

Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy

PURPOSE

Lalor Neighbourhood House acknowledges that bullying and harassment in the workplace falls under the Victorian OHS Act 2004 and the Fair Work Act 2009.

The primary purpose of this policy is to identify bullying and/or harassing behaviour and take action to prevent its occurrence in the workplace, and to guide Lalor Neighbourhood House approach and handling as to concerns workplace bullying and/or harassment.

This policy must not be used for the sole purpose of seeking a desired change in work arrangements (such as transfer, alternative duties, and / or reporting lines, etc.) or to receive compensation or any other pecuniary outcome.

This workplace Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedure is a complete framework for Lalor Neighbourhood House to manage and resolve workplace bullying, discrimination and harassment complaints. This policy in no way limits an individual's rights, including their access to a State based WorkCover Authority and/or the Fair Work Commission or any other jurisdiction (court or tribunal).

SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff, clients, students, trainers, volunteers and users of Lalor Neighbourhood House in the Lalor and wider community, who are subject to alleged bullying, discrimination and harassment behaviour or any other behaviour that may constitute a breach of this policy. Nothing in this policy limits the rights of an individual to make a protected disclosure in accordance with the **Protected Disclosures Policy**.

The principles set out in this policy are intended to apply to any work-related context, including conferences, work functions, social events and business trips.

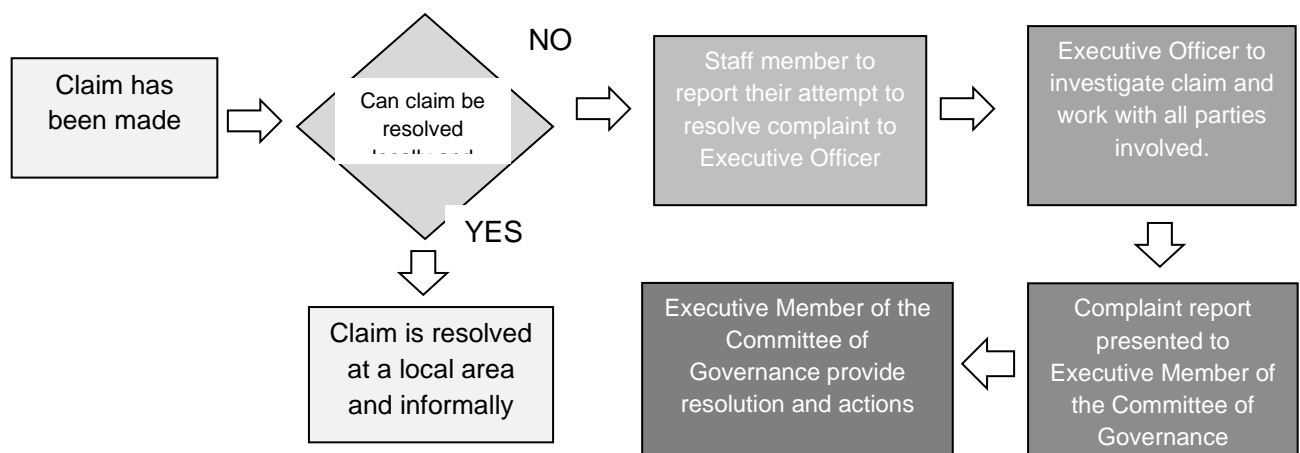
POLICY STATEMENT

Lalor Neighborhood House is committed to providing a workplace that is free from bullying, discrimination and harassment. All individuals have a right to work in an environment that is safe, free from bullying, discrimination and harassment, and to be treated with dignity and respect. Therefore, all individuals must refrain from any form of unlawful bullying, discrimination or harassment based on existing legislative requirements.

