

# PO6 DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

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## Policy

### Introduction

CVS Falkirk is committed to developing a working environment in which bullying and harassment are known to be unacceptable and are not tolerated at any level of the organisation. We seek to ensure that every individual can work effectively in comfort and dignity. We will provide any employee or volunteer who suffers bullying or harassment with an appropriate form of redress and seek to guarantee that complainants will not encounter any form of reprisal or victimisation as a result of their complaint.

This policy covers harassment or bullying which occurs both in and out of the workplace, such as on business trips or at work-related social functions and also through social media. It covers bullying and harassment by staff and also by third parties, such as clients, suppliers and visitors to our premises. It covers harassment where employees are not directly targeted. Any complaint will be thoroughly investigated and prompt corrective action taken.

### Harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or causes an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment can take many forms, occur on a variety of grounds, and may be directed at an individual or a group of individuals. It is not the intention of the perpetrator but the deed itself and the impact on the recipient which determines what constitutes harassment. Ultimately, the question which has to be asked is has an individual or group of individuals been treated in a detrimental way on improper grounds?

Whatever the form of harassment, it will be unwanted behaviour, which is unwelcome and unpleasant. Unlawful harassment may involve conduct of a sexual nature (sexual harassment), or it may be related to the victim's gender, gender reassignment, marital status or civil partner status, race, ethnic or national origin, colour, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy or maternity, belief or religion. Harassment is unacceptable even if it does not fall within one of these categories.

A person may be harassed even if they were not the intended 'target'. For example, an employee may be harassed by racist jokes about a different ethnic group if they create an offensive environment for that employee.

### Bullying

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined or threatened. Power does not always mean being in a position of authority, but can include both personal strength and the power to coerce through fear and intimidation. Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct.

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Legitimate, reasonable and constructive criticism of a worker's performance or behaviour, or reasonable instructions given to workers in the course of their employment, will not amount to bullying on their own.

### Guidance

No one in the organisation should have to put up with harassment or bullying within their employment or volunteering. Solutions may include the use of the disciplinary procedure.

If you think you are being bullied or harassed, you should, where possible, first make it clear to the person that their behaviour is unwelcome and you want it to stop. Once the person concerned understands that their behaviour is unwelcome, this may be enough to stop it.

If the bullying or harassment continues you should take your complaint through the Grievance Procedure. All such complaints will be handled in a timely and confidential manner. You will be guaranteed a fair and impartial hearing and the matter will be investigated thoroughly. If the investigation reveals that your complaint is valid, prompt action and disciplinary action designed to stop the bullying or harassment immediately and prevent its recurrence will be taken. In such circumstances, if relocation proves necessary, every effort will be made to relocate the perpetrator desks rather than you as the victim; however, the organisation will attempt to relocate you if that is your preference.

You will be protected from intimidation, victimisation or discrimination for filing a complaint or assisting in an investigation. Retaliating against an employee or volunteer for complaining about bullying or harassment is a disciplinary offence.

Whilst this procedure is designed to assist genuine victims of bullying or harassment, you should be aware that if you raise complaints which are proven to be deliberately vexatious, you will become subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Related Policies:	PO81 Grievance PO51 Disciplinary	
Related Documents:	none	
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