



Dignity At Work Policy

For the Health Service

Anti Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment
Policy and Procedure

Summary



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive





Introduction

The health service employers and health service trade unions have produced a revised **Dignity at Work Policy for the Health Service**. The Policy provides that all employees are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect in the workplace and have a duty of care to treat others with dignity and respect. The Policy protects employees from bullying, sexual harassment and harassment regardless of whether it is carried out by a work colleague or a person with whom employees come into contact during the course of their work e.g. patient/client, contractor, visitor, supplier.

Your responsibility as an employee

- You have a responsibility to help maintain a working environment in which the dignity of all individuals is respected.
- You must comply with the Dignity at Work Policy and ensure that your behaviour does not cause offence to fellow workers or any person with whom you come into contact during the course of your work.
- You should discourage bullying and harassment by objecting to inappropriate behaviour.
- You should inform a manager if you are concerned that a colleague is being bullied or harassed.



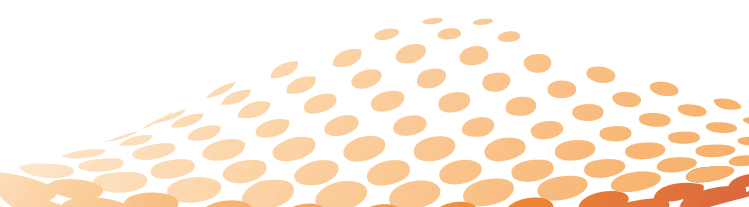
How do I know if I am being bullied or harassed?


The definitions of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment are clearly explained in the Policy document. Copies of the Policy are available from your manager or the Human Resources Department.

Remember that complaints relating to any aspects of your terms and conditions of employment or an instruction issued to you by your manager should be processed under the normal **grievance procedure**.

What should I do if I feel I am being bullied/harassed?

If you feel that you have been subjected to inappropriate behaviour which undermines your dignity at work you may:


- Approach the person concerned directly and make him/her aware that the behaviour in question is unwelcome or you may request a manager to approach the person on your behalf. Sometimes the person concerned may be genuinely unaware that his or her behaviour is unwelcome and causing distress. An informal discussion is often sufficient to alert the person to the effects of his or her behaviour and can lead to greater understanding and an agreement that the behaviour will stop.
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- Before deciding what course of action, if any, to take, you may wish to discuss the matter on a confidential basis with a Support Contact Person, manager, union representative, Occupational Health Service or EAP.

Role of Support Contact Person

- A **Support Contact Person** is available to listen, be supportive and outline the options open to you and explain the procedure for dealing with allegations of bullying/ harassment.

If, having consulted with the Support Contact Person or other appropriate person, you decide to pursue the matter, you may do one of the following:

- Approach the person concerned directly.
 - If you are not confident about approaching the person or where a direct approach has not resolved the matter, you should request the intervention of an appropriate manager who will make every effort to resolve the matter.
 - If the matter cannot be resolved by local management, it may be referred to the HR Department for a preliminary screening. If it is decided to formally progress the matter under the Dignity at Work Policy, you will be offered the opportunity to have the matter dealt with by mediation. If you choose not to avail of mediation, the matter may be referred for investigation.
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Mediation

Where the matter cannot be resolved locally, both parties will be requested to consider the use of mediation and every effort will be made to secure their agreement. Mediation is a strictly confidential process and requires the voluntary participation and co-operation of both parties.

Formal Investigation

If the matter cannot be resolved at local level or through mediation, it may be the subject of a formal investigation. Details of the investigation process are set out in the Policy.

The Process

Sources of Advice and Support

Support Contact Person

A Manager in the Workplace

Human Resources Department

Union Representative

Employee Assistance Programme

Occupational Health

Resolving Complaints

Approach the alleged perpetrator directly

Request the intervention of an appropriate manager

Mediation

Formal Investigation



For additional copies please contact:

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