

Dignity at Work Policy

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1. Aim

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority is committed to providing an environment that is supportive and free of harassment, bullying and victimisation, by any person whether an employee or third party.

All staff have a right to be treated with dignity and respect, they also have an obligation to treat others in the same way.

Where allegations of criminal acts such as indecent exposure, physical attack or sexual assault have been made, the complainant should be encouraged to report the matter to the police. The Combined Authority may also opt to report the allegations to the police.

The Combined Authority will maintain a zero-tolerance approach to unacceptable behaviour at work and is determined to eliminate any harassment, bullying and victimisation in the organisation.

Our Equality and Diversity Policy sets out the pledge towards the development of inclusive and supportive working environment for all our employees.

2. Principles

Dignity at work complaints relate to the behaviour of an individual; including bullying, harassment, victimisation, or discrimination arising from a protected characteristic as defined under the Equality Act 2010 (i.e., age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation).

The purpose of this policy is to define what the Combined Authority consider to be acceptable behaviours, outline the legal position and identify the responsibilities of managers and members of staff. It is also to establish a fair route for complaints of bullying and harassment so that they can be investigated in a fair and timely manner.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority employees

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as far as possible, except where there is a specific local agreement, or a clause within the contract of employment, which is at variance with the provisions as contained within the NJC agreement. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time.

4. Vision and Values

Our vision is for a prosperous and sustainable Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Driven by our values and using our collective voice and strengths, we seek inclusive good growth for an equitable resilient, healthier and connected region.

Our values define what is important in the way we deliver this vision. At Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority our core values are Collaboration, Integrity, Vision, Innovation and Leadership. We are committed to ensuring our culture enables our employees to display these values regardless of their roles within the organisation. Managers and employees alike must ensure our core values are upheld when implementing this policy.

5. Definitions

All employees within the Combined Authority are expected to treat each other with dignity and respect, conduct themselves professionally at all times and not behave in a way that could be perceived as offensive.

Behaviour that is offensive to one individual may not be to another, however, often at times people are able to judge correctly how they should behave. It is important that all employees respect the differences of opinion with their colleagues. Employees must be proactive in developing and maintaining effective working relationships with their colleagues.

Unacceptable behaviour may constitute a pattern of repeated behaviours in which individual incidents are borderline, but which taken together, breach the bounds of acceptability. The behaviour does not need to be ongoing; a single event of unreasonable behaviour is enough for the employee to make a complaint. Whenever anyone's behaviour is considered inappropriate any employee should be able to point this out without becoming subjected to a violation of their dignity.

There are some types of behaviour that would always be considered to fall below the threshold of acceptability.

Bullying: Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means which undermine, humiliate, belittle, or injure the individual or group of employees. This kind of conduct is usually repeated.

Bullying might:

- be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident
- happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or calls
- happen at work or in other work-related situations
- not always be obvious or noticed by others

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Discrimination: Less favourable treatment on the grounds of their sex, age, marital status race, religion/belief, disability, pregnancy and maternity or sexual orientation or gender reassignment.

A person can be a victim of direct, indirect, perceived discrimination or discrimination by association.

Harassment: Behaviour which is unwanted and offensive to the recipient irrespective of whether it is intended. Harassment can be a single act or numerous acts which are ongoing and therefore

employees should think carefully about behaviour which makes anyone feel uncomfortable, degraded or upset.

By law (Equality Act 2010), there are 3 types of harassment:

- sexual harassment, which is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature
- harassment related to certain 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010
- less favourable treatment as a result of harassment related to sex, sexual harassment or gender reassignment.

Victimisation: When someone is treated unfairly because they made or supported a complaint to do with a 'protected characteristic', or someone thinks they did or might do.

Unacceptable Behaviour: may include actions, or suggestions which could create a stressful working environment, displaying offensive material, excluding or ignoring someone, telling inappropriate jokes, inappropriate physical contact or assuming a threatening or intimidating management style (this list is not exhaustive and not all incidents that may occur will be covered by this list).

6. Responsibilities

Employer's Responsibility

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority recognises it has a collective duty to take active steps to eradicate the incidents of bullying or harassment and promote the well-being of its employee. In order to promote a positive culture, the Combined Authority will ensure there is support and guidance is accessible for anyone who feels they may be a victim (this may be the accused or the accuser), through a variety of means including our Employee Assistance Programme.

