

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Version: 01
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Owner: Group HR Manager

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Company is committed to providing a work environment free from sexual harassment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. Sexual harassment is unlawful and we will not tolerate it.
- 1.2 The Company will take active steps to help prevent our workers from being sexually harassed in the workplace or from being victimised if they have made a complaint or have supported someone else who has made a complaint.
- 1.3 The Company encourages anyone who is a victim of, or witness to, sexual harassment to report it in accordance with this policy. This will enable us to take appropriate action and provide support.
- 1.4 Sexual harassment can result in legal liability for us as an organisation as well as the perpetrator.
- 1.5 Any employee who sexually harasses another person should expect to be disciplined and, where appropriate, may be dismissed.
- 1.6 This Policy:
- explains what sexual harassment is;
 - sets out the standards of behaviour we expect you to follow;
 - sets out the process you should follow if you wish to raise a complaint;
 - explains how we will deal with any complaints;
 - explains the preventative measures we will take to reduce the risk of sexual harassment happening in our workplace.
- 1.7 This Policy applies to everyone who works for us, including employees, agency workers, consultants, and casual workers. It does not form part of your contract with us and we reserve the right to amend it.

2 What is “sexual harassment”?

- 2.1 Sexual harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Unwanted means unwelcome or uninvited. It is also unlawful to treat someone less favourably because they have either submitted a complaint of sexual harassment or have rejected such behaviour.
- 2.2 Sexual harassment can happen in the workplace and it can also occur away from the workplace such as at a client’s office, at conferences, training courses, staff parties and

other social events related to work. It may be face to face or in written communications, on the phone or via online interaction including email.

2.3 The list below sets out some examples of sexual harassment:

- unwanted physical conduct such as the invasion of personal space and touching;
- continued suggestions for sexual activity after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome;
- leering and suggestive gestures and remarks or jokes, banter of a sexual nature;
- intrusive questioning or suggestions about your sex life or a colleague's sex life;
- spreading sexual rumours about a person;
- comments of a sexual nature about a colleague's sexual orientation or gender identity;
- sending or displaying material that is sexual (including emails, text messages, video clips and images sent by mobile phone or posted on the internet).

2.4 A single incident can amount to sexual harassment.

2.5 A person may be sexually harassed even if they were not the intended target. For example, a person may be sexually harassed by pornographic images displayed on a colleague's calendar placed on their work desk or by overhearing colleagues boasting about their sexual conquests.

2.6 A person may experience sexual harassment because of conduct of a sexual nature that they find unwanted, even if it was not intended to have that effect by the person doing it. For example, whilst a joke may have been intended to be inoffensive, it may be offensive to the recipient and if it is of a sexual nature, this may amount to sexual harassment.

3 Third-party harassment

3.1 Third-party sexual harassment occurs where a person is sexually harassed by someone who isn't employed by us or under our control but with whom they have come into contact during the course of their employment. Third-party harassment could include, for example, unwelcome sexual advances from a supplier visiting our premises, by our customers, or where staff are visiting third party premises in the course of their employment.

3.2 The law requires us to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment by third parties and we will not tolerate third party harassment either by a third party to our staff or by our staff to a third party. Examples of steps that we will take to prevent third party harassment include for example: warning a customer or supplier about their behaviour; banning a customer / supplier / contractor; reporting criminal acts to the police; sharing warning information about the third party with other sites of the business.

3.3 All staff are encouraged to report any sexual harassment they experience or witness in accordance with this policy, including third party harassment, and to speak to their manager or any other appropriate person in our business if they think there are additional steps we could take to protect them from sexual harassment.

4 The steps we are taking to prevent sexual harassment

4.1 Reasonable steps we will undertake to prevent sexual harassment in our workplace include:

- implementing training programmes for all staff to ensure they recognise behaviours that may amount to sexual harassment, understand how we expect them to behave

towards the people they come into contact with and how to complain if they experience or witness inappropriate behaviour;

- making this policy available to all members of staff;
- encouraging staff to report incidents and ensuring that we deal with complaints in line with this policy.

6 Responsibilities of managers and supervisors

6.1 Managers and supervisors will:

- ensure that they are familiar with this policy and that it is followed, responding to any complaints of sexual harassment swiftly and sensitively;
- ensure that within their area of control, everyone is treated with dignity and respect;
- be exemplars of acceptable behaviour. They should be aware that an abuse of their positional power will send mixed messages about what is acceptable behaviour, and will only serve to condone harassment.

6.2 A failure to deal with sexual harassment should the Manager / Supervisor witness concerning behaviour, or should they fail to deal with an allegation of sexual harassment that is notified to them, could constitute a breach of this policy and formal action may be taken.

7 Responsibilities of staff

7.1 All staff have a responsibility to contribute to a respectful and productive working environment and to assist in the creation of a safe working environment where unacceptable sexual behaviour is not tolerated.

7.2 We all have a personal responsibility to:

- ensure the nature of sexual harassment is understood;
- be aware of how our individual behaviour may affect others and to uphold the expected standards of behaviour;
- report incidents of sexual harassment when witnessed, or supporting targets of sexual harassment in reporting it;
- co-operating fully in an investigation into alleged sexual harassment.

8 How to complain or raise issues

8.1 If you are not certain whether an incident or series of incidents amounts to sexual harassment, please speak to your Manager, the Group HR Manager or other senior leader and ask for advice.

