# Policy & Procedures

## Harassment & bullying

## 1. Introduction

The responsibility for ensuring this policy is implemented rests ultimately with the Board of Directors. However, members of staff - full-time, part-time and volunteers - are responsible for the implementation of the policy, its observance, monitoring it on a day-to-day basis and reporting on its operation to the Trustee Board. The Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance (CHWA) believes that all of its staff members have a basic right to peaceful enjoyment of their working lives. The defence of that right is the cornerstone of this policy. CHWA will adopt a victim-orientated approach in responding swiftly to all complaints of harassment.

## 2. Definitions of Harassment and Bullying

This policy defines harassment as a deliberate act or series of acts which interfere with the peace and comfort of an individual or group of individuals to the detriment of their quality of life.

Harassment includes not only physical attacks on persons and damage to property, but also verbal abuse, threats, intimidation and any other form of behaviour that deprives a person of the peaceful enjoyment of their working life.

Harassment may be carried out on a number of grounds, including: racial, gender, disability, age, sexuality, mental illness, learning difficulty – as well as personal. This policy covers all types of harassment.

Harassment and bullying are known to cause avoidable demoralisation, stress, anxiety, sickness, poor performance, and staff turnover. Some forms of harassment are unlawful, e.g. sexual and racial harassment, and harassment due to involvement in trade union activities.

Bullying can be described as persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour which amounts to an abuse of power and makes the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable.

CHWA will encourage and support members of staff to take legal action against the perpetrators of harassment or bullying. CHWA is unfortunately unable to provide financial assistance to staff taking legal action, however.

It is therefore the duty of every staff member and volunteer of CHWA to be aware that they could unintentionally be harassing or bullying another staff member and should take responsibility for their behaviour and modify it if necessary.

To counteract the effects of harassment/bullying, it is essential to have a well-understood procedure to deal with such incidents.

## 3. Harassment or bullying by contractors

Harassment or bullying of staff by CHWA contractors will lead to a formal complaint, where the contractor is employed by an organisation, and discontinued use of the contractor unless it can be shown that disciplinary action satisfactory to CHWA has been taken against the perpetrator by a contracted organisation.

## 4. Victim Support

CHWA will seek to provide additional assistance to victims by contacting outside agencies who will provide specialist advice and support, with the staff member’s permission.

CHWA will provide additional support to victims of harassment or bullying, until the case is resolved. Wherever possible, CHWA will ensure that staff is available to support victims if they so wish.

## 5. Police Involvement

CHWA will encourage and support victims to report acts of harassment or bullying to the Police. This support may include writing or telephoning the Police on behalf of the staff member, as well as attending meetings with the Police.

CHWA will report incidents of harassment or bullying to the Police where there is a clear threat to the safety of other CHWA staff or the general public.

## 6. Confidentiality

CHWA will respect and maintain the confidentiality of matters concerning the staff and volunteers and of any members of the public giving information in harassment cases.

## Revision history

The Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance Board of Directors will review this policy every year.

Date approved

Date amended

Date amended