- (1) **Complaint:** a written complaint received by the EDHRO by an individual who believes that they have been subjected to behaviour that may breach one of the policies under the EDHRO mandate. Note that

once the EDHRO receives a Written “Case Resolution Request Form”, the case is categorized as a complaint. A consultation with respect to concerns about an individual and/or unit may also result in the triggering of a University-led alternative dispute resolution and/or investigation process under the policies and thereafter be categorized as a complaint. Complaints may be addressed both through formal and informal resolution processes;

(2) **Consultation:** guidance and/or direction provided by the EDHRO on concerns, questions or potential complaints. Consultations may include (but are not limited to) requests for assistance or clarification from members of the Laurentian University community, including academic or administrative leaders (i.e. those with the authority or responsibility to address concerns), requests for information and/or assistance by third parties (i.e. friends, co-workers seeking assistance to support others), or the provision of information with appropriate guidance. Typically, this would entail a longer interaction or more than one meeting to address questions or a possible concern relating to a matter falling under the EDHRO mandate. Some consultation services may also require follow up with other individuals or administrative or academic units, and in certain appropriate cases, involve the employment of various early conflict resolution practices. Consultations also include the provision of support and accommodations to individuals under EDHRO’s policies, including survivors under the Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence as a follow up to a report of sexual violence;

(3) **Enquiry:** a basic clarification, reference or provision of information.

Case Contacts and Trends: Policy vs. General Contacts

The EDHRO recorded **429 total contacts** for the 2024-2025 period, reflecting a continued high level of service utilization.

Category of Contact	2024-2025 Result	% of Total Contacts
I. Policy-Based Contacts (RWLE, PRPSV, CSRR)	313	72%
II. General/Non-Policy Contacts (AODA, EDI, EDHRO General, Non-Mandate)	116	28%
TOTAL EDHRO CONTACTS	429	100%

Breakdown by Policy and Case Type

Policy / Case Type	Total Case Contacts (2024-2025)	Enquiries	Consultations	Complaints
Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment (RWLE)	177	17	143	17
Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (CSRR)	108	5	58	45
Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence (PRPSV)	28	1	21	6
Total Policy Contacts	313	23	222	68

Breakdown by General Category

General Contact Category	2024-2025 Count
Non-Mandate - Case contacts that are categorized as non-mandate are those that do not fall under one of the Policies administered by the EDHRO, or within the general mandate of the Office. In such cases, the EDHRO will assist the individual in connecting with the appropriate university official and/or department which is able to address the circumstances, and/or assist with connecting with other resources including community partners.	64

EDHRO General – Case contacts requesting general assistance, information and/or collaboration with respect to the EDHRO’s broader mandate, that includes multiple policies/subjects or is not specific to one particular policy.	34
EDI – Case contacts requesting information or collaboration relating to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) initiatives/questions	18
AODA/Accessibility General – Case contacts requesting information or collaboration relating to the AODA or providing feedback	5
Total General Contacts	116

Case Contacts by OHRC Protected Ground

The contacts categorized as human rights-related matters under the RWLE Policy break down as follows, confirming the primary grounds driving human rights-related contacts to the EDHRO, reflective of trends in the greater community/province:

Protected Ground	Number of Contacts	Percentage of Total (N=111)
Disability (including Accommodation)	41	36.94%
Race/Ancestry/Colour/Place of Origin/Ethnic Origin	33	29.73%
Gender expression/identity	10	9.01%
Family Status	9	8.11%
Sex	8	7.21%
Creed	5	4.50%
Sexual Orientation	4	3.60%

Comparison Statistics: 2022-2025

Policy	Case Contact Type	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
RWLE	Complaints	29	21	17
	Consultations	139	137	143
	Enquiries	7	14	17
PRPSV	Complaints	2	7	6
	Consultations	30	21	21
	Enquiries	4	10	1
CSRR	Complaints	34	23	45
	Consultations	55	54	58
	Enquiries	4	10	5
TOTAL Policy Contacts		304	291	313
TOTAL General Contacts		155	158	116
TOTAL CONTACTS		459	449	429

Case Contact Composition (Constituency Groups)

The total number of contacts (429) is broken down by constituency group below. Constituency groups are defined as follows:

- (1) **Faculty:** this group includes all members of the Laurentian University Faculty Association (LUFA) as well as department Chairs/Directors (who are members of LUFA);
- (2) **Faculty Unit/Department:** this group includes cases brought forward on behalf of a faculty unit or department as a whole and not by any one individual.
- (3) **Employees:** this includes all employees other than Faculty. Included are members of the Laurentian University Staff Union (LUSU), graduate teaching assistants represented by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), and members of the Laurentian University Administrative and Professional Staff (LUAPS) who do not fall into the leadership group

personnel category listed below, as well as all other employees who do not belong to a union or association;

