

PEOPLE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

CABI Dignity at Work

November 2024

KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE



General

CABI improves people's lives worldwide by providing information and applying scientific expertise to solve problems in agriculture and the environment.

This mission is underpinned by a commitment to conduct our business with honesty and integrity and in a professional manner.

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Dignity at Work policy is to ensure a culture of working relationships in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect and all staff are able and encouraged to meet their full potential by working in a non-threatening environment free of bullying and harassment and in accordance with the CABI Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, the CABI Code of Business Conduct and the CABI Code of Management Conduct.

Employees found to have committed acts of bullying or harassment may face disciplinary penalties, up to and including dismissal. Serious harassment may be a criminal offence.

CABI will not tolerate bullying and harassment of any kind. All allegations of bullying and harassment will be investigated and, if appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken. CABI will also not tolerate victimisation of a person for making allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith or supporting someone to make such a complaint.

2. Scope

The Dignity at Work policy covers all employees of CABI worldwide.This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

It covers bullying and harassment of and by managers, employees, contractors, agency staff and anyone else engaged to work at CABI, whether by direct contract with CABI or otherwise. If the complainant or alleged harasser is not employed by CABI, e.g. if the worker's contract is with an agency, this policy will apply with any necessary modifications such as that CABI could not dismiss the worker but would instead require the agency to remove the worker, if appropriate, after investigation and disciplinary proceedings.

The policy covers bullying and harassment in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, e.g. business trips and work-related social events.

3. Definition of bullying and harassment

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, and/or an abuse or misuse of power which has the purpose or effect of undermining, humiliating or injuring the person on the receiving end.

Harassment is unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that has that effect.

In some cases behaviour or actions that are acceptable to one individual may be offensive or unacceptable to another. Conduct may be bullying and harassment whether or not the person behaving in that way intends to offend.

CABI recognises the national laws and Codes of Practice of the countries in which we operate and will always comply with these as a minimum standard.

4. Examples of bullying and harassment

Bullying and harassment can take many forms, for example (but not limited to):

- physical contact ranging from unwelcome touching to serious assault;
- unwelcome sexual advances, such as touching, standing too close, the display of offensive materials, asking for sexual favours, making decisions on the basis of sexual advances being accepted or rejected;
- spreading malicious rumours, or insulting someone by word or behaviour;
- exclusion or victimisation;
- unfair treatment;
- overbearing supervision or other misuse of power or position;
- making threats or comments about job security without foundation;
- deliberately undermining a competent worker by overloading and constant criticism without justification;
- preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities;
- inappropriate, aggressive, inflammatory or abusive behaviour or language;
- public humiliation.

Bullying and harassment may not necessarily occur face to face, it may be by written communications, email or phone. Bullying or harassment that involves discriminatory language or actions may also breach CABI's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.

It should be recognised that managers may need to adopt a firm or assertive style in order to perform their duties. Legitimate and constructive fair criticism of an employee's performance or behaviour at work is not bullying and harassment. However, managers must be supportive and ensure their style is never abusive or aggressive, and any criticism must be delivered in an appropriate, proportionate and sensitive manner.

5. Procedure

The purpose of the following procedure is to provide employees with a means to raise complaints relating to bullying and harassment.

Informal procedure

- If possible, the employee should ask the alleged harasser to stop the perceived inappropriate behaviour, pointing out that the behaviour is unwelcome and is causing offence.
- If the employee is not able to approach the alleged harasser, or the harassment has continued after an approach, the employee should notify their line manager or a member of the People Team. (In the UK they may also wish to contact their trade union, Prospect, representative).
- If the issue continues or the matter has not been resolved by the informal procedure, the employee may follow the formal procedure set out below.

Formal procedure

- If an informal approach does not resolve matters, the employee can make a formal complaint by using the CABI Grievance Procedure. The grievance may be raised with the employee's line manager or directly with a member of the People Team. This procedure recognises that the alleged harasser should not be part of the team assessing the grievance.
- All complaints will be investigated and, if appropriate, disciplinary proceedings will be brought against the alleged harasser in line with the CABI Performance and Conduct policy. During investigation, it may be appropriate to take action to limit contact between the alleged harasser and the complainant.
- Counselling may be offered to the complainant via the Employee Assistance Programme or through other routes.

6. False accusations

Any employee found to be making mischievous or malicious complaints is likely to be subject to disciplinary proceedings. This does not include allegations later found to be without basis but were nonetheless made in good faith.



7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 Employees

We all have a responsibility to help create and maintain a work environment free of bullying and harassment. You can help to do this by:

- Being aware of how your own behaviour may affect others and changing it, if necessary - you can still cause offence even if you are “only joking”;
- Treating your colleagues with dignity and respect;
- Taking a stand if you think inappropriate jokes or comments are being made;
- Making it clear to others when you find their behaviour unacceptable, unless it should be obvious in advance that this would be the case;
- Intervening, if possible, to stop bullying or harassment and giving support where appropriate;
- Making it clear that you find bullying and harassment unacceptable;
- Reporting bullying or harassment to your manager or to the People team and supporting CABI in the investigation of complaints; and
- If a complaint of bullying or harassment is made, not prejudging or victimising the complainant or alleged harasser.

7.2 Line managers

Line managers are responsible for:

- Implementing this policy and related processes and for monitoring the implementation in the day-to-day activities of their business area or function;
- Setting a good example by their own behaviour;
- Ensuring that there is a supportive working environment;
- Making sure that staff know what standards of behaviour are expected of them;
- Intervening to stop bullying or harassment;
- Reporting promptly to a member of the People Team any complaint of bullying or harassment, or any incident of bullying or harassment witnessed by them;
- Undertaking investigations of alleged bullying and harassment, and
- Taking appropriate action, with support from the People Team, against employees found to have infringed the Dignity at Work Policy.

7.3 People Team

The People Team is responsible for:

- Ensuring that employees are aware of their responsibilities under the Dignity at Work policy;
- Providing guidance as and when required, particularly to the relevant decision makers;
- Ensuring training is made available to line managers to support the management of staff in an effective, fair and respectful manner.
- Supporting line managers to take appropriate action against employees found to have infringed the policy in accordance with the established procedures incorporated within the Performance and Conduct policy;
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the Dignity at Work policy through anonymous surveys and other means, and to keep under review procedures and criteria in the implementation of the policy, in discussion with CABI management and employee and/or union representatives (Prospect in the UK).

7.4 Senior Management

Senior Managers are responsible for:

- Creating a respectful workplace environment free from harassment;
- Being a role model for respectful behaviour;
- Embedding and living the values and behaviour that underpins dignity, respect and inclusion;
- Visibly promoting a positive and inclusive workplace culture where harassment is taken seriously and is not tolerated.