



Growing Hope |
Registered charity 1176358

Growing Hope, KXC, 237 Pentonville Road,
London, N1 9NG | 07496 528506
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Bullying and Harassment Policy

Introduction

Growing Hope believes that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and to work in an environment, which is free from bullying and harassment (this includes victimisation and discrimination). The purpose of this policy is to support a working environment and culture in which bullying and harassment is unacceptable. Bullying and harassment affects the lives of staff and the service received by our families and therefore Growing Hope will not tolerate such behaviour from its employees or volunteers.

The purpose of this policy is to provide the mechanism, which allows an individual to report concerns of bullying and harassment by other employees or volunteers and receive the necessary support to do so. It also gives information on support that should be given to any employee or volunteer who has an allegation of bullying made against them. It also contains guidelines for managers to assist them to take appropriate action.

Principles

The following principles will be applied in relation to this policy

- Organisational culture – all individuals working for or volunteering with Growing Hope must treat colleagues with respect and dignity.
- Self definition – bullying and harassment are determined by the effect on the recipient rather than the intention of the person who has caused offence.
- Impartiality and fair treatment – independent procedures and offers of support to both parties will take place surrounding any allegation.
- Confidentiality – as far as possible allegations will be kept confidential.

Definitions

The information below gives advice on how to recognise and identify behaviour that constitutes bullying or harassment in the work place.

Bullying

Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.

This takes many forms and may not just be physical menace or violence. It may be stress and/or anguish caused by: attitudes, innuendoes, derogatory comments, ridicule, undermining authority, repeated rudeness/pressurising behaviour and deliberate isolation of an individual. This can include demeaning communications using written, electronic or telephonic methods.

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Harassment

This is any uninvited, unwelcome and unreciprocated comments, suggestions, jokes or attention which is offensive to the person concerned and causes them to feel humiliated, embarrassed, patronised or threatened.

Such behaviour does not have to be repeated to constitute harassment and a single incident of sufficient gravity can constitute harassment.

It is, however, acceptable for supervisors and managers to reasonably manage the performance of staff, by explaining unacceptable performance and behaviours and setting fair objectives for improvement.

Responsibilities

Growing Hope Trustees

The Trustees have a responsibility to ensure that the policy is followed, fairly and consistently. Their duties will involve:

- Advising managers and staff where individuals feel that they are being harassed or bullied in the course of their employment
- All incidents of bullying or harassment reported to the trustees will be recorded and reviewed for appropriate action to be taken.
- Ensuring the effective implementation of the policy
- Monitoring incidence of bullying and harassment and initiating appropriate action
- Reviewing and amending the policy as necessary.

Growing Hope Staff and Volunteers

All staff have a responsibility to consider how their behaviour affects others. Behaviour that is handled easily by one colleague may be offensive or upsetting to another.

If you witness a colleague being bullied or harassed, you should alert your manager or a trustee to enable them to support the victim and explore the possibilities of action.

Actions

Personal action

In some cases talking directly to the person who is causing the bullying or harassment problem may be enough. This approach may be appropriate if the person complaining believes that the destructive behaviour is unintentional, and the perpetrator is unaware of its impact. The person complaining can take this approach alone, or with help from a friend.

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The person complaining should clearly:

- Explain how the behaviour makes them feel.
- Explain how it is interfering with their work
- Ask it to stop

The person complaining should keep a note of everything that is said, so that they can report this back to the person bullying/harassing.

Reporting Concerns

If you wish to report your concerns to someone whether you are a victim or witness, you should do this in writing and, where possible, provide examples of the incident/s of bullying and harassment that you have experienced or witnessed (including details of witnesses, if possible). If you are concerned about preparing such a written report, support can be obtained through an initial conversation with the Lead Therapist and Clinic Manager.

If the Lead Therapist and Clinic Manager is involved in the bullying or harassment then the Local Chair of Trustees should be contacted in the first instance. If the local trustee board are also involved the concern should be emailed to chairman@growinghope.org.uk in order to reach the Chairman of Growing Hope (umbrella charity).

Growing Hope Managers and Trustees will endeavour to respond to reports within 5 working days.

Investigation

- Once your report is received, the manager/trustee responsible for investigating your concerns will first meet with you to ensure they fully understand the extent of your complaint.
- They will also advise you of the procedure they will follow to carry out their investigation and the timescale. Where appropriate, and if possible, they may also make arrangements for you to work different hours or to have time off whilst the investigation is carried out so that you are not working with the perpetrator.
- Investigations will be completed within 5-10 working days.
- Once the manager/trustee has completed his/her investigation, a decision will be taken regarding the most appropriate action in order to ensure that the inappropriate behaviour is not repeated.
- The action may range from counselling to formal disciplinary action and would not preclude specialised support where the behaviour is found to be health related.

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- The victim will be advised of any action taken, although certain courses of action will, by their nature, be kept confidential.
- If disciplinary action is considered you may be asked to discuss the situation with the charity trustees at a formal hearing, you will be supported to do this (Managers/trustees should refer to the disciplinary policy and procedure).

Guidance for Managers and Trustees investigating allegations

Formal Investigation

Managers should collect statements or signed minutes of meetings as supporting evidence to allow them to proceed. A member of the trustee board should be available to support the manager at all meetings where appropriate.

Outcomes

Your action, wherever possible, should be to ensure that the behaviour is not repeated by the perpetrator and the recipient is not put in a position where they could be exposed to it again. Using the principles of the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, a wide range of action is available to you:

- Counselling
- Re-training package
- Using the capability procedure
- Formal disciplinary action
- Action on health grounds, i.e. behaviour is identified as a direct cause of poor health, e.g. stress

NB If formal disciplinary action is considered necessary, managers/trustees may need to provide additional support to the complainant to enable them to appear as a witness.

Monitoring

It is essential that managers/trustees put in place a process to monitor the employee(s) who have displayed the inappropriate behaviour. An individual who has developed a style of behaviour that uses bullying and harassment is likely to find it difficult to stop this instinctive reaction. Therefore, work may need to be undertaken to assist them in learning new patterns of behaviour.

Legal position

Relevant law and codes of practice

Growing Hope is bound by the provisions of the following the Equality Act 2010, which encompasses protected characteristic legislation to ensure that we do not

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discriminate against any employees, which includes acts of bullying and harassment.

NB Certain forms of harassment may constitute criminal offences and, as such, may be referred to the Police, e.g. physical assault, stalking or nuisance phone calls. Individuals may be held personally liable for acts of sexual or racial harassment.

This policy should be read alongside other Growing Hope policies.

Policy adopted: February 2020