

Recently, Stella's has become aware of activity by a few individuals on social media that is critical of us. At Stella's, we believe in freedom of expression and we accept that, as a family business with over 500 employees in Manitoba, we must be held to a high standard of conduct. We accept that constructive feedback must be used as a way to continuously improve. We also believe that feedback should be fair and factual, and must respect the privacy and dignity of all members of the Stella's family, whether that be our amazing staff, customers, suppliers or friends.

We do not believe that it would be constructive to try to publicly address matters raised in social media. We believe that all concerned individuals deserve to be treated with utmost respect and dignity, and their privacy must be respected. For those who are critical of us, we regret that we have let you down. Please let us assure you that Stella's is committed to creating a positive environment for all members of the Stella's family by doing our utmost to ensure that everyone – employee, customer, supplier and friend – is treated with dignity and respect.

As an employer of over 500 amazing Manitobans, Stella's has overall responsibility for creating and maintaining a work environment within the Stella's family that is free from discrimination and harassment. We cannot do it alone; all of our employees have a personal responsibility for conducting themselves in a professional, businesslike and caring manner at all times.

Harassment in any form – whether sexual, physical, psychological or otherwise – is not and will not be tolerated within the Stella's family. We expect all of our employees to be stewards of this policy and to report any incidents of harassment as soon as possible. Our commitment at Stella's is to investigate all reports of harassment in a fair and timely manner, while protecting the privacy of all parties as much as possible.

Stella's has a harassment policy and procedures in place for dealing with these complaints. We take them very seriously. Over the last 15 years, Stella's has seen tremendous growth, and our family has gotten so much bigger. With that growth comes responsibility, and we will continue to work at making Stella's a truly modern and egalitarian work culture. We are going to continue to listen to our staff and to everyone who have taken the time to share their important views, and we are going to continue to strive to train our managers and leaders so that they are equipped to handle complaints of harassment in a timely, professional, sensitive, fair, and caring manner.

We have engaged People First HR Consultants, a qualified human resource consulting firm, to review all of our policies and procedures on workplace safety and harassment and to make recommendations to help us continuously improve. We will review and improve our training practices so as to ensure that our management and staff receive the very best training in how to handle complaints of harassment, including so as to ensure that there is clarity in the organization as to how to safely report and deal with complaints of harassment. As part of our review process, we will develop a communications plan for our employees that makes clear our commitment to a safe workplace, and provides updates on this important initiative. We will also be introducing a "whistle blower line" that all employees will have access to.

No matter your gender, race, ethnicity or sexual orientation, you are welcome at Stella's. We want you to be safe and to feel safe, at Stella's. We will always listen to feedback, whether positive or negative, and we will always strive to be a company that we – and we hope you – can take pride in.

Sincerely

Tore Sohlberg & Lehla Abreder

Stella's