- (4) **Staff Unit:** this group includes cases brought forward on behalf of a staff unit or department as a whole and not by any one individual.
- (5) **Students:** this group includes all students at Laurentian University.
- (6) **Leadership group personnel:** this category includes all leadership personnel including Executive Team members, Associate Vice-Presidents, Deans and Directors. It does not include Chairs of departments as they are included as members of Faculty, as noted above.
- (7) Other: Included in this category are case contacts who are not a member of the Laurentian University community. This group may also include Laurentian University addressing a complaint as an institution.

Constituency Group	Number of Contacts	% of Total Contacts
Student	215	50.12%
Employee	93	21.68%
Staff Unit	24	16.8%
Faculty	36	8.9%
Faculty Unit	6	1.40%
Leadership Personnel	47	10.96%
Other (e.g., Alumni, Visitor, Public)	8	1.86%
TOTAL	429	100.00%

Resolution of Complaints

The following summarizes the manner of disposition of complaints made to the EDHRO of those complaints that were resolved during the 2024-2025 reporting year under the *Policy on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment (RWLE)*, *Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence (PRPSV)* and the *Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (CSRR)*.

Resolution Type	RWLE (N=17)	PRPSV (N=6)	CSRR (N=45)
Formal Resolution (Investigation)	1		
Informal Resolution	4	4	22
Early Resolution	2		3
Referral	3		6
Abandoned/ Withdrawn	1		
No further action required	1		6
Carry Forward	5	2	8
TOTAL	17	6	45

* Please note that some of these complaints involved the clarification of information and once the clarification was made, the complaint was either withdrawn, or no further action or follow-up was necessary. In certain cases, a complaint can also be resolved by providing guidance which enables the case contact to address the complaint through self-managed resolution, or at the local level.

POLICY REVIEW

The *Strengthening Accountability and Student Supports Act, 2024* received Royal Assent on May 16, 2024. This legislation amended the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act (the “Act”) with new requirements for Ontario’s publicly-assisted colleges and universities to have policies and rules that describe how each institution will address and combat racism and hate, including but not limited to anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Black racism, antisemitism and Islamophobia.

The Act also enables the Minister to issue a directive that specifies topics to be addressed or elements to be included in a college or university’s policies and rules. In September, 2024 the Minister’s Anti-Racism/Anti-Hate Directive for Publicly-Assisted Colleges and Universities (the Directive) was issued pursuant to subsection 20 (4) of the Act, and all requirements were to be implemented by January 31, 2025.

The minimum requirements outlined in the Directive are:

- All publicly-assisted colleges and universities are required to have policies and rules that describe how the institution will address and combat racism and hate at the institution. Policies can take many forms, including a dedicated stand-alone policy on anti-racism/ anti-hate or embedded into existing policies and processes such as part of a harassment and discrimination policy or a code of conduct.
- At minimum, there must be a centralized platform available for the campus community to access all the necessary information in alignment with the legislative and directive requirements. Where anti-racism/ anti-hate policies and rules are embedded into other policies, the relevant sections of these policies must be identified.
- An institution's anti-racism/ anti-hate policies and rules must apply to students, faculty, staff, management and visitors, including guest speakers.

Accordingly, in order to meet the requirements of the Directive, the EDHRO undertook a consultative process and made revisions to Laurentian University's *Program on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment* (RWLE) which were brought forward for approval in order to meet the January 31, 2025 implementation deadline.

The EDHRO also worked with campus partners to create a new [centralized webpage](#) on anti-racism/ anti-hate resources.

Anti-Racism/Anti-Hate Directive

The Directive provides that each institution must provide its Board of Governors with an annual report on the implementation and effectiveness of its anti-racism/ anti-hate policies and rules in the preceding year.

The reporting period for the EDHRO is May 1 to April 30 of each calendar year. Given the timing of the Directive's requirement, a truncated report covering complaints specifically related to the Directive, received from February 1, 2025, to April 30, 2025, is provided below.

Complaints related to the Directive are brought forward to the EDHRO under the *Policy and Program on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment* (RWLE). As described above, a complaint is defined as "a written complaint received by the EDHRO by an individual who believes that they have been subjected to behaviour that may breach one of the policies under the EDHRO mandate". To clarify, as per the RWLE Program, once the EDHRO receives a Written "Case Resolution Request Form" or an Anonymous Complaint as set out in section 6.4.6, the case is categorized as a complaint.

