

HARASSMENT & BULLYING POLICY

Policy

Hunts Mind will not tolerate harassment or bullying of employees, sessional workers, volunteers or service users by other employees, sessional workers, volunteers or service users or any other person on any grounds; this includes physical attack, threats, damage to property, verbal abuse, sexual abuse or any other behaviour intended to deny an individual's human rights to a non abusive environment.

Harassment and bullying are a disciplinary offence.

Context

Hunts Mind's Harassment & Bullying Policy applies to employees, sessional workers and volunteers in the working environment and to service users while they are on Hunts Mind premises or using Hunts Mind services.

Depending on the circumstances, the trustees may deal with instances of harassment or bullying by invoking the Disciplinary Procedures or the Suspension Procedures. Individuals who feel they are being unfairly accused of harassment or bullying may invoke the Grievance Procedure (for staff) or the Complaints Procedure (for users and others).

With respect to the Hunts Mind Confidentiality Policy, when there is a clear incident of harassment or bullying the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Board of Trustees may disclose the name of the individual(s) concerned to the Trustees and any other person or organisation, on a need to know basis.

Implementation

Harassment is behaviour by a person or persons which another person finds intimidating, upsetting, embarrassing, humiliating, or offensive and may take place over a period of time or on one isolated occasion.

Harassment is a sensitive issue and each individual's perception of harassment may vary. However it is for the recipient to define whether any behaviour is unacceptable.

Bullying is a complex phenomenon of unwanted offensive and malicious behaviour which undermines an individual or group through persistently negative attacks. There is typically an unpredictable and irrational abuse of power or position that can manifest itself in physical, verbal or non-verbal forms. There is usually an element of vindictiveness attached to bullying and the behaviour is calculated to undermine, patronise, humiliate, intimidate or demean the recipient.



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It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that harassment or bullying do not occur, or do not persist once complained about, by asking the harasser/bully to stop and pointing out that their behaviour is in breach of Hunts Mind policy.

Where an individual feels harassed or bullied, Hunts Mind will endeavour to resolve the matter informally and in a way which enables the people concerned to continue to work together. It is recognised that individuals are not always aware of the impact of their behaviour. If the informal approach fails to resolve the situation, the relevant disciplinary procedure will be invoked.

For disciplinary purposes, the current definition of harassment – as applied to sexual orientation, religion or belief and race and ethnic and national origin is:

“unwanted conduct that violates people’s dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment”

If any employee feels harassed, bullied or placed under unreasonable pressure in the course of their work for Hunts Mind, they should report this to their line manager who will in turn inform the Chief Executive or Chairperson of Hunts Mind.

Volunteers or service users feeling harassed or bullied should report to the relevant project manager or that person’s line manager who, as above, will inform the Chief Executive or Chairperson of Hunts Mind.

If harassment or bullying does occur, and the accused is a member of staff, the Disciplinary Procedure will be invoked

If harassment or bullying occurs, and a service user is accused, the Suspension Procedures will be invoked.

If an individual feels they are being unfairly accused of harassment or bullying, they may invoke the Grievance Procedure (for staff) or the Complaints Procedure (for users and others).

Hunts Mind Harassment & Bullying Policy

Date policy ratified by Executive Committee: 26th August 2009

Signature of Chair:

To be reviewed: December 2010