



Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy

Purpose

The Company does not accept any form of harassment and bullying, and the purpose of this policy is to prevent or eliminate them from the workplace.

Description

Reference is made to the Ethical Guidelines of the Grieg Group, especially point number 2, which states:

Quote

We do not accept any form of discrimination of employees or others involved in our activities.

Discrimination includes unequal treatment, exclusion or preference on the basis of religion, political views, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin or any other similar circumstance that compromises the principle of equality. Positive discrimination is tolerated in order to achieve equality and diversity.

The Grieg Group expects employees to treat everyone with whom they interact through their work with respect and tolerance. Employees must refrain from any conduct that has a negative effect on colleagues, the working environment or the Grieg Group.

Unquote

Harassment and bullying are examples of inappropriate and unwanted conduct that cause detrimental effects, such as stress, lack of motivation, reduced work performance, absenteeism, resignations, and high costs. Many who experience harassment or bullying do not report it, either because they think no one will believe them and so they will not receive any support, or because they think they will be subject to reprisals. It is important to know that there is support available from the Company, trade unions and professional associations.

Harassment and bullying, or any form of discrimination, are destructive behaviors which can significantly affect the performance of an employee. Harassment and bullying can take a wide variety of forms, ranging from simple verbal aggression, ill-treatment, cyber-bullying or sexual discrimination through to various forms of physical aggression resulting in serious injuries. Aggression may take the form of body language, intimidation, contempt, or disdain. While the physical effect of harassment and bullying is fairly easy to identify on account of the obvious external signs, the same cannot be said of the emotional effects of harassment and bullying which are often denied or distorted.

Harassment, whether intentionally or not, creates feelings of unease, humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort to the person on the receiving end. Bullying is a particular form of harassment that includes hostile or vindictive behavior, which can cause the recipient to feel threatened or intimidated. It results in a work environment in which a group of people or an individual may become fearful or intimidated because of the negative or hostile behavior of another group of people or individual. Bullying often involves a misuse of power or position and is often persistent and unpredictable.

Complaints

Complaints of harassment or bullying, or information from staff relating to such complaints, shall be dealt with fairly, confidentially, and sensitively.

To tackle the problems caused by harassment and bullying, everyone shall be encouraged to bring all incidents of harassment and bullying to the attention of the Company. No one shall “stick it out”, instead of reporting the incidents.

The Company has designated the Chief HR Officer as the first point of reference for any employee who wishes to make a complaint. The Chief HR Officer has the authority to deal with the complaint himself/herself or can choose to refer the complaint to a higher level in the Company. The complaint procedure shall be separate from the general grievance procedure, and the authorized person shall confer with the employee on the process going forward.

Complaints can be made orally or written (i.e., email, letter), and the authorized person shall keep the information confidential. Complaints shall be investigated promptly and objectively and shall consider all the circumstances before reaching a conclusion. The authorized person shall keep in mind that the perception of harassment and bullying is often felt differently by different people.

In some cases, the matters can be rectified informally, e.g., through mediation. This shall only be done if acceptable to the complainant. Sometimes people are not aware that their behavior is unwelcome and causing distress. An informal discussion can lead to greater understanding and an agreement that the behavior will cease. The perpetrator may be offered an opportunity to apologize for his/her actions and undertake not to repeat them. Under no circumstances shall the victim be made to face an alleged perpetrator if he/she does not wish to.

If the matter cannot be resolved through an informal process, or the complainant feels that the harassment or bullying is of such a serious nature, invoking a complaint procedure becomes necessary. The Company may also decide that the matter needs to be dealt with formally, and as with any disciplinary problem, shall follow a fair procedure. A complaint of harassment or bullying shall ensure fairness to both the complainant and the person accused.

Strengthening of Policy

The Company shall ensure that the commitment to eliminate harassment and bullying is communicated effectively through policy awareness, discussions, seminars etc.