



PURPOSE:

As part of our commitment to the fairness, dignity and respect of each employee, any form of bullying will not be tolerated by Sligo CIL. The aim of this policy is to indicate what constitutes bullying and what action CIL will take if it becomes necessary to deal with an offence of this nature.

SCOPE:

This Policy is applicable to all employees (temporary and permanent) irrespective of length of service and includes clients and service personnel both inside and outside the work environment.

POLICY:

Sligo CIL acknowledges the right of all employees to a workplace and environment free from any form of bullying. Every member of staff has an obligation to be aware of the effects of their own behaviour on others.

Any instances of bullying will be dealt with in an effective and efficient manner. In cases where the behaviour is proved to be repeated and consistent, causing unnecessary stress and anxiety, this will be considered gross misconduct. Sligo CIL reserves the right to use the disciplinary procedure up to and including summary dismissal.

As part of our code of conduct, it is imperative that all staff and suppliers respect the dignity of every colleague. Please consider the multi-cultural beliefs of all of your colleagues regarding your code of conduct, with particular reference to remarks, dress code, posters, e-mails and anything which may cause offence on the grounds of a person's gender, marital/civil status, race, religion, family status, age, sexual orientation or disability or to a member of the traveller community.

DEFINITION

The Task Force on the Prevention of Workplace Bullying defines bullying as:

“Repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work but, as a one off is not considered to be bullying”.

The following are examples of the types of behaviour considered as bullying and are prohibited by Sligo CIL:

VERBAL ABUSE

- Shouting or using aggressive or obscene language, in public or in private, to humiliate or intimidate.
- Making offensive comments about the same person regularly.
- Unfair and excessive criticism.
- Ridiculing the employee in front of other employees and individuals.
- Spreading false or malicious information about the individual around the Organisation etc.
- Personal insults, name calling
- Threatening job loss for trivial errors.

The above list is not exhaustive and only serves as a guideline to employees. Each case will be taken in isolation and dealt with in the appropriate manner.

NON VERBAL ABUSE:

- Setting up a person to fail by overloading them with work or setting impossible deadlines.
- Withholding information and blaming the person for being ignorant.
- Ignoring, excluding and isolating a person.
- Blocking promotion.
- Threatening body language.
- Damaging personal belongings.
- Excessive monitoring.
- Making offensive/inappropriate comments via text messaging, email or via social networking sites.

The above list is not exhaustive and only serves as a guideline to employees. Each case will be taken in isolation and dealt with in the appropriate manner.

PHYSICAL ABUSE:

- Hitting.
- Bodily contact that is abusive in nature.

The above list is not exhaustive and only serves as a guideline to employees. Each case will be taken in isolation and dealt with in the appropriate manner.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING:

Informal Procedure:

An informal approach can often resolve difficult situations with the minimum of conflict and stress for the individuals involved. This in no way diminishes the issue of the effects on the individual.

If you feel you are being bullied you should attempt to explain to the alleged bully that their behaviour is unacceptable. If you find it difficult to approach the alleged bully alone then seek help and advice from the nominated contact person. He/she will listen, be supportive and explain the various options open to you.

You may ask the contact person to assist you with raising the issue with the alleged bully. The contact person will approach the alleged bully in a confidential, non-confrontational discussion to try to resolve the matter in a low-key manner.

If you decide to bypass the informal procedure, for whatever reason, and choose to go down the formal route then this will not reflect negatively on you in any way.

Formal Procedure:

If the informal approach is not appropriate, or if after using the informal procedure, the bullying continues, then the formal procedure will be invoked.

A formal written complaint must be given to the manager or a member of the management team. The complaint should only contain precise details of actual incidents of bullying.

A letter will be sent to the alleged bully to inform him/her that a formal complaint has been made against them. A copy of the complaint will be given to him/her and he/she will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegations.

An initial examination will be carried out by a designated, impartial member of Management who will determine the appropriate course of action to be taken e.g. a mediated solution or attempt to resolve the situation informally or decide if it should be progressed to a formal investigation. If these courses of action prove to be inappropriate or inconclusive, then a formal investigation of the complaint will take place to determine the facts and credibility of the allegations.

Investigation:

The investigation will be carried out by a designated member of the Management team or, if necessary, in the case of any possible conflict of interest, an agreed external third party. In either case, the person nominated should be familiar with the procedures involved. The investigation will be thorough, objective and confidential. It will be conducted with sensitivity and respect for the rights of the complainant and the alleged bully.

The designated investigator will meet with the complainant, the alleged bully and any witnesses or other relevant persons individually. The purpose of these meetings is to establish the facts about the allegations, set a timeframe, all of which will be completely confidential.

The complainant and the alleged bully have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or employee / trade union representative.

The person investigating the complaints will make every effort to carry out and complete the investigation as quickly as possible. When the investigation is complete, a written report will be submitted to management which will contain the findings of the investigation.

Both the complainant and the alleged bully will be given the opportunity to comment on the findings of the investigation before any action is decided by management.

Management will inform the complainant and the alleged bully, in writing, about the findings of the investigation.

Outcome:

If it is decided that the complaint is well founded then a formal interview will be conducted with the alleged bully to determine an appropriate course of action. This may include counselling, monitoring or progressing the issue through disciplinary and grievance procedures.

In the event of the findings of the investigation concluding that the complaint was untrue and was brought with a malicious or vexation intent then disciplinary action will be taken against the complainant up to and including dismissal.

Approved by:

Maria Mulligan, CEO, SCIL

Date: April 2021