

# WORKPLACE BULLYING AND VIOLENCE POLICY



**Introduction** This policy applies to all relationships within the Company, including those with Employees, trainees, clients, contractors and other visitors.

It is Company policy to provide an environment where Employees:

- are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect
- can work without distress or interference caused by workplace bullying or violence.

The Company does not accept workplace bullying or violence of any kind by Employees, trainees, clients, contractors or other visitors. Behaviour of this nature is deemed to be unacceptable and will not be tolerated in **any** circumstance.

This also applies to any workplace bullying or violence in any work-related context including conferences, work functions, work-related Christmas parties or business trips.

## **What is Workplace Bullying?**

Workplace bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed towards an Employee or group of Employees, that creates a risk to health and safety.

Bullying types of behaviour, where they are repeated or occurring as part of a pattern of behaviour, can include, but are not restricted to:

- verbal abuse
- excluding or isolating Employees
- psychological workplace bullying and violence
- intimidation
- assigning meaningless tasks unrelated to the job
- deliberately changing work rosters to inconvenience particular Employees
- practical jokes
- deliberately withholding information that is vital for effective work performance.

## **What is 'Repeated' Behaviour?**

'Repeated' behaviour refers to the persistent nature of the behaviour, not that the behaviour is the same type each time. Behaviour is considered 'repeated' if an established pattern can be identified.

It may involve a series of different incidents, for example: verbal abuse, deliberate damage to personal property and unreasonable threats of dismissal.

## **What About a Single Incident?**

According to the definition, a single incident of bully-style behaviour does not constitute workplace bullying, however, the Company does not condone this and Management are required to take the appropriate action to ensure that the inappropriate behaviour is not repeated.

The behaviour may, however, be considered as harassment or discrimination

## **What is not Workplace Bullying?**

It is important to note the difference between a person's legitimate authority at work and workplace bullying. As an employer, the Company has a legal right to direct and control how work is performed, and Managers have a responsibility to monitor workflow and give feedback on performance.

Reasonable management actions include, but are not limited to:

- performance management processes
- disciplinary actions
- action taken to transfer or retrench an Employee
- a decision not to provide a promotion in connection with the worker's employment
- allocating work in compliance with systems and policies
- injury and illness processes
- business processes, such as, workplace change or restructuring.

If an Employee has obvious performance or behavioural issues, these will be identified and managed in a constructive way that does not involve personal insults or derogatory remarks.

## **What is Workplace Violence?**

Workplace violence is any incident where an Employee is physically attacked or threatened in the workplace.

Acts of workplace violence can include, but are not limited to:

- a threat to harm an individual or group
- striking, kicking, scratching, biting, spitting or any other type of direct physical contact
- throwing objects
- pushing, shoving, tripping, grabbing
- any form of indecent physical contact
- attacking with knives, guns, clubs or any other type of weapon.

Some types of workplace bullying and violence may be considered an offence under criminal law eg: physical assault or threat of assault.

## **Employee Responsibility**

All Employees have a responsibility:

- to abide by the ATTAR Workplace Bullying and Violence Policy
- not to conduct or participate in any behaviour that is of a bullying or threatening nature
- to set a personal example through their own conduct at work
- to notify Management if they observe any example of bullying or violent behaviour being displayed in the workplace.

## **Management Responsibility**

Management have a responsibility to:

- support the development and implementation of preventative measures
- take immediate corrective action if inappropriate behaviour is observed in the workplace, without waiting for a complaint to be made
- communicate the ATTAR Workplace Bullying and Violence Policy to all Employees and ensure that they are familiar with its contents.

# WORKPLACE BULLYING AND VIOLENCE POLICY



## **Dealing with Workplace Bullying and Violence Issues**

Employees who believe they are being bullied or are the object of workplace violence are encouraged to inform the alleged perpetrator that their behaviour is offensive, unacceptable, is against company policy and must stop.

Employees also have a range of informal and formal options available to address a workplace bullying and violence issue. Employees who wish to discuss or receive assistance with a workplace bullying or violence issue are encouraged to approach the Company's Management.

Where a complaint of alleged workplace bullying and violence is brought to Company's attention, the complaint will be addressed as early as possible in accordance with the Company Grievance Resolution Procedure.

## **Vexatious Complaints**

Vexatious or malicious complaints, (complaints made in bad faith without genuinely believing the complaint to be true) will not be tolerated.

## **Victimisation**

No Employees may be threatened, victimised or disadvantaged as a result of:

- making or intending to make a workplace bullying and violence complaint,
- providing information as a witness,
- supporting a complainant.

## **Disciplinary Action**

If a claim of workplace bullying and violence is substantiated, the Company will consider the matter and initiate disciplinary action in line with the circumstances of the individual case, up to and including termination of employment, exclusive of any civil remedy or criminal penalty that might be pursued if appropriate.

## **Procedures**

Refer to ATTAR Grievance Resolution Procedure