

Global Solution Services

Bullying and Harassment Policy

GSS (UK) LTD firmly believe that every employee has the right to work in an environment where they are shown respect and consideration at work, and in which the dignity of each and every individual is highly valued and maintained.

GSS (UK) LTD is committed to the development and promotion of a positive and safe working environment free from harassment and bullying, and we constantly aim to ensure that any allegation of harassment or bullying at work is taken seriously, is properly Investigated, and is dealt with effectively.

GSS (UK) LTD Policy applies to harassment on the grounds of disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religion, race and ethnic origin, and any other personal characteristics. The Policy applies to all staff employed by GSS (UK) LTD and those who are contracted through us.

Principles

GSS (UK) LTD is committed to ensuring that any form of harassment is dealt with both sensitively and speedily. Employees are encouraged to raise any issues immediately in accordance with this procedure in the knowledge and understanding that these will be treated seriously and in confidence at all times.

To assist and support employees involved in a harassment and bullying case, (both complainants and accused), GSS (UK) LTD will develop a network of support workers and mediators, who will be trained in harassment and bullying issues, to provide support, advice and mediation as appropriate.

There will undoubtedly on occasions be times when Managers may be required to make unpopular decisions and give instructions that may not be welcomed by all employees, but these should not necessarily be construed as harassment or bullying. All GSS (UK) LTD Managers are however responsible for communicating such instructions in an appropriate manner and in accordance with any procedures laid down by GSS (UK) LTD and UK Law. Formal action may be taken under the disciplinary procedure against any employee who has been found to have bullied or harassed any of their colleagues, other personnel or those involved in GSS (UK) LTD business. However, the making of a false or malicious complaint of harassment or bullying will be regarded as a serious breach of procedures and the disciplinary procedure may be invoked against the complainant.

Definition

The current definition of harassment – as applied to age, sex, sexual orientation, Religion or belief and race and ethnic and national origin is: ‘commonly understood as behaviour intended to disturb or upset, and it is characteristically repetitive. In the legal sense, it is intentional behaviour which is found threatening or disturbing. Sexual harassment refers to persistent and unwanted sexual advances, typically in the workplace, where the consequences of refusing are

potentially very disadvantageous to the victim and that the action(s) is unwanted by the recipient. Forms of harassment include many kinds of unacceptable behaviour.

For example: Uninvited, unreciprocated and unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature, which is offensive to the person involved and causes that person to feel threatened, humiliated, or embarrassed.

Action, behaviour, comment or physical contact which is found objectionable or which causes offence, including: offensive jokes, verbal abuse, language, graffiti or literature of a racist or sectarian nature, or offensive remarks about a person's skin, colour, physical characteristics, age, sexual orientation, or any other personal characteristic.

Bullying is the intimidation or belittling of someone through the misuse of power or position, which leaves the recipient feeling hurt, upset, vulnerable or helpless. It is often inextricably linked to the areas of harassment described above. Examples of bullying include: Unjustified criticism of an individual's personal or professional performance, shouting at an individual and or criticising an individual in front of others. Spreading malicious rumours or making malicious allegations, ignoring or excluding an individual from the team / group.

The legal position

The UK Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes provision for protecting people from harassment and 'similar conduct'. It states that a person must not carry out actions which amount to harassment, or which they know may be regarded by the other person as harassment. GSS (UK) LTD also works within the guidelines of other legislation regarding discrimination such as:

Sex

The Sex Discrimination Act gives protection against discrimination and victimisation on the grounds of sex, marriage or because someone intends to undergo or has undergone gender reassignment.

Race

The Race Relations Act 1976 gives protection against discrimination and victimisation on the grounds of colour or nationality. The regulations that amended the Act (Race Regulations 2003) also give standalone right to protection from harassment on the grounds of race and ethnic or national origin.

Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 gives protection against discrimination and victimisation.

Sexual Orientation

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 give protection against discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sexual orientation (orientation is de-fined as 'same sex' – lesbian/gay, 'opposite sex' – heterosexual, and 'both sexes' – bi-sexual).

Religion or belief

The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 give protection against discrimination and harassment on the grounds of religion or belief.

Age

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 give protection against discrimination and harassment on the grounds of age.

Responsibilities of All Employees

All employees have a personal responsibility not to harass or bully other members of staff, or to condone harassment or bullying by others. Harassment and bullying is misconduct and action may be taken under the disciplinary procedure against any employee found to have harassed or bullied an individual at work. Employees should also be aware that they could also be personally liable by law if they harass anyone at work. All employees have a duty to assist in the creation of a safe working environment, where unacceptable behaviour is not tolerated. This may include challenging unacceptable behaviour, ensuring their own behaviour does not contribute to or collude with unacceptable behaviour, and cooperating fully in any investigation undertaken by GSS (UK) LTD. Any employee who becomes aware of harassment or bullying occurring should bring the matter to the attention of GSS (UK) LTD Management Team.

GSS (UK) LTD Managers have an obligation to prevent harassment or bullying and to take immediate action once it has been identified, whether or not a complaint has been made.

GSS (UK) LTD Managers and Directors must ensure that the workplace under their control is one where everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. Complaints will be dealt with swiftly and sensitively, and we will be aware of behaviour which would cause offence, if necessary reminding employees of expected standards.

It may not always be appropriate for a line manager to be involved with specific complaints. For example, if the complainant is male and wishes to speak to a male, but the manager is female, or if the complaint relates to the conduct of the line manager. In such circumstances GSS (UK) LTD Directors will make a decision on the most appropriate Manager to address the situation.

Redress

An employee who feels that he/she has been harassed or bullied has a right to seek redress via the procedure set out below.

Communication & Training

All staff will be informed of our Harassment and Bullying Policy and Procedure. A copy of the Policy and Procedure will be made available to all staff, and a copy will be provided to new employees on induction. Hard copies are filed at GSS (UK) LTD HQ also.

In addition, training will be provided to all employees who have a specific responsibility for implementing the procedure, e.g. mediation, investigation, support etc.

Monitoring and Review

In order to assess the effectiveness of the procedure, statistics will be maintained in respect of any harassment and bullying complaints. Strict confidentiality will be maintained and the monitoring process will comply with the Data Protection Act.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sonia Benjamin-Leach'.

28.09.2016 v3
Signed By Sonia Benjamin-Leach
Director