**AFEI Member Template: Anti-Bullying Policy**

**THIS DOCUMENT IS ONLY A GUIDE**

AFEI recommends members consider their specific requirements when adopting a template document or policy to ensure the document meets the particular needs of your organisation.

For assistance, please call the AFEI Hotline on 02 9264 2000.

**How to use this document:**

1: Check with the AFEI Hotline as to its suitability for your needs.

2: Edit to meet your requirements by:

* **Add** relevant information in the [yellow highlighted] sections.
* **Delete** comments in the *[blue highlighted]* areas.

**Anti-Bullying Policy**

All managers, employees and other workers of [name of organisation] are accountable for creating and maintaining a safe, respectful and professional work environment that is free from all forms of bullying behaviour.

Workplace bullying will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Disciplinary action may be taken against any employee who breaches this policy including termination of employment.

**What are our objectives concerning workplace bullying?**

[Name of organisation] aims to:

* Maintain a working environment free from workplace bullying;
* Ensure that employees understand their rights and responsibilities;
* Deal with complaints in an impartial and timely manner;
* Ensure that employees are not victimised for making a genuine complaint;
* Encourage the reporting of behaviour that breaches this policy; and
* Promote appropriate standards of conduct at all times.

# What is workplace bullying?

Workplace bullying is *repeated* and *unreasonable* behaviour directed towards an individual or group, by an individual or group of individuals that creates a risk to health and safety.

***Repeated behaviour:*** behaviour of a persistent nature that can involve a range of behaviours over time.

***Unreasonable behaviour:*** behaviour that a reasonable person, having considered the circumstances, would see as unreasonable, including behaviour that is victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening.

Bullying does not have to be intentional for it to be unreasonable behaviour.

Workplace bullying is a breach of the *Work, Health and Safety Act 2011* which requires all workers to take reasonable care for the health and safety of others.

***Examples of bullying behaviour***

Bullying behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

* Abusive, insulting or offensive language or comments;
* Deliberately excluding someone from work-related activities;
* Interfering with someone’s personal property or work equipment;
* Sabotaging another employee’s work;
* Unjustified criticism or complaints;
* Withholding information that is vital for effective work performance; and
* Spreading misinformation or malicious rumours.

## What is not workplace bullying

***Reasonable management action***

Reasonable management action carried out in a reasonable way is not workplace bullying. Examples of reasonable management action include, but are not limited to:

* Setting performance goals, standards and deadlines;
* Allocating work to an employee;
* Rostering and allocating working hours;
* Deciding not to select an employee for promotion;
* Informing a worker about inappropriate behaviour;
* Implementing organisational change;
* Performance management processes; and/or
* Constructive feedback.

***Workplace Conflict***

Unless differences of opinion or workplace conflict escalate to *repeated* and *unreasonable behaviour* that creates a risk to health and safety,such instances will not fall within the definition of workplace bullying.

**What must management and employees do?**

All employees are required to:

* Refrain from workplace bullying;
* Refrain from making malicious, frivolous or vexatious allegations of bullying against another person;
* Take reasonable care for their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others;
* Cooperate with any internal/external investigations (conducted or authorised by the employer) into workplace bullying;
* If an employee reasonably considers they have been subjected to workplace bullying, notify [insert role of person to notify e.g. the employee’s manager];
* If an employee witnesses conduct that they consider to be workplace bullying, report the incident or conduct to [insert role of person to notify e.g. the employee’s manager]; and
* If an employee is unsure whether or not conduct that they have witnessed or participated in, constitutes workplace bullying, discuss the matter with [insert role of person to notify e.g. the employee’s manager].

In addition to the above, all managers and supervisors are required to:

* Assist employees to understand what is bullying behaviour or conduct;
* Deal appropriately with any complaints or reports of bullying in accordance with the [name of organisation’s] complaints procedure;
* Provide appropriate support to an employee who claims that they have been subjected to workplace bullying.

**Investigating complaints and/or reports of workplace bullying**

Refer to[insert company’s complaint procedure] *[See AFEI template for “Complaints Handling Procedure”]*

## Consequences of breaching this policy

An employee found to have engaged in workplace bullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including the termination of their employment.

**Where can I get help?**

Refer to [insert role of person to approach e.g. the employee’s manager, applicable department or section].

In order to effectively implement this policy, employers must take reasonable steps to notify employees that the policy exists and/or has been amended.

If it is practicable to require employees to sign the policy and return it to you, include the User’s Declaration below. If this is impractical, omit the User’s Declaration and consider alternate means by which employees may be informed of the change e.g. emailing as an attachment to all staff.

### User’s Declaration

I have read and understood this Anti-Bullying Policy and agree to its terms.

**Name:**  **Date:**

**Signature**:

**Members should be aware that this document is a guide only. It might not be appropriate in this format for every situation or your industry. For assistance in drafting workplace policies to suit your specific needs please contact the AFEI Hotline on 02 2964 2000.**