

Equal Opportunities and Practice

The Managing Director of Alternative Heat advocates equality of opportunity for all and declares that they will actively promote a policy which is anti- discrimination, harassment or victimisation. The Company will provide equal opportunity for all job applicants and workers. All recruitment, promotion and training will be based upon an individual's ability and job performance and will exclude any consideration of:

- **Race**
- **Religion**
- **Age**
- **Disability**
- **Sex / gender**
- **Being pregnant or having just had a baby**
- **Being married or in a civil partnership**
- **Sexual orientation**

This is in accordance with the following legislation:

- (Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and Race Regulations 2003)
- (The Employment equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003)
- (The Disability Discrimination Act 2005)
- (The Gender Recognition Act 2004)
- (Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2003)
- (The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003)
- Equality Act 2010

The Company will not directly or indirectly discriminate on the aforementioned grounds.

Furthermore, Kane Group and Alternative Heat will undertake to use its best endeavour to encourage its employees and all persons within the range of its influence to commit themselves to the same policy.

Breaches of the Policy and Practice will be regarded as misconduct and may lead to disciplinary proceedings and, for serious or continuous disregard of policy, dismissal from the Company.

We will strive to ensure there is equality of opportunity within our Company for all our employees.

We declare that we will uphold all Equal Opportunities Legislation to ensure equal rights for all.

Signed



CONNEL MCMULLAN
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Positive Work Environment Policy

As Management of Alternative Heat, we believe that people work well together in an atmosphere of mutual respect. We appreciate that companies thrive through good employee relationships and unfortunately bullies undermine this.

We therefore strive to foster a culture free of bullying or harassment. We consider consistent bullying and harassment to be examples of gross misconduct which will be acknowledged as disciplinary offences and will be addressed through our disciplinary procedure. All employees must comply with this policy.

It is committed to ensuring that individuals do not feel apprehensive because of their religious belief, political opinion, gender, marital/civil partnership status, sexual orientation, race, age, disability or as a result of being subjected to any inappropriate behaviour.

We do not tolerate bullying.

We encourage our employees to report allegations of bullying or harassing behaviour to their supervisor or to any Company Director, whichever is easier, and assure them that their allegations will be taken seriously and confidentially and that grievances or complaints will not be ignored or treated lightly.

At the outset, we like to make our employees aware of our company expectations of tolerance and the promotion of good working relationships and, to this end

- Ensure comments and actions in the workplace do not go beyond acceptable behaviour
- Ensure employees that bullying and harassment will not be tolerated
- Encourage employees to report instances of bullying or harassment immediately so problems can quickly be resolved before morale has been damaged
- Include clear and fair disciplinary procedures, including confidentiality provisions
- Promote good working relationships and staff morale-boosting opportunities.

Signed:



CONNEL MCMULLAN
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Positive Working Environment Complaint Procedure

PURPOSE

All employees of this Company have a right to be treated with dignity and harassment at work will not be permitted or tolerated. It is committed to ensuring that individuals do not feel apprehensive because of their religious belief, political opinion, gender, marital/civil partnership status, sexual orientation, race, age, disability or as a result of being subjected to any inappropriate behaviour. Any person who feels that they have suffered harassment has the right to make a complaint.

PROCEDURE SUMMARY

This procedure is to ensure that harassment and bullying does not occur in the workplace, and, if it does occur, to ensure that adequate procedures are readily available to deal with the problem and prevent its recurrence.

BACKGROUND / SCOPE

Harassment and bullying pollutes the working environment and can have a detrimental effect upon health, confidence, morale and performance. The anxiety and stress produced by such harassment commonly leads to those subjected to it taking time off work due to sickness, being less efficient at work, or leaving their job to seek work elsewhere. We therefore strive to foster a culture free of bullying or harassment.

APPLICABILITY

This procedure applies to all employees regardless of length of service.

EXCLUSIONS / EXCEPTIONS

No exclusions.

PROCEDURE DETAILS

A. Definition of Harassment	See Definitions
B. Definition of Bullying	See Definitions
C. Breach of Procedure / Disciplinary Action	<p>Disciplinary action will be taken against any colleague who acts in breach of this procedure by harassing or bullying a work colleague, customer or any person with whom he/she comes into contact with in the course of their duties.</p> <p>Disciplinary action may include summary dismissal in the case of a serious breach of this procedure or repeated breaches. In other cases, it may include a formal warning either oral or written. Disciplinary action (which may include summary dismissal) will also be taken against any employee who victimises or retaliates against a colleague for alleging that harassment or bullying has occurred or any colleague who makes malicious or vexatious allegations of harassment or bullying. Such action will be taken in accordance with the Company's Disciplinary Procedure.</p> <p>Breaches of this procedure may also result in the employee responsible being held personally liable for compensation if the person who has been harassed takes legal action. In addition, in cases of serious harassment, the colleague responsible may be prosecuted in the criminal courts.</p>
D. Complaints Procedure	The Company recognises that any employee who feels that they need to bring a complaint of harassment or bullying may feel embarrassed and vulnerable. However, you will receive support and reassurance that your complaint will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Employees need not fear that they will be victimised for bringing a complaint. Any person who is found to have harassed or retaliated against another for complaining about or giving evidence about harassment or bullying will be subject to disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.

