



Name of policy	OP P&C – Bullying & Harassment Policy
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Authorised sign-off	BMS EDT

Bullying and Harassment Policy

At BMS World Mission we want to provide a safe and supportive working environment for all our employees, free from bullying and harassment. This policy explains how we expect our employees to behave, what to do if you witness or experience inappropriate behaviour and how we can all help to create a respectful working environment.

This policy applies to all BMS employees, as well as contractors and temporary workers.

1. General principles

We all have a responsibility to create a culture at BMS where we feel safe to be ourselves, and where bullying and harassment does not happen. We are also responsible for challenging it or reporting it if we see it happening.

BMS will not tolerate any forms of bullying or harassment towards our staff and is committed to taking allegations very seriously. If we find that an employee has bullied or harassed someone, made false allegations, or treated a colleague badly because they have raised a legitimate concern then this may be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy (**Disciplinary policy and procedures**).

Other useful policies to refer to may include **Grievance policy and procedures**, **Safeguarding Policy**, **Whistleblowing Policy** and the **Serious Incident Policy**.

All concerns or issues raised, regardless of how minor or serious should be passed to the safeguarding team who will review whether safeguarding action is required.

1.1 Informal approach

We know it can be very difficult to decide what to do if you feel that you're being bullied or harassed. It can also help to talk this through with someone, this could be your line manager, department director, safeguarding officer or member of the People and Culture team.

BMS supports employees to resolve issues informally in the first instance. Explaining to the person responsible how they are making you feel and asking them to stop may resolve the issue. They may not have realised the impact their words or actions had on you. Where you don't feel able to talk to the individual concerned, your manager should be your next port of call. If appropriate, your manager may speak

to them confidentially to say that their behaviour is inappropriate and needs to change.

If you feel unable to speak to your line manager, or the complaint relates to them, you could speak informally to your manager's line manager, or someone else you feel comfortable speaking to, such as another manager or a manager in People and Culture. If the behaviour persists, you can make a formal complaint.

The safeguarding team should be involved where concerns are raised, for the purpose of monitoring and acting on complaints where required. The People and Culture department will involve the safeguarding team wherever concerns are raised with them.

1.3 Formal complaints

Formal complaints should be in writing and sent to your line manager (or if the complaint relates to your line manager, then their line manager). If the complaint relates to a member of EDT, then the complaint should be sent to the General Director and a member of the HR team, if the complaint relates to the General Director, then the complaint should be sent to a member of the Board of Trustees.

Please see the Grievance Policy (**Grievance Policy and Procedures**) for more information.

BMS is committed to investigating grievances as quickly as possible, and where necessary taking appropriate action against those involved.

1.4 Support

We know that raising a concern can be a difficult thing to do and we are committed to providing support for those who have raised concerns or witnessed bullying and harassment at BMS. We will not allow you to suffer negative treatment in your job as a result.

We also know that being accused of bullying and harassment is a very difficult thing to experience. If we find an accusation is untrue, we will not allow you to suffer negative treatment in your job as a result.

1.5 Performance management

Bullying is not the same as managing someone's performance. If you are going through a performance management process, this should have been clearly explained to you, as well as the reasons why and what you need to do in order to improve. Performance management processes should be supportive and professional, with your improvement and development as the focus. If you feel your manager's behaviour is unacceptable in a performance management process, then talk to them about it or consider making a formal complaint (see 1.3).

2. Considerations

All BMS staff are responsible for their own behaviour at work, or at any time they are representing BMS outside of the workplace or at any work-related event. We expect everyone to be respectful and considerate of others and our individual differences. We recognise that as a polycentric and global organisation, we interact cross-culturally, while we encourage sensitivity to cross-cultural behaviours and values, where a behaviour makes a person feel uncomfortable, they don't need to accept it and are encouraged to speak up.

2.1 What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour that is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting toward someone else. It could also be an abuse or misuse of power which undermines, humiliates, puts down or hurts another person.

Bullying can take many different forms, including;

- physical, verbal or mental, or all of these
- aggressive - such as threatening or intimidating someone, or passive – such as ignoring someone
- carried out in an obvious and public way, or be subtle so only you and the bully know it's going on
- in person or by phone, email, text, or via social networking sites
- ongoing or a serious one-off incident
- between two individuals or involve a group of people targeting one person

Bullying can also be related to work, for example:

- giving someone tasks that aren't achievable, an unmanageable workload or impossible deadlines
- singling out someone for trivial tasks or unpleasant jobs
- holding back information or deliberately "losing" information
- not passing on messages or giving wrong or unclear information on purpose
- making inappropriate comments or threats about someone losing their job

2.2 What is harassment?

Harassment is legally defined as unwanted behaviour in relation to one of the categories below that violates someone's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

- Gender

- Disability
- Age
- Race and ethnic or national origin
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Religion or religious belief

It includes unwanted conduct that is sexual in nature and treating someone badly because they either rejected it or because they went along with it.

The law also protects people against victimisation – which means being treated badly because they think you have done or may do something about unlawful discrimination, such as:

- Brought an employment tribunal claim alleging discrimination
- Complained about discrimination
- Given evidence or information in relation to someone else’s claim about discrimination.

Harassment is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010. If someone’s behaviour is unwanted and causes offence, even if it was not done on purpose, it may be harassment. The unwanted behaviour does not have to be aimed at you for you to be offended by it. You also may change your mind about the impact of the behaviour, even if you once accepted it. If it creates an intimidating or offensive environment for you or anyone else, then it could be harassment.

Always try to think about how your behaviour or language might affect other people. If you are not sure whether it’s right for the working environment, it is best to err on the side of caution.

2.3 Unacceptable behaviour

Below are some examples of the kind of behaviour we think is unacceptable at BMS:

- Threatening or using physical violence
- Using insulting, humiliating or offensive language, both spoken and in writing
- Sending, circulating or displaying offensive words or images – including on posters, graffiti and tattoos
- Abusing a position of power
- Making sarcastic or snide remarks, inappropriate jokes or banter

- Spreading rumours about someone
- Excluding someone
- Making unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour / sexual jokes toward someone
- Making unnecessary or unwanted physical contact with someone
- Rudeness, undermining or talking down to someone

2.4 Behaviour outside work

If you experience unwanted or offensive behaviour that happens outside of the workplace but still to do with your work, like at a work-related social event, training course or during work related travel, tell your manager or another appropriate person. They will investigate and deal with it in line with this policy.

2.5 Social Media

If you put potentially offensive or inappropriate comments or images about or directed at colleagues on social media sites, we will take this very seriously and investigate it in line with this policy.

People and Culture
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