Responsibility

- All Lalor Neighbourhood House managers and supervisors are responsible for actively intervening to prevent and stop any bullying, discriminatory and/or harassing behaviour that is occurring in their workplaces, whether or not a complaint is received (*refer Code of Conduct Policy*)
- Lalor Neighbourhood House provides procedures by which all individuals can have any complaint of workplace bullying, discrimination and harassment addressed
- All individuals have a right to use the procedures in this policy if they believe they have experienced bullying, discrimination and/or harassment under Definitions section in this policy

PROCEDURE



Individuals should normally raise a claim of bullying, harassment and/or discrimination with their direct line manager or nominated supervisor, and attempt to resolve such claims locally and informally.

Where the attempt to informally resolve the matter fails or is not appropriate, the staff member must report their attempt to resolve their issue in writing to the Manager. The manager will then contact the relevant personnel.

The Manager will review the allegations and respond to the individual who raised the complaint.

The manager/investigator will:

- conduct the investigation with due regard to procedural fairness, timeliness, and the individual's safety and well-being
- notify the parties of the investigation
- seek sufficient particulars of the alleged conduct to enable the complaint/concern to be factually investigated
- provide the respondent with a summary of allegations and/or a statement of the alleged conduct
- provide the respondent with an opportunity to respond to the complaint and/or alleged conduct
- interview the parties and, where necessary, any witnesses
- review any relevant documentation

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- prepare a report setting out the complaint, how the investigation was conducted, relevant facts, and findings, and present this to the designated Member or Members of the Executive group of the Committee of Governance.

Lalor Neighbourhood House aims to ensure that:

- bullying, harassment and/or discrimination complaints are addressed sensitively, promptly and in accordance with this policy and the principles of natural justice
- fairness and impartiality prevail throughout the appropriate resolution process - until a bullying, harassment and/or discrimination complaint is investigated and a decision is made, a grievance is an allegation, not a fact
- complainants have the right to determine how the allegation is treated, have support, have representation throughout the process, and/or have the option to discontinue the complaint at any stage of the process
- the alleged bully or harasser be given the right to have a support person of their own during the investigating procedure
- appropriate records are maintained throughout the resolution process
- persons who notify a bullying, harassment and/or discrimination complaint are protected from victimisation or reprisal
- persons who notify a bullying, harassment and/or discrimination complaint are regularly informed of the progress of the matter and of the consequences of any finding i.e. whether or not the grievance is substantiated
- persons who notify of a bullying, harassment and/or discrimination complaint are also entitled to make a protected disclosure in accordance with the *Protected Disclosures Policy*, provided that the disclosure is of the type that is identified as 'Reportable Conduct' under the Protected Disclosures Policy.

The relevant Member or Members of the Executive will then make a decision based on the investigation report as to whether the alleged conduct is proven, proven in part or not proven. The decision, along with a summary of reasons for making the decision and a clear statement of what actions will follow, will be provided to the complainant, and the respondent/s.

If a complaint is investigated and findings are made that substantiate any or all of the allegations made, the designated Member of the Executive may refer the matter to the relevant nominated supervisor in order for them to take appropriate action to prevent any behaviours that are identified as bullying, harassment and/or discrimination. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Requiring the individual or group of individuals to stop the specified behaviour(s)
- Regular monitoring of behaviours by Lalor Neighbourhood House
- Requiring compliance with this policy and any other relevant Lalor Neighbourhood House policy
- Provision of information, additional support and training of relevant individuals.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND VICTIMISATION

The parties to a bullying, harassment and/or discrimination complaint are required at all stages of this policy and procedure, to maintain confidentiality in relation to the concern or complaint. The parties must not disclose, by any form of communication, either the fact or the substance of the allegations or issues to anyone other than an advocate, staff representative or Lalor Living and Learning Centre approved officer.

A person must not victimise or otherwise subject another person to detrimental action as a breach of either the confidentiality or non-victimisation requirements will be treated seriously by Lalor Neighbourhood House, and may result in disciplinary action.

Any breach will be referred for investigation and handling in accordance with the relevant misconduct procedure.

Vexatious claims and claims made without reasonable cause
Individuals should not raise allegations which are vexatious or without reasonable cause.

