

Bullying and Intimidation Policy

1. Objective

1.1 To actively prevent and address bullying and intimidation within the workplace and to promote a harmonious working environment between all parties within the employment relationship, including but not limited to supervisors, subordinates and between staff members. Employees who fail to act on incidents and report workplace intimidation and bullying may be subject to disciplinary action.

2. General

2.1 *Workplace Bullying* is defined as the repeated, less favourable treatment of a person by another or others in the workplace, which may be considered unreasonable and inappropriate workplace practice. It includes behaviour that intimidates, offends, degrades or humiliates a fellow employee.

2.2 Bullying and intimidation is a directly or indirectly imposed action which is unsolicited. It may occur with person to person interactions, in the presence of managers or supervisors, co-workers, clients or customers or by means of visual, written or electronic communications such as letters, drawings, emails, telephonic communications and text messages.

2.3 Bullying can occur between managers or supervisors and their subordinates or between co-workers.

3. Types of Behaviour

3.1 Behaviours constituting bullying may range from obvious directed actions such as physical and verbal assault and abuse through to more subtle actions such as continuously undermining another person. Examples of types of behaviour constituting bullying and intimidation include but are not limited to:

- Physical and verbal assault;
- Screaming or the use of offensive language;

- Threatening behaviour;
- Opinions that belittle or constant criticism;
- Inappropriate, demeaning or derogatory remarks or jokes about a person's appearance, background or lifestyle;
- Isolation of employees from normal work interaction, development, training or career opportunities;
- Insults;
- Overwork, unnecessary pressure and unreasonable deadlines;
- Tampering with a person's personal effects, equipment or work materials;
- An unacceptable and unusually aggressive interactive style from a superior;
- Undermining work performance by deliberately withholding work-related information, support, resources or access or supplying inaccurate or incorrect information;
- Exaggerated supervision or unwarranted policing of performance;
- Underwork or creating a feeling of uselessness;
- Unexplained job changes, meaningless tasks, tasks beyond a person's skills and training, and failure to give credit where it is due.

3.2 It is accepted that in some cases people may not be aware that their behaviour is unacceptable or offensive due to the fact that the behaviour has become part of the workplace culture. It is the role of the Managing Director to set acceptable standards and to inform staff of expectations.

4. Responsibilities of Managers and Supervisors

4.1 Managers and supervisors have a responsibility to:

- Proactively promote a working environment free of bullying and intimidation and to act on incidents;
- Provide for appropriate instruction and information to staff about what are considered to be acceptable and unacceptable behaviours;
- Inform staff of the recourses available to them should they be bullied or intimidated;
- Provide or arrange for adequate support to staff who refer complaints of bullying, including the insurance of the confidential handling of the matter and the prevention of victimisation;

- Deal fairly with all persons involved in allegations of bullying and intimidation and ensure due process.

5. Formal Complaints

5.1 Employees who feel that they are being bullied or intimidated are entitled to make a formal complaint to Management.

5.2 The complaint should be in writing and provide Management with sufficient information to assess whether further steps are necessary. The complaint should include details of all informal steps taken to try to resolve the matter, or if such steps have not been taken, reasons why it was not done.

6. Investigation of Formal Complaints

6.1 Once a complaint had been raised to management, a formal investigation will be initiated into whether bullying or intimidation and investigation has occurred and who the perpetrators were.

6.2 The person against whom the complaint is made will be informed of the allegations against them and the fact that the outcome of the investigation could lead to disciplinary action.

6.3 Management shall ensure that the complainant is not victimised, irrespective of the outcome of the investigation.

6.4 The investigation may include the gathering of information and evidence from all relevant parties.

7. Possible action

7.1 Once the investigation is concluded, Management will decide which action needs to be taken if any, including:

Whether disciplinary action is warranted against the perpetrator;

- Whether remedial action could be taken to prevent further bullying or intimidation;
- Whether counselling, conciliation or mediation should be provided.

8. Disciplinary action

8.1 If it is found that bullying or intimidation has been committed, disciplinary action for misconduct will be initiated against the perpetrator in adherence with the company disciplinary code.

9. Privilege

9.1 All information gathered from participants in informal and formal complaints of bullying and intimidation in the workplace is privileged information as long as it is dealt with in accordance to the company bullying and intimidation policy.

9.2 This privilege does not extend to:

- Evidence and actions of parties who have acted with ill intent or for any improper motives and who claim the defamatory matter to be untrue;
- Situations where the publication of defamatory material is excessive for the occasion;
- If defamatory material is irrelevant to the bullying or intimidation matter attracting qualified attention.

10. Sanction

10.1 All matters of bullying and intimidation which are dealt with through disciplinary action will be judged on the individual merits of the case in order to ascertain which sanction would be appropriate for that particular incident. Contravention of this rule will be dealt with through progressive discipline, and in cases where the gravity of the contravention so warrants, summary dismissal will be accepted as an appropriate sanction for a first offence.

As approved by Management committee on 10th February 2020

Signed: 
GT Selikoe
Director