



Yenaa Housing

Bullying and Harassment Policy 2024



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Policy Checklist	
Date of Implementation	Feb 24
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Bullying and Harassment Policy

1. Introduction and Purpose

Yenaa Housing is committed to providing a workplace free from bullying, harassment, and any form of discrimination. We believe that all employees, workers, contractors, and visitors have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. This policy outlines our commitment to preventing and addressing bullying and harassment and provides a framework for reporting and resolving such issues. We recognise that bullying and harassment can have a detrimental impact on individuals' well-being, productivity, and the overall work environment.

This policy applies to all employees (permanent, temporary, and agency), workers, contractors, consultants, visitors, and anyone else acting on behalf of Yenaa Housing. It applies both in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside of the workplace, including social events, conferences, and online communications.

2. Core Principles

Yenaa Housing's approach to bullying and harassment is based on the following principles:

- * **Zero Tolerance:** We have a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment in any form.
- * **Respect and Dignity:** All individuals are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity.
- * **Fairness and Impartiality:** All complaints will be investigated fairly, impartially, and promptly.
- * **Confidentiality:** We will maintain confidentiality to the extent possible, while ensuring a thorough investigation. (Note: complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, as investigations may require disclosing information on a need-to-know basis.)
- * **Support and Protection:** We will provide support and protection to those who experience bullying or harassment and to those who report it.
- * **Accountability:** Those who engage in bullying or harassment will be held accountable for their actions.

3. Definitions

* **Bullying:** Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious, or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. It can involve verbal, physical, written, or online communication. Bullying can be a single incident or a pattern of behaviour. Examples include:

- * Spreading malicious rumours or gossip.
- * Intimidating or threatening behaviour.
- * Unjustified criticism or blame.
- * Exclusion or isolation.
- * Undermining someone's work.
- * Excessive monitoring or micromanagement.

* **Harassment:** Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic (as defined in the Equality Act 2010) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for that person. It can also be unwanted conduct of a sexual nature (sexual harassment). Protected characteristics include:

- * Age
- * Disability
- * Gender reassignment
- * Marriage and civil partnership
- * Pregnancy and maternity
- * Race
- * Religion or belief
- * Sex
- * Sexual orientation

* **Examples of Harassment:** (This list is not exhaustive)

- * Making offensive jokes or comments about someone's protected characteristic.
- * Displaying offensive pictures or materials.
- * Unwelcome sexual advances or attention.
- * Creating a hostile or intimidating environment.
- * Victimisation (treating someone unfairly because they have made a complaint of harassment or discrimination).

4. Relevant Legislation and Guidance

This policy is informed by the following legislation and guidance:

- * **Equality Act 2010:** Prohibits discrimination, harassment, and victimisation based on protected characteristics.
 - * **Protection from Harassment Act 1997:** Provides legal protection against harassment, including stalking.
 - * **Employment Rights Act 1996:** Deals with unfair dismissal and constructive dismissal, which may arise from bullying or harassment.
 - * **ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) Guidance:** Provides guidance on preventing and managing bullying and harassment in the workplace.
 - * **EHRC (Equality and Human Rights Commission) Codes of Practice:** Provides guidance on discrimination and equality issues.
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- * Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974: Requires employers to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of their employees, which includes protecting them from bullying and harassment.

5. Responsibilities

- * Directors/Senior Management: Responsible for creating and maintaining a culture of respect and dignity, ensuring adequate resources are allocated to implement this policy, and regularly reviewing its effectiveness.
- * Managers: Responsible for promoting a positive work environment, addressing any concerns raised by their team members, and taking prompt action to prevent and address bullying and harassment. They should act as role models and be familiar with this policy and its procedures.
- * All Employees: Responsible for treating others with respect and dignity, adhering to this policy, and reporting any concerns about bullying or harassment they witness or experience.

6. Reporting Procedures

Yenaa Housing provides a clear and accessible process for reporting incidents of bullying and harassment. We encourage individuals to report concerns as soon as possible.

- * Informal Resolution: Where appropriate, an individual may wish to address the issue informally by speaking directly to the person involved. This is not always possible or appropriate, especially if the behaviour is serious or intimidating.
- * Formal Complaint: If the informal approach is not possible or has not resolved the issue, a formal complaint should be made. The complaint should be submitted in writing (email or letter) to [Name and Title of designated person,
 - * The name of the person making the complaint.
 - * The name of the person against whom the complaint is being made.
 - * A clear and detailed description of the incident(s), including dates, times, and locations.
 - * The names of any witnesses.
 - * Any supporting evidence (e.g., emails, messages).
 - * The outcome the complainant is seeking.

- * Alternative Reporting Channels: If the individual feels unable to report to the designated person (e.g., because that person is the alleged perpetrator), they can report to [Specify alternative reporting channels, e.g., a senior manager, a confidential hotline, an external ombudsman]. Contact details for these alternative channels are: [Provide contact details].

7. Investigation Procedures

Yenaa Housing will conduct a thorough and impartial investigation of all formal complaints of bullying and harassment.

- * Acknowledgement: The complainant will receive acknowledgement of their complaint within [Specify timeframe, e.g., 3 working days].
- * Investigation: The investigation will be conducted by Senior management or Directors. The investigator will:
 - * Interview the complainant.
 - * Interview the alleged perpetrator.
 - * Interview any witnesses.
 - * Gather and review any relevant evidence.
 - * Maintain confidentiality throughout the investigation, to the extent possible.
- * Outcome: The investigator will prepare a written report of their findings. The report will be shared with the complainant and the alleged perpetrator (subject to data protection considerations). The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to both parties within 14 days of the complaint being received.

8. Outcomes and Disciplinary Action

If the investigation finds that bullying or harassment has occurred, Yenaa Housing will take appropriate action. This may include:

- * Disciplinary Action: Up to and including termination of employment.
- * Training and Development: Requiring the perpetrator to attend training on bullying and harassment prevention.
- * Mediation: Facilitating a mediated discussion between the parties (where appropriate and with the agreement of both parties).
- * Changes to Work Arrangements: Making changes to work arrangements to prevent further incidents.
- * No Action: If the investigation finds that the complaint is unsubstantiated, no further action will be taken.

9. Support for Individuals

Yenaa Housing is committed to providing support to individuals who have experienced bullying or harassment, and to those who have been accused of bullying or harassment. Support may include:

- * Mediation: Offering mediation services to help resolve the conflict.
- * Mentoring: Providing a mentor to offer support and guidance.
- * Time Off: Granting time off for stress or medical reasons.
- * Review of Workload: Reviewing workload to reduce stress and pressure.

10. Protection Against Victimisation

Yenaa Housing will not tolerate any victimisation of individuals who report concerns about bullying or harassment, or who participate in an investigation. Any act of victimisation will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

11. Training and Awareness

Yenaa Housing will provide regular training and awareness sessions on bullying and harassment prevention to all employees. Training will cover:

- * What constitutes bullying and harassment.
 - * The impact of bullying and harassment on individuals and the workplace.
 - * How to report concerns.
 - * The responsibilities of managers and supervisors.
 - * The organisation's policies and procedures.
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