



DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

“Ensuring the safety of the communities and individuals in Dyfed-Powys and their confidence in their Force”.

1. POLICY AIM

Dyfed Powys Police Authority is committed to promoting equality and human rights among staff and Members. As part of this overall aim, this policy sets out how the Police Authority will promote dignity at work for all employees and for Police Authority Members when conducting their Police Authority role. The Police Authority is committed to promoting a culture whereby all employees and Members feel valued and respected, and where nobody is expected to work in fear of prejudice, discrimination or harassment.

The Police Authority will not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment among employees or Members. Where any such behaviour is found to occur, appropriate action will be taken so that the behaviour is correctly dealt with and prevented from reoccurring.

This policy is linked with the Police Authority's Equality & Diversity Policy, which also aims to eliminate discrimination and unfair treatment. Both policies should be communicated to and understood by all employees and Members.

2. DEFINITION

By 'dignity at work', the Police Authority means that everyone has a right to be treated with dignity and respect whilst carrying out their roles and to work without fear of harassment from their colleagues.

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct that violates someone's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It is important to remember that harassment can be overt but can also be experienced in subtle ways. Most importantly, it is not the intention of the perpetrator which defines whether a particular type of conduct is harassment, but the effect it has on the recipient.

Examples of harassment include sexual harassment, racial harassment, homophobic harassment, ageist harassment, harassment against transgender people and harassment on grounds of disability or religion. The Police Authority also recognises that people can experience harassment that is not related to any particular factor, but can be experienced as bullying. Any unwelcome behaviour based on any of these grounds will not be tolerated.

3. THE POLICE AUTHORITY'S APPROACH TO DIGNITY AT WORK

The Police Authority will deal promptly and sensitively with any reported cases of harassment, bullying or unfair treatment and will act in a supportive manner to anyone who brings such a complaint to its attention, whether this be the victim or any other person.

The Police Authority recognises that what may appear to be harassment to one person, may not appear so to another. However, we recognise that victims are able to judge for themselves whether they feel harassment is occurring and all cases will be investigated fairly. The important factor is how

the situation is perceived by the victim or any other person, not whether the situation is *intended* to cause offence.

The Police Authority will not tolerate any form of victimisation, meaning that no employee will be treated unfairly because they have made a complaint or intend to make a complaint of harassment or unfair treatment involving themselves or any other person. In all cases the Police Authority's aim is to eliminate unwanted behaviour with the intention of promoting dignity at work for everyone.

4. EFFECTS OF HARASSMENT

Harassment or bullying behaviour has serious and negative consequences for victims and their colleagues. Examples of these effects include:

- Low morale
- Increased anxiety and stress related illness
- Feeling powerless or isolated
- Loss of confidence and self esteem
- Higher absence rates
- Reduction in work productivity

It is therefore in everyone's interest to ensure that harassment is dealt with as soon as it is reported. The Police Authority recognises the importance of responding promptly to any incidents that may lead to the above occurring.

5. TYPES OF HARASSMENT

Bullying and harassment can take many forms. Harassment or intimidation can be verbal, written or physical; overt or subtle; occur over a period of time or just be one occasion. Bullying is persistent action and can often occur through abuse of power or position. The following are examples of the different types of harassment and bullying behaviour that may occur, none of which will be tolerated within Dyfed Powys Police Authority:

Examples of Bullying Behaviour:

- Using aggressive, threatening or intimidating language or behaviour
- Belittling or undermining employees or Members in front of others
- Intentionally excluding an employee or Member or unfairly withholding information from him or her
- Picking on one person when there is a wider problem

Examples of Sexual Harassment and Harassment on Grounds of Gender

- Displaying physical behaviour of an unacceptable nature, such as close personal contact, unwelcome advances or sexually suggestive gestures

- Using sexist or inappropriate language such as suggestive remarks, innuendos or obscene comments
- The display, storage or sharing of pornographic or sexually suggestive pictures or other materials
- Using language that ridicules, intimidates or abuses an individual because of their gender or gender identity, such as degrading remarks or insults, or offensive comments about appearance or dress
- Unfair treatment based on gender, such as development opportunities being withheld because of negative stereotypical views based on gender

Examples of Racial Harassment

- Use of racist words or derogatory or degrading language aimed at people from ethnic minority groups
- Use of racist jokes or banter or stereotypical nicknames based on ethnic background
- The display, storage or sharing of racially offensive images or materials
- Unfair treatment based on racial background, such as development opportunities being withheld because of negative views about someone's race.