Similarly, the Company recognises that those who are accused of harassment or bullying need to have their views heard and the allegations made against them investigated thoroughly. Whilst all acts of harassment or bullying are serious, any action taken will depend upon the gravity of the alleged harassment.

The procedure does not replace or prejudice your right to pursue a complaint under current legislation to the Industrial Tribunal or Fair Employment Tribunal for Northern Ireland.

E. Informal Procedure

Wherever possible, any employee who feels that he or she has been the subject of harassment or bullying should firstly inform the person responsible that their behaviour is unwelcome and ask them to stop. If the harassment or bullying continues, or if there are employment consequences, a formal complaint should be made as per section (F).

An employee who considers that they are being harassed by a third party, such as a customer, contractor or supplier, should initially attempt to resolve their concern by raising it with the immediate manager on an informal basis. Managers will provide confidential advice and assistance to workers who have been bullied or harassed and will assist in the resolution of any problems, whether through formal or informal means.

This stage is used if an employee simply wants a behaviour to stop.

F. Formal Procedure

If the behaviour continues or if it is not appropriate to resolve the problem informally, you should raise the matter through the formal complaints procedure. An employee who believes that they are the victim of harassment or bullying should report the incident(s) to their immediate manager. If you find this embarrassing or if the complaint is against your manager, then you should make the complaint, providing details, to the Human Resources Department in writing. An appropriate manager will then be made available to investigate your complaint;

The person to whom a complaint is made is under a duty to immediately investigate the complaint themselves, or if they feel unable to do so, should refer the complaint to the Human Resources Department.

The process should be as follows

i) Initial Meeting

The Manager will meet the complainant to:

- clarify and formally record the nature of the complaint and that it is being handled under the formal procedure
- ensure that you are aware of the next stages of the procedure

ii) Avoiding Contact between the two parties involved

This issue must be considered before action is taken to inform the alleged harasser of the complaint.

In cases of serious harassment, consideration will be given to precautionary suspension on full pay to enable full investigations to proceed. An individual who is going to be suspended will be formally advised of this at a meeting with the Manager concerned.

iii) Informing the Alleged Harasser / Bully

The Manager will meet with the alleged harasser / bully and:

- outline the nature of the complaint
- confirm that it is being handled under the formal procedure
- ensure that the individual is aware of the next stages of the procedure

All complaints will be handled in a confidential and impartial manner. The investigating manager should firstly discuss the situation with the colleague affected. He or she should then make arrangements to interview the colleague against whom a complaint has been made. These two procedures should be completed within 14 days of the complaint being made, depending on the availability of the parties, and should be fully documented.

Employees against whom a complaint has been made are assured a fair and impartial hearing and the chance to put forward their side of the story. Full details will be given of the complaint in writing before the investigatory interview and the employee concerned will be offered the opportunity to be interviewed in the presence of a fellow colleague or trade union representative. Family members, even when they are a work colleague, are not permitted to accompany the employee unless the employee is under the age of 18 years.

It may also be necessary to place any person accused of harassment or bullying on investigatory suspension depending on the circumstances of the particular allegation(s).

If it is necessary to interview other colleagues who may have witnessed acts of harassment or bullying, these colleagues can be assured of the same degree of confidentiality. Any further investigations should be completed within 28 days.

G. Outcome

1. Reporting of facts

Having obtained and considered all the information possible, the Manager will prepare a written report outlining the facts, indicating their findings, and whether a case is substantiated.

2. Communicating the findings

The outcome of the investigation will be communicated in writing to the person who made the complaint and the person against who the complaint was made.

3. Decision on disciplinary action

If practicable, another Manager within the Company will consider the facts and will decide either:

- i) to implement the Company's agreed Disciplinary Procedure against any party as appropriate
- ii) and / or to take any other appropriate management action, for example, the provision of training or counselling.

After the investigation is complete

i) Consideration of transfer

Redeployment if action is taken under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure – AH-HR-PO-14 Rev:01

Where a complaint has been upheld and a serious act of harassment/bullying has taken place you may wish to avoid any further contact with the harasser/bully. Should the harasser/bully remain in employment with the Company, where it is agreed that further contact between the individuals concerned would be unacceptable, every effort will be made to facilitate this wish. Consideration will always be given to relocating the harasser/bully in the first instance.

