

## **OUR COMMITMENT TO GROWTH AND CHANGE**

Hard Feelings is a non-profit social enterprise founded with a mission to reduce barriers and increase access to mental health supports and resources. We operate a retail storefront and rent offices to counsellors in private practice offering low-cost short-term service. Our work is based on values of integrity, innovation, inclusion, and empathy.

Across Canada, organizations are being called to reflect on the ways they contribute to the reality of systemic racism in our country. Hard Feelings is not exempt from this necessary conversation. Important concerns were raised by our former employees about our accountability structures, human resources processes and a lack of support for racialized employees. We want to highlight that the concerns raised were not about counsellors within our community of practice, but rather about operational leadership within the organization.

Thank you to our former staff for their work and contributions to Hard Feelings. We are listening, and we are committed to doing the work needed to make change, and ensure that everyone who interacts with Hard Feelings feels safe, supported, and welcome.

Over the next six months, we will be engaging in an internal process of evaluating and developing new strategies, capacities and directions for Hard Feelings. This process will include consultations with external resources and expertise.

As a starting point, we are committed to:

- Diversifying our Board of Directors to better represent the communities we work with
- Separating operations and governance structures at Hard Feelings to ensure effective oversight of the organization
- Identifying the areas where systemic and structural racism show up at Hard Feelings and engaging with ways to challenge this
- Developing a safer and more supportive workplace for all future employees, including improved human resource processes for complaints and feedback about leadership
- Deepening our learning and understanding with ongoing trainings about anti-racism and anti-oppressive practice for all members of the leadership team, counsellors and volunteers

We recognize that these are first steps in an ongoing process.

We will be providing updates on our work in these areas, through our website and newsletters, reflecting our commitment to accountability, now and moving forward.

Thank you to our community of supporters, the counsellors in our community of practice, and our many volunteers for joining us on this journey of growth.

You can reach the board at [admin@hardfeelings.org](mailto:admin@hardfeelings.org) with any questions.. If you choose to reach out to the board, we want to assure you that your name or other identifying information will not be shared with anyone outside of the board of directors without your permission.