Examples of Harassment on Grounds of Disability

- Use of offensive language or behaviour aimed at a disabled person
- Asking invasive, personal questions about someone's disability
- Communicating negative and offensive assumptions about a disabled person to others
- Unfair treatment based on disability, such as development opportunities being withheld because of negative assumptions about disabled people.

Examples of Harassment on Grounds of Sexual Orientation

- Treating someone in an offensive, abusive or exclusionary way because of their sexuality
- Questioning someone about their sexuality, perceived sexuality or private life, or gossiping or speculating with others about someone's sexuality
- Using homophobic language, joking or banter, or expressing negative stereotypical views about gay, lesbian or bisexual people
- Disclosing someone's sexuality or perceived sexuality ('outing' someone) in the workplace

Examples of Harassment on Grounds of Age

- Using ageist language or treating someone in an offensive way because of their age or perceived age
- Insinuating that someone is 'too old' or 'too young' to be able to undertake certain duties or participate in certain activities, or that they will be less likely to deliver effective outcomes
- Using patronising language when speaking to someone considered to be 'old' or 'young'
- Unfair treatment based on age, such as refusing training requests for an older employee or Member

Examples of Harassment on Grounds of Religion

- Using derogatory comments relating to someone's religious beliefs
- Making fun of clothing or jewellery worn for religious reasons
- The display, storage or sharing of offensive pictures or materials relating to religious beliefs
- Putting persistent pressure on colleagues to take on the same religious beliefs

The above are examples only and are not the only possible ways in which harassment, bullying or unfair treatment can occur within a working environment.

6. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Overall, the Police Authority recognises that everyone has the right to be accepted whilst carrying out their duties as an employee or Member and the right to feel comfortable in their surroundings. The Police Authority does not expect employees or Members to tolerate behaviour from others that makes them feel unduly uncomfortable or to feel that their dignity is compromised in any way.

The Police Authority also recognises the responsibilities that all employees and Members have to ensure that they do not in any way display behaviour which would contravene this policy and its aims. All individuals should be aware of how their language or behaviour could impact on others and ensure that they adjust their behaviour where it could be considered to cause offence.

7. LANGUAGE

The Police Authority recognises that everyone has the right to be spoken to with respect and to work without listening to abusive or discriminatory comments.

Employees and Members must refrain from using abusive or threatening language, including use of jokes or comments which perpetuate discrimination or have negative connotations about people or their lifestyles.

8. DEALING WITH HARASSMENT AND UNFAIR TREATMENT

The Chief Executive and Chair of the Police Authority have the responsibility of leading by example. They are therefore required to communicate the message of the Dignity at Work Policy to employees and Members, ensuring that others understand that bullying and harassment will not be accepted and that action will be taken if it is found to occur.

If any employee or Police Authority Member feels that they have experienced or observed something which contravenes the Dignity at Work Policy, they should take action or seek support. They should not put up with it and should not condone it. They may wish to speak directly with the person concerned, or where this would not be appropriate, they should raise it with their line manager or Chief Executive. If the issue cannot be resolved informally it should be dealt with using the Grievance Procedure, or using the Member's Code of Conduct as the case may be.

In all cases of alleged or actual bullying or harassment, the outcome the Police Authority aims for is that harassment stops and does not reoccur.

9. CONCLUSION

All Police Authority employees and Members must work together to ensure that whilst carrying out Police Authority duties, everyone is treated with respect and does not experience prejudice, discrimination, harassment, or hurtful and negative language. Everyone has the right to be accepted for who they are and the Police Authority will work to communicate this message to all.