Where a claim is determined as vexatious or made without reasonable cause, the individual who raised the complaint will receive written notification of the determination which will include reasons as to why the complaint was deemed as vexatious and/or without reasonable cause.

All individuals must:

- respect the person and privacy of students, staff, volunteers and members of the public
- not engage in offensive behaviour, actions and/or comments
- practice tolerance in all regards and, in particular, in relation to the beliefs and cultural values of students, staff and members of the public.

Definitions

As identified in the chart below:

Item	Definition
What is Bullying?	Bullying is defined as repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a person, or a group of people, that creates a risk to health, safety and well-being. Bullying hampers productivity by creating dysfunction and damaging morale within work environments. It includes behaviour (generally a pattern of behaviour) that intimidates, offends, degrades or humiliates another person, including by electronic means such as email, notice boards, blogs and social networking websites.
What is <u>not</u> Bullying?	Reasonable management practices, including performance management and disciplinary procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a direction to carry out reasonable duties and instructions; and • a direction to comply with Lalor Neighbourhood House rules, resolutions and policies.
Without reasonable cause	A claim is made without there being any real reason, basis in fact(s), or purpose. Such claims include allegations that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • so obviously untenable that the claim cannot possibly succeed • manifestly groundless; and/or • insufficiently particularised.

Vexatious	Causing or tending to cause or provoke annoyance, frustration, or worry and/or there is another purpose for the grievance other than the settlement of the issues arising in the claim (or response).
Pecuniary	Relating to or consisting of money.
Harassment	Means behaviour that is not wanted and not asked for, and that a reasonable person would have anticipated would cause humiliation, offence or intimidation.
Discrimination	Discrimination is treating, or proposing to treat, someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic protected by law.

Legislative Framework

- **Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)**
- **OHS Act 2004 (Vic)**
- **Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (C'wth)**
- **Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)**
- **Fair Work Act 2009 (C'wth)**

Related Documents

- **Protected Disclosures Policy**
- **Code of Conduct Policy**
- **Occupational Health and Safety Policy**
- **Complaints and Appeals Policy**
- **NHACE Collective Agreement 2016**

Signed..... **Date**.....

Name.....
(Print)

Policy/Procedure name	Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy	Version	4
Policy number	P003	Date developed	Dec 2017
Drafted by	Manager	Approved by CoG	Jun 2018

Responsible person	Manager	Scheduled review date	Jun 2019
Policy Area	Operational		

Appendix

Examples of behaviours that may amount to bullying and harassment include:

- *Intimidation*
 - *Repeated unreasonable behaviour*
- *Verbal abuse or threats, including yelling, screaming or offensive language*
- *Excluding or isolating people from workplace activities*
- *Assigning impossible tasks, meaningless tasks unrelated to the job, or giving someone the majority of unpleasant tasks*
- *Undermining responsibility*
- *Deliberately changing work rosters to inconvenience particular staff members*
- *Withholding information essential to do a task properly*
- *Copying emails that are critical about someone to others who do not need to know*
- *Making threats or comments about job security without foundation*
- *Spreading malicious rumours*
- *Cyber bullying*
- *Physical abuse*

Unlawful Discrimination

Existing legislative requirements prohibiting unlawful discrimination, including harassment, relate to the following;

- **race, colour, ethnicity or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background**
- **gender or sexuality**
- **pregnancy or likelihood of pregnancy**
- **marital status**
- **status as parent or carer, or family and parental responsibilities (including breastfeeding);**
- **age**
- **physical features**
- **disability or impairment (including, for example, physical disability, mental illness, or medical status)**
- **HIV status**
- **political affiliation**
- **membership or non-membership of an association or organisation of employers or employees and associated activities**
- **membership of a profession, trade, occupation or calling**
- **religion**
- **association with, or relation to, a person identified on the basis of any of the above attributes**



Policy No: P0003

Each of these grounds or attributes is covered by legislation in the State of Victoria.