



Dove Nest Group

Harassment & Bullying Policy

DOVE NEST GROUP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Signed: 

Director

V Hannant

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DOVE NEST GROUP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Statement of Intent

Dove Nest Group expects all staff to behave in a professional way towards colleagues, clients, associates and learners, both at work and socially. The company seeks to eliminate any form of harassment and bullying at work, and to promote equality of opportunity for all employees regardless of their gender, marital status, race, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion, sexual orientation, age and trade union membership or non-membership.

The policy for dealing with incidences of harassment or bullying is such that it:

- provides employees with a means of raising a complaint using a formal or informal route;
- ensures that complaints are dealt with seriously and promptly and in a sympathetic and confidential manner;
- ensures that the alleged harasser or any other employee does not victimise or in any way retaliate against the complainant at work;
- ensures that, where there are reasonable grounds, to support an allegation of harassment or bullying that appropriate action is taken against the harasser under the firm's disciplinary procedure (which may include a dismissal for gross misconduct).

Harassment or bullying may be defined as any inappropriate action, behaviour, comments or physical contact that is unwelcome to the recipient. It does not cover behaviour which is mutually acceptable rather than which is unsolicited, personally offensive and not reciprocated. Harassment and bullying may take different forms such as:

Verbal Harassment or bullying

This includes:

- offensive remarks
- innuendoes
- inappropriate comments about appearance
- requests for sexual favours
- insensitive jokes
- displays of offensive material
- pranks or practical jokes
- threat of dismissal, loss of promotion for refusal of favours
- intrusion by pestering, spying, stalking

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Physical Harassment or bullying

This includes:

- touching or other physical contact without consent
- non-accidental behaviour causing injury, trauma or bodily harm
- threatened violence

Digital harassment and cyber bullying

This includes:

- abuse of the company's E-mail or Intranet to circulate offensive material
- Threatening or abusive text messages, e-mails or social media posts
- Sharing embarrassing or inappropriate media about an individual without consent
- Excluding individuals purposefully from group chats and other online activities
- Creating hate groups, forums or social channels about an individual
- Stealing passwords, masquerading and other hacking in order to pose as another individual

Harassment and bullying is an infringement of employees' rights and can affect their physical and mental health. Every member of staff should be aware that acts of sexual, racial and disability harassment committed during the course of employment can constitute unlawful sex, race and disability discrimination.

If the Company is satisfied that a case of harassment, intimidation or bullying has arisen the disciplinary procedure will be invoked. Serious or repeated cases of harassment, intimidation or bullying may constitute gross misconduct and could result in summary dismissal.

All managers of other individuals and teams are required to respect and act in accordance with the firm's Equal Opportunities Policy. Additionally, it is their responsibility to ensure their staff work in an environment free from harassment and bullying by preventing or stopping it and supporting employees who make a complaint.

All partners, associates and employees have a personal responsibility to be sensitive to the impact they have on the people around them and to respond to requests from other employees that is perceived to be harassment or bullying.

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Complaints

Complaints about harassment or bullying may be raised by an informal or formal route. Complaints should be made as soon as possible and normally within three months of the alleged incident. However, complaints after this time can be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Informal Procedure - In the first instance it may be possible to resolve a complaint through an informal approach to the harasser or bully. This is because some people may not realise that their behaviour may be regarded by others as harassment or bullying and may cease the behaviour if this is brought to their attention. It is preferable therefore that complaints of harassment or bullying are dealt with informally wherever possible.

Staff members who are victims of harassment or bullying are advised to make it clear that the behaviour is unacceptable and must stop. If employees are unable to do this verbally they should consider sending a written request (explaining the distress the behaviour is causing) to the harasser which may be effective.

If an individual finds it difficult or embarrassing to raise the problem directly, advice may be sought confidentially from Karen Moore (HR Department) so that an informal solution can be found if possible.

Formal Procedure - Where informal methods fail, or serious harassment or bullying occurs individuals are encouraged to lodge a formal complaint under the firm's Grievance procedure. If the individual's immediate superior is the harasser the grievance should be addressed to the Karen Moore Human Resources Director in the business unit. The complaint should be made in writing and state, where possible:

- the name of the harasser/bully
- the nature of the harassment/bullying
- dates and times when harassment/bullying occurred
- names of any witnesses to the harassment/bullying, if any
- any action taken by the complainant to address the harassment/bullying, if any.

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Investigation

Managers handling complaints raised under the formal procedure will carry out a thorough investigation under the disciplinary procedures quickly as possible, maintaining confidentiality at all times. All employees or partners under investigations are expected to respect the need for confidentiality. Failure to do so will be considered a disciplinary offence.

Disciplinary Action

If any person is found to be in breach of the Firm's Harassment and Bullying Policy, disciplinary action will be taken. Individuals will be protected from intimidation so far as possible, victimisation or discrimination as a result of filing a complaint. Such retaliation against an employee will be regarded as a disciplinary offence.

The option of a transfer may be considered. If this is appropriate every effort will be made to transfer the harasser/bully and not the complainant unless a request to the contrary is made.

If an individual proves to be acting maliciously in lodging a complaint under the harassment procedure, disciplinary action will be considered.

Dove Nest Group board of directors who have overall responsibility will review this policy and its commitments annually; however, Vince Hannant accepts delegated responsibility to implement this policy and achieve the objectives set.