



volunteer centre
Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Contae Átha Cliath Theas
SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY

south dublin county volunteer centre anti - bullying policy

Statement of policy

The organisation acknowledges the right of all employees to a workplace and environment free from any form of harassment or bullying. Every member of staff has an obligation to be aware of the affects of their own behaviour on others.

Any instances of bullying or harassment will be dealt with in an effective and efficient manner. In cases where the behaviour is proved to be repeated and consistent causing unnecessary stress and anxiety this will be considered gross misconduct. The organisation reserves the right to use the disciplinary procedure up to and including dismissal.

As part of this organisation's code of conduct, it is imperative that all staff and suppliers respect the dignity of every employee. Please consider the multi-cultural beliefs of all of your colleagues regarding your code of conduct, with particular reference to remarks, dress code, posters, e-mails and anything which may cause offence to a persons' gender, marital status, race, religion, family status, age, sexual orientation, membership of the Traveller community and disability.

Procedures

This policy is applicable to all employees (temporary and permanent) irrespective of length of service and includes clients and service personnel both inside and outside the work environment.

1. Definition

The task force on the prevention of workplace bullying defines bullying as: "repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work but, as a once off is not considered to be bullying".

The following is an example of the types of behaviour considered as bullying and are prohibited by the organisation:

Verbal Abuse

Shouting, making jokes, unfair and excessive criticism, ridiculing the employee in front of other employees and individuals, setting unrealistic and unattainable targets, spreading false truths about the individual around the organisation etc

Non Verbal Abuse

Looks, gestures, displaying emblems on clothing, exclusion, whistling, isolation at lunch breaks or social events etc.

Physical Abuse

Hitting, bodily contact that is abusive in nature, shaking fists in a threatening manner, sabotaging a colleagues personal belongings etc.

The above list is not exhaustive and only serves as a guideline to employees. Each case will be taken in isolation and dealt with in the appropriate manner. This policy adopts a two-tiered approach (the informal and formal procedures) to the issue of bullying and harassment in the workplace.



2. The Informal Procedure

The purpose of the informal procedure is to ensure that the majority of cases of this nature will be handled effectively, efficiently and in a confidential and sensitive manner.

The informal procedure is used in a situation where an offensive incident has occurred and the victim approaches the perpetrator directly and requests him/her to stop. The victim should inform the individual of the organisation's bullying policy and advise him/her that a second occurrence of this nature will result in a formal complaint.

In instances where you are unsure of whether the behaviour constitutes a form of bullying you should discuss this with either a member of the human resources team, your manager or a colleague. Please be encouraged to seek support from your line manager or whoever you deem to be appropriate.

3. The Formal Procedure

In the event that the informal complaint has failed and the harassment is repeated, or where it is deemed inappropriate, the complainant will progress to the formal procedure. These are the steps that individuals must follow in this procedure:

1. Make your initial complaint in writing to your line manager/supervisor/team leader.
2. Send a copy of your complaint marked confidential to the union representative and/or the human resources department.
3. If your line manager/union representative is involved in the incident make the complaint to the next manager in succession.
4. All complaints will be treated in the strictest confidence.
5. Only individuals necessary to the investigation will be involved from the initial stages.
6. Management, the human resources department or an independent advisor will be assigned to thoroughly research the case.
7. Interviews will be held with the complainant, alleged perpetrator(s) and any relevant witnesses to establish a thorough understanding of the facts of the alleged complaint.
8. Each party to be interviewed will be advised of their right to representation by a colleague of choice or a trade union representative.
9. All material received will be treated with the highest level of sensitivity.
10. Where necessary parties to the procedure may in some cases be asked to remain at home on paid leave to enable parties to investigate the complaint.
11. When the investigation has been completed all the facts will be summarised and where possible a decision made as to whether bullying has taken place.
12. Both the complainant and alleged perpetrator(s) will receive a written copy of the outcome.
13. An interview will be held with the perpetrator to establish what action is to be taken.
14. He/she will have details of the case read out to them.
15. He/she will have the right to have someone present in the room representing them.
16. He/she have the right to defend his/her case.
17. He/she have the right to appeal against his/her position In certain cases the organisation may reserve the right to offer counselling to the perpetrator or the complainant.
18. When all the facts have been collected the alleged perpetrator may face a disciplinary hearing to explore the allegations made against him/her.



19. The complainant is formally informed of any action taken against the perpetrator.
20. The organisation reserves the right to re-locate the complainant or perpetrator, where it is necessary for the effective running of the department.
21. In cases where it is discovered that the complainant made a false accusation against an employee for bullying, the complainant will face gross misconduct charges resulting in an immediate disciplinary hearing.
22. The organisation will monitor the workplace to ensure there is no follow up action, victimisation or future incidents.

7. Action to be taken if you are being bullied at work

If you believe you are the victim of bullying/harassment please take account of the following key points:

1. Remain as calm and collected as possible
2. Record the incidents including days, dates, times and what was said during the alleged incidents and if there were any witnesses to help your case
3. Write down how the incident of bullying made you feel at the time
4. Try and confront the bully and inform him/her that you find his/her behaviour unacceptable and ask them to stop immediately
5. Talk to a colleague or your manager, your trade union or a member of the human resources team about the incidents
6. Keep copies of any materials you receive from the perpetrator as this may be needed at a later date
7. Read the bullying policy in the organisation
8. Don't feel you have encouraged this behaviour or brought this on yourself.