8.2 We encourage staff who witness sexual harassment or victimisation to take appropriate steps to address it. Depending on the circumstances, this could include:

- intervening where you feel able to do so;
- supporting the victim to report it or reporting it on their behalf;
- reporting the incident where you feel there may be a continuing risk if you do not report it;
- co-operating in any investigation into the incident.

8.3 We will deal with complaints in line with our Grievance Procedure.

8.4 We want to reassure you that you will not be penalised for making a complaint – even if we don't uphold it. Employees will only face disciplinary action if we reasonably conclude that their allegations are false **and** were made in bad faith (that means the employee who made the complaint didn't honestly believe it to be true).

8.5 It is important that staff make their colleagues aware if certain conduct or behaviour is causing concern or offense to themselves or others.

8.6 **Informal action**

8.6.1 Sometimes, people do not realise how their actions are impacting others and pointing this out can be enough to prevent repeat behaviour. If possible, a worker who believes that they have been the subject of sexual harassment or has witnessed it should, in the first instance, ask the person to stop the behaviour and make it clear what aspect of their behaviour is offensive and unacceptable, and the effect it is having. This can be done verbally or in writing. If the sexually harassed person or witness feels unable to approach the person responsible directly, they can ask a work colleague, their Manager or Group HR Manager to make this initial approach.

8.6.2 If a worker is approached informally about stopping their unwelcome or upsetting behaviour, they should not consider the reaction to be oversensitive nor the incident to be too trivial, but should remember that different people find different things acceptable and everyone has the right to decide what behaviour is acceptable to them and to have their feelings respected by others. An apology and assurance that the behaviour will not be repeated may be enough to end the matter.

8.6.3 Should the nature of the harassment be deemed by the Company to be of a particularly serious nature however, we may opt to take formal action and particularly so where there is a high immediate risk to the safety of the complainant, their colleagues, or someone else the harasser may come into contact with.

8.7 **Formal action**

8.7.1 If informal action does not stop the sexual harassment, or a formal complaint is made from the outset, the formal Grievance Procedure should be initiated. The worker making the complaint will, where possible, set out the details of the complaint in writing with specifics as to dates and times and an account of what the sexual harassment is alleged to consist of.

8.7.2 If your concerns relate to your manager, contact the Group HR Manager, Group Chief Operating Officer or another senior leader.

8.7.3 All complaints will be handled and investigated in a timely and confidential manner.

8.7.4 Wherever possible, we will try to ensure that both the complainant, and the person against whom the complaint has been made, are not required to work together while the complaint is under investigation. In a serious case, the person against whom the complaint has been made may be suspended whilst investigation and any subsequent disciplinary procedure are undertaken as a precaution for the protection of the complainant or to prevent interference in the investigation. Such suspension will be for as short a time as possible and will be on full pay.

8.7.5 If the investigation reveals that the complaint is upheld, prompt action designed to stop the sexual harassment immediately and prevent its recurrence will be taken. Disciplinary action up to and including dismissal may be taken in accordance with

the Disciplinary Procedure if a complaint of sexual harassment is upheld against an employee.

- 8.8 If we decide not to uphold a complaint, we will explain why. If it was a formal complaint we will also explain how you can appeal in accordance with our Grievance Procedure. If your complaint relates to a colleague, we will consider ways of improving your relationship and may, for example, suggest mediation or offer training.
- 8.9 If a member of staff has been harassed by a third party, we will take appropriate action to prevent it from reoccurring. That may include warning the harasser that if they repeat their behaviour we may ban them from our premises, cease doing business with them and / or report any criminal acts to the police.

9 How we will protect and support those involved

- 9.1 Anyone who raises an allegation of sexual harassment with us in good faith will not be subjected to any detriment as a result.
- 9.2 We will provide appropriate support to anyone who makes a complaint or who witnesses an incident and will protect them from victimisation. You should not fear retaliation for having raised or supported a complaint of harassment and you will be protected from being treated less favourably because you have done so.
- 9.3 We offer access to confidential counselling, which is available for anyone affected by, or accused of, sexual harassment. This is available via ***The Printing Charity, tel 0333 2123534.***

10 How we will maintain confidentiality

- 10.1 We are committed to handling all complaints of sexual harassment sensitively and confidentially.
- 10.2 If you have made a complaint, witnessed an incident or are accused of sexual harassment, you must not discuss the case with anyone except:
- any manager or other responsible person in our organisation you have approached for help and support;
 - someone at work who is acting as your companion at a formal meeting;
 - close family or friends who are supporting you;
 - anyone who is providing counselling or other services to you provided they are suitably qualified.
- 10.3 We will ensure that any investigation into a complaint is conducted confidentially and that the details of the complaint are only disclosed to those who need to know in order to investigate and resolve the matter. In some cases, this may include providing information to the police or to a regulator.
- 10.4 We may place information and documents about a complaint raised by or about you on your personnel file.
- 10.5 We will only use Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) or confidentiality provisions if it is lawful, necessary, and appropriate to do so, and will not prevent employees from making protected disclosures (whistleblowing) as defined under the Employment Rights Act 1996.

10.6 If you fail to maintain confidentiality when you are involved in some way in a sexual harassment complaint, then you may face action under our Disciplinary Procedure.

11 How we will monitor our progress

11.1 We will monitor the treatment and outcomes of any complaints of sexual harassment or victimisation we receive to make sure that they are properly investigated and resolved, those who report or act as witnesses are not victimised, repeat offenders are dealt with appropriately, cultural clashes are identified and workforce training is targeted where needed.

11.2 We will review the effectiveness and contents of this policy at least on an annual basis. We will identify any themes that emerge, evaluate feedback and consider what lessons can be learned.