



# **PERSONAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

# PERSONAL HARASSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Many people in our society are victimised and harassed as a result of their race, religion/belief, creed, colour, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability. Personal harassment takes many forms ranging from tasteless jokes and abusive remarks to pestering for sexual favours, threatening behaviour, and actual physical abuse. Whatever form it takes, personal harassment is always serious and is unacceptable. We recognise that personal harassment can take place in the workplace as well as outside and that this can seriously affect employee's working lives by creating a stressful, intimidating, and unpleasant working environment.

We disapprove of all forms of personal harassment and seek to ensure that the workplace is sympathetic to all our employees. We publish these procedures to inform all employees of the type of behaviour that is unacceptable and provide any employee who feels that they are a victim of personal harassment with a means of raising their complaint. We recognise that we have a duty of care to implement this policy and it is an express term and condition of employment for all employees to comply with it.

Personal harassment takes many forms and employees may not always realise that their actions or behaviour constitutes harassment. Personal harassment is unwanted behaviour by one employee towards another and examples of harassment include:

- Insensitive jokes or pranks
- Lewd or abusive comments about personal appearance
- Deliberate exclusion from conversations
- Displaying offensive or abusive writing or materials
- Unwelcome personal contact
- Abusive, threatening, or insulting words, comments, or behaviour

These examples are not exhaustive and disciplinary action at an appropriate level will be taken against any employees committing any form of personal harassment.

If you are the victim of minor harassment, you should make it clear to the harasser on an informal basis that their behaviour is unwelcome and you should ask them to stop. We recognise that complaints of personal harassment and particularly of sexual harassment can sometimes be of a sensitive and intimate nature. In this case it may be more appropriate to hand a written request to the harasser.

Where the informal approach fails or if you feel the harassment is more serious you should bring the matter to the immediate attention of your line manager, General Manager or Director as a formal complaint in writing. If possible, you should keep evidence, notes, or a diary so that the written complaint can include:

- The name of the harasser
- The nature of the alleged harassment
- The dates, times, and circumstances of the alleged harassment
- The names of any witnesses
- Any action already taken by yourself to stop the alleged harassment.

On receipt of a formal complaint we will take action to separate you from the alleged harasser to enable an investigation to take place. This may involve temporary

transfer of the alleged harasser to another work area or suspension with full pay until the matter has been resolved.

The General Manager or another member of the senior leadership team will then conduct a full investigation. All employees involved in the investigation will be expected to act in complete confidence.

When the investigation has been concluded, a written draft report of the findings and the investigators proposed decision will be sent to you and the alleged harasser. If you or the alleged harasser is dissatisfied with any findings in the report you should raise them within 5 working days of receipt of the report. The investigator will then consider any points of concern and a final report will be sent to you and the alleged harasser.

If the report finds that the complaint of personal harassment is well founded, the harasser will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Any employee who receives a formal warning or is dismissed may appeal using the disciplinary appeal procedure.

If you complain of harassment, you will not be victimised for having brought the complaint.

However, if the report concludes that the complaint is untrue and has been brought with malicious intent, subsequent disciplinary action may be taken against you.

**Paul Battershall**  
**General Manager**