No written complaints specifically related to anti-racism or anti-hate as described in the Directive were received by the EDHRO during this three-month period. The EDHRO's Annual Report for 2025-2026 will include a full year of reporting.

TRAINING AND AWARENESS INITIATIVES

1. Mandatory and Targeted Training (Staff, Students, and Orientation)

The EDHRO's targeted training strategy focused heavily on August and September to proactively equip high-impact groups for the academic year. Training reached a broad array of audiences, including:

- **Student Leaders and Staff** received training on understanding the role of the EDHRO, discrimination and harassment, student rights and responsibilities, Upstander sexual violence prevention and response skills (bystander intervention), as well as Anti-Oppression training.
- **New Students:** First-year students in a variety of academic programs, as well as all first-year residence students, received comprehensive education, including understanding the role of the EDHRO, discrimination and harassment, student rights and responsibilities, and sexual violence prevention and response.
- **Targeted Groups:** Student groups such as student athletes received policy and conduct training, including discrimination and harassment within athletic environments as well as Upstander intervention skills.

General and targeted training sessions continued throughout the academic year to support ongoing professional development for employees and education opportunities for students. Sessions included topics such as student rights and responsibilities, sexual violence prevention and response, the fundamentals of the Human Rights Code, Building Respectful Workplaces and Learning Environments, Accessibility in the Classroom and Universal Design for Learning, and specialized programming focused on compliance and safe intervention skills.

2. Awareness Weeks and Community Education

The EDHRO successfully executed and collaborated with campus partners in a year-long campaign of high-visibility events and awareness weeks to embed equity and human rights principles as well as consent culture across the campus including:

- engagement at service fairs to introduce EDHRO services and resources
- Consent Awareness Days
- Drink Spiking Awareness Booths
- Accessibility Awareness Week
- Bell Let's Talk Day

- Pride Laurentian and Every Child Matters Crosswalks Repainting

The most intensive efforts centered around major, multi-day campaigns:

1) 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (November/December) is an annual international campaign that runs from November 25 to December 10. It is a time to raise awareness and call for an end to gender-based violence.

Event/Program Title	Focus/Outcome Detail
International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women Flag Raising Ceremony	Official launch event for the 16 Days, symbolizing the University's commitment to eliminating gender-based violence and providing a unified community statement.
Social Media Campaign	Daily digital outreach providing educational content, statistics, and essential resource information across multiple social platforms.
Fact Check: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)	Public display campaign using infographics and statistics to dispel common myths and increase awareness of GBV realities.
Raising Awareness Against Inequality in Sports	Collaboration with the Women's Centre and Laurentian Athletics during the Varsity basketball games to highlight issues of gender inequality and safety in sport.
Human Rights & You: Self-Advocacy Workshop	Workshop empowering students with knowledge of the Human Rights Code to recognize and articulate their rights.
Human Rights and Unconscious Bias	Interactive training to explore implicit biases, fostering more equitable campus interactions.
Celeste Trianon Workshop: Being Trans in Canada, in 2024	Critical workshop on the current climate for trans individuals, addressing violence, legal issues, and discrimination in Canada.
Paris 2024 & the Inclusion Revolution	A discussion featuring Laurentian's Lance Cryderman, Paralympian, in recognition of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.
Laurentian Pride Drop-In & Meet-and-Greet	Safe and inclusive drop-in social offering peer support and resources specific to the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

Laurentian Women's Centre Drop-In & Meet-and-Greet	Safe and inclusive drop-in social offering peer-support and resource-sharing space.
Bloom for Réseau ACCESS Network Fundraiser	Fundraiser in partnership with Réseau ACCESS Network, coinciding with World AIDS Day.
Brain Board: What Did You Learn This Week?	Interactive feedback mechanism to capture Laurentian community member reflections, key learnings, and community feedback on the campaign's impact.
Presentation by Jason Nakogee, Truth and Reconciliation Coordinator	Educational session providing Indigenous perspectives and reflections on gender-based violence for the National Day of Remembrance.
The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women: Together in Remembrance: A Vigil Against Violence	A vigil honouring the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women: to remember those affected by gender-based violence and to reaffirm the people's commitment to ending violence against women and reflect on the importance of taking action.

2) Black History Month (February), in collaboration with the Laurentian African Caribbean Students Association (LUACSA), featured a month-long series of events dedicated to celebrating and educating on Black history and contributions.

