

DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY				 Delivering peace of mind
Owned by	Issue date	Last Reviewed	Next Review Date	
Human Resources	April 2003	May 2014	May 2017	Policy No: 002.09

1. Policy Statement

We are committed to maintaining a working environment which is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination and which protects the dignity of all employees. You have a responsibility at all times to behave in a way that is courteous, respectful and reasonable towards others.

Our approach to bullying and harassment is one of zero tolerance. Harassment at work is not only despicable and demeaning, but it is also unlawful under the Equality Act 2010 and may also be treated as a criminal offence. We will not tolerate harassment or bullying of job applicants, employees, contractors, agency or temporary workers, ex-employees or customers/clients.

It is everyone's responsibility to uphold this policy, however there is a particular emphasis to ensure that those with line management responsibility also ensure that bullying and harassment have no place in the workplace.

This policy also applies to organised work-related events regardless of the fact that these may be held outside of our premises and in your own time.

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is up to date with current legislation.

2. Policy Aims

The aims of this policy are to ensure that:

- You are aware of the types of behaviour which may constitute harassment or bullying and your responsibilities for preventing such behaviour.
- You understand that bullying and harassment are unacceptable and will not be tolerated and that appropriate measures, including disciplinary action, may be taken if bullying or harassment are found to have taken place.
- All allegations of bullying or harassment are responded to quickly, fairly and in confidence.

3. Definitions

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct that intentionally or unintentionally violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive working environment. Harassment can take many forms. Although this list is not exhaustive, this may include:

- Verbal/Non Verbal harassment – Some examples include crude language, offensive jokes, suggestive remarks, open hostility, sexually suggestive posters/calendars, graffiti, offensive emails or text messages.
- Physical harassment/Coercion/Intrusion – Some examples include unnecessary touching, intimidating behaviour, assault, pressure to participate in political, religious or trade union groups, stalking.

Bullying is defined as any offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or any abuse or misuse of power, which has the purpose, or effect of, intimidating, belittling and humiliating the recipient, leading to loss of self-esteem and ultimately the self-questioning of their worth.

The actions must be viewed in terms of the distress they cause the individual. As with harassment, it is the perceptions of the recipient that determines whether any action or statement can be viewed as bullying.

Examples of bullying can include derogatory remarks, use of foul or abusive language, insensitive jokes or pranks, insulting, humiliating or aggressive behaviour, excluding an individual, setting unrealistic deadlines, public criticism or withholding necessary information. This list is not exhaustive.

4. Complaints Procedure

If you believe that your dignity has been violated or that another employee's conduct amounts to bullying or harassment or that such conduct has otherwise created an uncomfortable environment for you or others, you have the right to complain under this policy. Such a complaint may be informal or formal.

All complaints under this policy will be treated seriously and investigated and dealt with promptly, fairly and objectively and, insofar as is possible, in confidence. If at any time there are grounds to believe that an employee has been bullied, harassed or otherwise caused offence in the workplace, the business will investigate the alleged behaviour. This may be the case whether or not there has been a formal complaint. You have a responsibility to report any behaviour that potentially contravenes the principles of this policy.

Where appropriate, a complaint will first be dealt with informally. Where informal methods fail, or informal methods are inappropriate in the circumstances, a formal complaint can be made in the form of a grievance. Where a formal complaint is not submitted we may still have a duty to take appropriate action.

Formal complaints will be dealt with under the Grievance Policy. Please refer to the [Portakabin Group Grievance Policy and Procedure](#) for further details.

Breaches of this policy may be regarded as misconduct/gross misconduct and could lead to disciplinary action including dismissal. In these circumstances, we reserve the right to suspend temporarily or re-deploy either the employee suspected of acting in breach of this policy, or the employee who has made a complaint of bullying or harassment, if it is considered in the interests of the individual(s) or the business to do so. Suspension in these circumstances will be on full pay. Suspension does not mean that the employee has been found guilty of misconduct and does not constitute disciplinary action.

You will not be penalised, victimised or subjected to any detriment for complaining that your dignity has been breached through a colleague's words or actions. Any complaint found to be false and malicious will result in disciplinary action being taken against the complainant.



Derek Carter
Chief Executive



Amanda Stainton
Human Resources Director