

Bullying and Harassment at Work

Highwood Brewery Ltd. is an equal opportunity employer and as such is committed to creating a non-discriminatory, fair and supportive working environment for all its employees. The Company's Equal Opportunity Policy provides the broad framework within which these objectives are sought. An intrinsic element of the policy is that employees have the right not to suffer bullying and harassment at work and to be treated with dignity and respect.

Definition

Harassment is behaviour, which is unwelcome, unreasonable or offensive to the recipient. It is defined by the effect this behaviour has on the harassed employee, not by the intentions of the harasser. It may be the result of a single act or repeated inappropriate behaviour.

Harassment and the Workplace

The disciplinary procedure of Highwood Brewery Ltd. identifies harassment as a serious disciplinary offence. In some cases, harassment may be regarded as gross misconduct, which can lead to summary dismissal.

Highwood Brewery recognises that in general its employees can be relied upon to conduct themselves in accordance with its policies. Therefore the intention of this policy is to extinguish harassment and bullying and to provide a means of helping employees who experience it.

Personal Responsibilities of Staff

Highwood Brewery expects all employees, particularly those who exercise line management responsibilities, to eliminate harassment and to ensure that appropriate action is taken where necessary. In particular they should:-

- a) Endeavour to correct standards of conduct or behaviour which might be interpreted as offensive, and remind the employee(s) concerned of Highwood Brewery's policy.
- b) Take effective action to end the harassing behaviour as soon as it is identified.
- c) Provide a supportive framework for employees who complain about harassment.

Examples of Harassment

Sexual Harassment

This may include persistent and unwanted attention. Physical contact of a sexual nature; repeated and unwanted sexual advances; offensive remarks or suggestions directed at a person's physical appearance or character, the exercising of "undue influence" to obtain consent to a sexual relationship; the general use of explicit or provocative language.

It may also include leering, ridicule, embarrassing remarks or jokes, unwelcome comments about dress or appearance, use of pin-ups or pornographic pictures, unwanted physical contact or demand for sexual favours.

Racial Harassment

This may include persistent recounting of offensive "jokes" or stories, which demean racial and ethnic minorities, patronising remarks, discriminatory and unjustified allocation of work, unwelcome comments about appearance or dress.

Bullying Behaviour

This may include repeatedly shouting or swearing at staff in public and in private, personal insults and name calling; spontaneous rages over trivialities; spreading malicious rumours; ignoring or excluding; never listening to another person point of view; constantly changing targets at work or guidelines; deliberately withholding work related information; setting unrealistic deadlines; blocking of application for leave or training or promotion without good reason.

Communication

Harassment may not always take place person to person. It may also include use of email, written words, pictures and telephone.

Harassment by third parties

In the event that an employee feels that he/she is being harassed by an external organisation e.g. customer/supplier etc. employees are encouraged to report any such incidents. An appropriate senior member of the management team will investigate the complaint and all parties concerned will be interviewed.

In exceptional circumstances harassment from an external organisation may result in termination of business contracts.

False or Malicious Allegations

Highwood Brewery take all complaints seriously. Should the investigatory officers conclude that the complainant has made false allegations, the reporting manager will consider what level of disciplinary action should be taken.