Redeployment where action has not been taken under the Disciplinary Procedure

In such cases consideration may still be given, where practicable, to the voluntary transfer of one of the employees concerned.

ii) Further Meetings

The Manager will check with the individual who has alleged harassment / bullying on at least a fortnightly basis for 2 months following the investigation to ensure that no further harassment or bullying or victimisation has occurred. This action will be undertaken even when a complaint has not been upheld.

4. Appeal

Where the alleged victim is not satisfied with the outcome they will have the right of appeal. Any appeal should be made in writing and will be investigated by a more senior manager to ensure the matter is dealt with impartially. After the appeal meeting the final decision will be communicated.

5. Review

The procedure is non-contractual and will be reviewed on a regular basis in the light of operating experience and/or changes in legislation.

DEFINITIONS

Term / Acronym	Definition
Harassment	<p>Harassment is any physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct which has the purpose, or effect of, violating an employee's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Such conduct is commonly related to sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race (including but not limited to colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, disability or age.</p> <p>It is for each individual to determine what behaviour they find acceptable and what they regard as offensive.</p> <p>All employees of this Company have a right to be treated with dignity and harassment at work will not be permitted or tolerated. Any person who feels that they have suffered harassment has the right to make a complaint.</p> <p>Examples of harassment might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unwanted physical contact, even if not obviously sexual, including unnecessary touching, patting, pinching or brushing against another person• Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions, lewd comments or pressure of a sexual nature (for example that sexual favours may further a career or that refusal may hinder it)• Threatening, insulting, abusive or violent behaviour or insensitive jokes or pranks which denigrates or ridicules a worker because of a particular characteristic including his or her sex, race, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief, or age including offensive comments about appearance or dress• Display or circulation of sexually suggestive material by e-mail, posters, photographs, cartoons or otherwise• Purposely ignoring or excluding an individual• Substituting responsible tasks with trivial tasks or setting unrealistic targets for colleagues.• Inappropriate texts, emails or other forms of communications to fellow employees that are sexual, degrading, offensive or humiliating in nature <p>This list is not exhaustive and other behaviour may constitute harassment.</p>

Bullying

Bullying means offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or an abuse or misuse of power intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure an employee. It can be direct or indirect, either 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. Bullying does not include legitimate and constructive criticism of your performance or behaviour, an occasionally raised voice, or an argument. Examples of bullying might include:

- Persistent criticism, threats, abuse, teasing, gossip and practical jokes
 - Name calling, insults, devaluing with reference to age, physical appearance
 - Humiliation and ridicule either in private, at meetings or in front of customers/clients
 - Overbearing supervision
 - Unjustifiably excluding colleagues from meetings/communications
 - Shouting or swearing at people in public and private
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- Spontaneous rages, often over trivial matters
 - Deliberately sabotaging or impeding work performance
 - Setting individuals up to fail by imposing impossible deadlines
 - Removing areas of responsibility and imposing menial tasks
 - Continually refusing requests for leave, holidays or training

This list is not exhaustive and other behaviour may constitute bullying.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Entity / Personnel	Responsibilities
HR & All Managers	<p>Managers and supervisors have a responsibility to ensure that harassment or bullying does not occur in work areas for which they are responsible.</p> <p>Managers also have a responsibility to explain the Company's policy to their staff and take steps to promote it positively. They will be responsive and supportive to any member of staff who makes a complaint, provide full and clear advice on the procedure to be adopted, maintain confidentiality in all cases and ensure that there is no further problem or any victimisation after a complaint has been resolved.</p> <p>The Company will provide training to ensure that all managers, supervisors and other staff are fully aware of this policy and the procedures for dealing with harassment and bullying.</p> <p>HR will assist in the both the implementation and application of the process and procedure.</p>
Employees	<p>All employees have a responsibility to help create and maintain a working environment that respects the dignity of employees. You should be aware of the serious and genuine problems, which harassment and bullying can cause, ensure that your behaviour is beyond question and could not be considered in any way to be harassment or bullying. You should discourage such behaviour by making it clear that you find it unacceptable and by supporting colleagues if they are experiencing harassment or bullying and are considering making a complaint. You should alert a Manager or Supervisor to any incidents to enable the Company to deal with the matter.</p>

RELATED DOCUMENTS, TOOLS AND TEMPLATES

Policies & Procedures	Location
Disciplinary Policy & Procedure – AH-HR-PO-014 Rev:02	Z:\20. HR - Employee\2. Policies and Procedures\HR & General Policies