

## POLICY

# Bullying and harassment

**We're committed to providing a fair, healthy and safe workplace in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect and in which no individual or group feels bullied, threatened, or intimidated.**

Bullying or harassment in any form is unacceptable behaviour and will not be permitted or condoned.

We recognise that bullying and harassment can exist in the workplace as well as outside it. They can seriously affect workers' working lives by detracting from a productive working environment and impacting the health, confidence, morale, and performance of those affected by them, including anyone who witnesses or has knowledge of the unwanted or unacceptable behaviour.

This procedure aims to inform workers of unacceptable behaviour and provide procedural guidance.

We recognise our duty to implement this policy and all workers are expected to comply with it.

### **HARASSMENT**

Harassment is defined as any unwanted physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct based on grounds of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation which affects the dignity of anyone at work or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

A single incident of unwanted or offensive behaviour can amount to harassment.

Harassment can take many forms and individuals may not always realise that their behaviour constitutes harassment. Examples of harassment include:

- Insensitive jokes and pranks
- Lewd or abusive comments about appearance
- Deliberate exclusion from conversations
- Displaying abusive or offensive writing or material
- Unwelcome touching, and
- Abusive, threatening, or insulting words or behaviours.

These examples are not exhaustive, and workers committing any form of harassment will be subject to disciplinary action at the appropriate level. Appropriate action in relation to an employee will include disciplinary action in accordance with our disciplinary and disciplinary termination procedures. For other workers, appropriate action may include termination of their engagement.

### **BULLYING**

Bullying is repeated, offensive, abusive, intimidating, insulting or unreasonable behaviour directed towards an individual or a group which makes the recipient(s) feel threatened, humiliated, or vulnerable. Note single incidents of bullying will not be tolerated.

Bullying can occur in the workplace and outside of the workplace at events connected to the workplace, such as social functions or business trips.

Bullying can be a form of harassment and can cause an individual to suffer adverse physical and mental effects.

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# FARA

Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct. As with harassment, there are many examples of bullying, which can include:

- Abusive, insulting or offensive language or comments
- Unjustified criticism or complaints
- Physical or emotional threats
- Deliberate exclusion from workplace activities
- The spreading of misinformation or malicious rumours, and
- The denial of access to information, supervision, or resources such that it has a detrimental impact on the individual or group

These examples are not exhaustive and disciplinary action at the appropriate level will be taken against employees committing any form of bullying. Appropriate action in relation to an employee will include disciplinary action in accordance with our disciplinary and disciplinary termination procedures. For other workers, appropriate action may include termination of their engagement with FARA.

## **REASONABLE MANAGEMENT ACTION TAKEN IN A REASONABLE WAY**

It is reasonable for managers and supervisors to allocate work and to give fair and reasonable feedback on a worker's performance. These actions are not considered to be workplace bullying or harassment if they are carried out lawfully and in a reasonable manner, taking the particular circumstances into account.

- Examples of reasonable management action can include but are not limited to:
- Setting reasonable performance goals, standards, and deadlines
- Rostering and allocating working hours where the requirements are reasonable
- Transferring a worker for operational reasons
- Deciding not to select a worker for promotion where a reasonable process is followed
- Informing a worker of their unsatisfactory work performance
- Meeting with a worker to discuss performance and/or conduct
- Informing a worker of their unreasonable or inappropriate behaviour in an objective and confidential way
- Implementing organisational changes or restructuring, and
- Taking disciplinary action, including suspension or termination of employment.

## **COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

### **INFORMAL COMPLAINT**

We recognise that complaints of bullying, harassment and particularly sexual harassment can be of a sensitive or intimate nature and that it may not be appropriate for you to raise the issue through our normal grievance procedure. In these circumstances you are encouraged to raise such issues with a senior colleague of your choice (whether or not that person has a direct supervisory responsibility for you) as a confidential helper.

If you are the victim of minor bullying or harassment, you should make it clear to the alleged bully or harasser on an informal basis that their behaviour is unwelcome and ask the individual to stop. If you feel unable to do this verbally, then you should hand a written request to the individual, and your confidential helper can assist you with this.

### **FORMAL COMPLAINT**

Where the informal approach fails or if the bullying or harassment is more serious, you should bring the matter to the immediate attention of management as a formal written complaint and again your confidential helper can assist you in this. If possible, you should keep notes of the bullying or harassment so that the written complaint can include:

- The name of the alleged bully or harasser
- The nature of the alleged incident of bullying or harassment
- The dates and times when the alleged incident of bullying or harassment occurred
- The names of any witness, and
- Any action already taken by you to stop the alleged bullying or harassment.

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# FARA

On receipt of a formal complaint, we'll take action to separate you from the alleged bully or harasser to enable an uninterrupted investigation to take place. This may involve a temporary transfer of the alleged bully or harasser to another work area or suspension of employees (with contractual pay) until the matter has been resolved.

The person dealing with the complaint will invite you to attend a meeting at a reasonable time and location to discuss the matter and carry out a thorough investigation. You have the right to be accompanied at such a meeting by your confidential helper or another work colleague of your choice and you must take all reasonable steps to attend. Those involved in the investigation will be expected to act in confidence and any breach of confidence will be a disciplinary matter.

At the conclusion of the investigation, which will normally be within ten working days of the meeting with you, a report of the findings and of the investigator's decision will be sent in writing to you and to the alleged bully and harasser.

## GENERAL NOTES

If the report concludes that the allegation is well-founded, appropriate action will be taken against the bully or harasser.

If you bring a complaint of bullying or harassment, you will not be victimised for having brought the complaint. However, if the report concludes that the complaint is both untrue and has been brought with malicious intent, appropriate action will be taken against you. Appropriate action in relation to an employee will include disciplinary action in accordance with our disciplinary and disciplinary termination procedures. For other workers, appropriate action may include termination of their engagement.



**Chris Jones**  
Director



**Warrin Orman**  
Director

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