Employee Responsibility

- All employees of the Combined Authority are mandated to adhere to the code of conduct and perform their duties giving consideration to the impact of their actions on others.
- All employees in the Combined Authority have the right to challenge behaviour and raise issues where they have perceived behaviour, they may be considered harassing, intimidating or bullying in nature, whether this behaviour is directed toward themselves or others.
- To assist in promoting the right culture of respect, employees will be encouraged to co-operate in any investigation into a breach in policy or may be requested to support a colleague by challenging the harasser/bully directly at the time of the incident if safe

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to do so.

Manager's Responsibility

- The manager is responsible for ensuring the awareness and compliance with this policy by the staff they manage.
- If any potential breaches in this policy are witnessed or reported to the manager, they are expected to act upon the allegation, even if this is in the absence of any formal complaint.
- In some cases, a line manager may be legally obliged to proceed with an investigation even if the employee does not wish to make a formal complaint. In these circumstances the employee will be informed why it is necessary to proceed and will be kept informed of the process.
- All employees of the Combined Authority with management duties have the responsibility to ensure that they promote and foster a climate that discourages behaviour that could be construed as bullying, intimidation or harassment. Inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour can be raised using performance management techniques.
- The line manager is also required to record any incidents that are raised under this policy (formal or informal) and seek guidance and advice from the Human Resources.

7. Timescales

Every effort should be made to use informal means to stop the perceived offensive behaviour. The complainant should make a complaint in a timely fashion (normally immediately after the incident or at the latest within three months of the most recent incident or occurrence of the behaviour). If there is good reason, this timeframe could be extended for example where a complainant does not feel able to make a complaint without initial support or counselling. Once a complaint is made it must be investigated promptly. While it is important that an investigation is thorough, a long-drawn out investigation is not in the interest of either party. However, there may be cases in which the investigation of a complaint is unavoidably delayed. In these circumstances every effort will be made to keep all parties informed of progress.

8. Procedure for dealing with complaints

Informal approach

Anyone employee, contractor, or visitor, who feels they have been bullied or harassed should try to resolve the problem informally, in the first instance. It may be sufficient to explain to the person(s) involved in the unwanted behaviour, or an intermediary, that their conduct is unacceptable or offensive. Anyone concerned about being bullied or harassed is encouraged to maintain a journal or other record of the incidents.

Formal approach

Where the employee feels they have been bullied and harassed and the attempt to resolve the informally is not satisfactory, they may decide to raise a formal complaint. To do so the

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complaint must be put in writing. This will be managed in accordance with the Grievance procedure.

Any other party who feels they have been bullied or harassed should raise their complaint with the combined authority. The complaint would be investigated and an outcome would be sent to the individual.

Disciplinary Action

Following a Grievance Hearing or investigation into allegations of bullying or harassment a full report will be made to all parties, and this may result in disciplinary action being taken against the perpetrator of the alleged action/behaviour. Please see the Disciplinary Policy & Procedure for more information.

In some extreme cases, a referral to the Police under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 may be made.

9. Document Retention

The relevant Manager should forward copies of all paperwork relating to the investigation and hearing to the HR Department. Any such correspondence should be marked as 'Strictly Private and Confidential'

Any paperwork provided will be stored and/or destroyed in accordance with the Combined Authority's records retention and management policies.

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Governance – Dignity At Work Policy

References:
Appeal Policy
Disciplinary Policy
Equality and Diversity Policy
Grievance Policy

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Document Control Sheet

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| Purpose of document: | This policy is designed to ensure that staff are treated with dignity and respect and that there is a consistent approach when matters are raised under this Policy. |
| Type of document: | Policy |
| Document checked by Legal | No |
| If applicable, has an initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been completed? | Yes |
| Document lead and author: | HR Team |
| Dissemination: | |
| What other documents should this be read in conjunction with: | Guidance documents listed in policy |
| Who will review the document (job title): | HR Team |
| Why is this document being reviewed? | N/A – new Policy |
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Revisions

| Version No. | Page/ Paragraph No. | Description of amendment | Date approved |
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