Event Title	Focus/Outcome
Talk Among Peers (Student Debate)	Lively debate on shaping the narrative of Black History Month in the diaspora, featuring panellists, speakers, and audience Q&A.
Open Mic Night	PRIDE LU-led social event for creative expression and community building.
Sudbury FIVE & Laurentian Tripleheader Game	Partnership with the Sudbury FIVE for a triple-header game night, promoting Black excellence in sports and community engagement.
Black Entrepreneur Day	Celebration and recognition of the impactful contributions, success, and innovation of Black entrepreneurs in the community.
Laurentian Varsity	Athletic event dedicated to celebrating Black History Month for the LU

Basketball Games: Black History Month	community.
Film Screening and Discussion	Screening of <i>Hidden Figures</i> , with facilitated discussion and movie snacks.
Becoming Unstoppable by Tychon Carter	Hands-on workshop focusing on building resilience, self-discovery, wellness, and self-esteem for personal and professional goal achievement.
Nikki Clarke: Black Canadian Innovation /L'Innovation Canadienne Noire	Two presentations (English and French) highlighting the pivotal contributions of Black Canadians to the nation's innovative landscape.
Cultural Mini Gala	Grand finale event featuring cultural cuisine, encouraging cultural attire.

3) International Women's Week (March): The EDHRO partnered with the Women's Centre and promoted empowerment and gender equity through a variety of activities and community engagement opportunities.

Event Title	Focus/Outcome
Survivors Circles	Peer support space for survivors of sexual violence and gender-based harm.
Film Screening and Discussion	Screening of <i>Analogue Revolution: How Feminist Media Changed the World</i> with facilitated discussion and movie snacks
The Academic Journey	Panel/Discussion on challenges, triumphs, and the promotion of women in academia.
Self-Advocacy Workshop	Practical training for students on how to assert their rights and advocate for themselves.
Wellness Activities	Community-building activities including Puppy Room, Yoga, and Women's Only Fitness to promote well-being and safe spaces.

4) Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Week (March), in collaboration with campus partners, featured sessions and social events designed to promote dialogue, cultural competency, and community building.

Date	Event Title	Focus/Outcome
March 24	Cultural Diversity Day Survivors Circle	Celebration of diverse cultural groups Facilitated peer support space for gender-based violence survivors.
March 25	KAIROS Blanket Exercise in collaboration with the ISLC	Facilitated, experiential workshop promoting understanding of Indigenous history and colonization.
March 25	Know Yourself. Know your Needs. Know how to Ask.	Self-advocacy session focused on recognizing needs and navigating accommodation requests effectively.
March 26	Inclusive Language Workshop	Building competency in respectful communication, avoiding microaggressions, and understanding gender-inclusive language.
March 26	Intersectionality Café	Informal discussion space to explore intersecting identities and experiences of multiple oppressions.
March 27	Two-Spirit, Queer and Indiqueer Drop-In Social	Dedicated, affirming social space for 2SLGBTQIA+ and Indigenous community members in partnership with campus groups.
March 28	AEF Social: Colouring & Snacks	A relaxing afternoon social event in partnership with the AEF.

The strategic timing and diverse programming of these initiatives ensured continuous awareness and skill-building throughout the academic year.

3. Student Equity Centre (SEC)

The SEC provided mentorship and oversight of Pride Laurentian and the Women's Centre (including Laurentian University Women in Sport); student-led resource centres which provide information, peer support, referrals, education and facilitate events.

The Women's Centre and Laurentian Pride organized and hosted a multitude of social activities and events to educate students, staff and faculty and to raise awareness.

The Women's Centre partnered with Peer Programs to offer free menstrual products in campus washrooms.

The SEC also collaborated with several student groups throughout the year by providing mentorship and support of their initiatives and events including but not limited to: the Laurentian University Muslim Student Association (LUMSA) (i.e. sponsorship of iftar to students for Ramadan), Laurentian University African and Caribbean Students Association (LUACSA).

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The 2024-2025 report confirms the Equity, Diversity, and Human Rights Office (EDHRO) as an essential resource for the Laurentian University community. The continued high demand for our services, evidenced by 429 total contacts this year, demonstrates that the EDHRO is widely utilized by students, faculty, and staff for guidance, case resolution, and education across all of the policies the EDHRO oversees.

The work of the EDHRO along with the Student Equity Centre is only possible because of the collective effort of our dedicated partners. The success of our training and awareness initiatives is fundamentally a testament to the strong support we receive from campus partners, students, as well as our invaluable external partners in the Greater Sudbury community. It is through these essential collaborations that can help to ensure and maintain a University community where every member feels safe, welcomed, and respected.