



BULLYING AND HARRASSMENT POLICY

Policy Owner: Gavin George – Chief Executive Officer

Review & Control: Laura Creasey – Head of People

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POLICY STATEMENT

The aim of this policy is to encourage and share Laine's working environment across our organisation and facilities. Everyone is entitled to work free of bullying and harassment, irrespective of race, creed, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, age, language, religion, political or other opinion affiliation, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status, connections with national minority, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, family connections, membership or non-membership of a trade union, or disability.

DEFINITIONS OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

In the Equality Act 2010 harassment is defined as 'unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for that individual'.

ACAS define bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious, or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate, or injure the recipient.

POLICY DETAILS

At Laine, we take all forms of bullying and harassment that is harmful to employees, employers and customers seriously. All forms of harassment are prohibited. The company views bullying and harassing of an employee, Management Partner, and General Manager as gross misconduct.

Bullying and Harassment can subject an individual to fear, stress and anxiety, often leading to great strains on work, personal and family life. This can lead to illness, accidents, absenteeism, poor performance, an apparent lack of commitment and people leaving



employment. Those who are harassed, victimised, or bullied may often feel vulnerable which can often lead to reluctant to complain.

Examples of this could be:

- Unwanted physical contact.
- Unwelcome remarks about a person's age, dress, appearance, race or marital status, jokes at personal expense, offensive language, gossip, slander, sectarian songs, and letters.
- Posters, graffiti, obscene gestures, flags, bunting and emblems.
- Isolation or non-cooperation and exclusion from social activities.
- Coercion for sexual favours.
- Pressure to participate in political/religious groups.
- Personal intrusion from pestering, spying, and stalking.
- Failure to safeguard confidential information.
- Shouting and bawling.
- Setting impossible deadlines.
- Persistent unwarranted criticism.
- Personal insults.

EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Laine is committed to promoting a safe and inclusive workplace. We will enforce this policy in stances of harassment that are brought to the attention of managers, Heads of Department and Laine's People Team.

All employees have a responsibility to behave in a way which supports a safe and inclusive working environment for themselves and colleagues. Everyone has the authority to challenge inappropriate behaviour, and where harassment has been witnessed, report it to the appropriate person to investigate the situation.

Employees are reminded that the company's responsibility to investigate allegations of bullying and harassment is not confined to working hours and may include social events, hospitality or anywhere where the incidents have an impact on the company.

DEALING WITH HARASSMENT

Any individual who believes that they have been subject to, or have witnessed harassment, victimisation or bullying have access to channels through which complaints can be raised. All claims of bullying and harassment will be dealt with initially in accordance with the company grievance procedure. However, given the nature of harassment, victimisation or bullying is such that it is recognised that an individual may not wish to discuss it initially with their immediate manager or supervisor. It may be more appropriate to discuss with another manager or the People Team.

All complaints will be taken seriously and dealt with confidentially and promptly. Normally, cases will be concluded within two to four weeks, some cases will take longer depending on availability and complexity.



EXAMPLES OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

The following behaviours as defined below are unacceptable in the eyes of Laine: Harassment consists of any unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of any individual at work. It includes unwelcome physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct and it could amount to unlawful discrimination. It can involve a single incident or may be persistent and may be directed towards one or more individuals. In addition to race, creed, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, it will be unacceptable if it is inflicted because of an individual's age, language, religion, political or other opinion affiliation, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status, connections with a national minority, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, family connections, membership or non-membership of a trade union, or disability.

Unwanted Physical Contact such as unnecessary touching, patting, pinching, brushing against another individual's body, insulting or abusive behaviour or gestures, physical threats, assault, coerced sexual intercourse or rape.

Unlawful Victimisation consists of treating an individual less favourably than others are, or would be treated in the same or similar circumstances, because they have made a complaint or allegation of discrimination or have acted as a witness or informant in connection with proceedings under any Discrimination Legislation.

Other Conduct which denigrates, ridicules, intimidates or is physically abusive of an individual or group.

Unwanted Verbal Conduct such as unwelcome advances, patronising titles or nicknames, propositions or remarks, innuendo, lewd comments, jokes, banter or abusive language, which refer to an individual or a group's gender, colour, race, nationality,

ethnic or national origins, disability, sexual preference, etc., repeated suggestions for unwanted social activities inside or outside the workplace.

Unwanted Non-Verbal Conduct such as racially or sexually based graffiti referring to an individual's characteristics or private life, abusive or offensive gestures, leering, whistling, display of pornographic or suggestive literature or other items, pictures or films/videos or inappropriate use of visual display units (VDUs) or network systems for this purpose.

Bullying, including persistent criticism and personal abuse and/or ridicule, either in public or private, which humiliates or demeans the individuals involved, gradually eroding their self-confidence. These examples are not exhaustive. Much of this behaviour would be considered to be gross misconduct, punishable by summary dismissal. However, none of the above types of behaviour will be tolerated. All will result in a disciplinary investigation and may constitute gross misconduct depending upon the circumstances of the case in question.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Equality Act 2010 became law in October 2010 replacing previous legislations such as Race Relations Act 1976 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Its purpose is to ensure consistency in making workplaces a fair environment to work in.



POLICY REVIEW

Laine reviews the Bullying and Harassment Policy annually and we will ask that all team members make a declaration of compliance with this Policy.

VERSION NUMBER	AUTHOR	PURPOSE/CHANGE	DATE
1	Laura Cressey		1.1.24

