



Bullying, harassment & sexual harassment policy

Purpose

To provide safe Synod workplaces free from all forms of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment.
To create and maintain a child safe culture.

Policy statement

The Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania (the Synod) is committed to providing a safe and productive work environment where the dignity of every individual is respected and therefore has a zero tolerance approach to bullying, harassment and sexual harassment.

The Synod will actively endeavour to eliminate bullying, harassment and sexual harassment in all forms from its workplaces and will not tolerate bullying or harassment of any kind, whether it is by managers, staff, contractors, sub-contractors, volunteers or others associated with the organisation in the course of its operations.

As part of its commitment to a workplace which is free of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment, the Synod will ensure that the following individuals are appropriately trained and available to all staff:

- Contact Officers who provide advice and support to staff members who experience bullying or harassment in the workplace;
- Equal Opportunity Officers who promote equal opportunity in the workplace, provide advice and support on equal opportunity matters including bullying, harassment and sexual harassment, arrange periodic education programs, and investigate complaints or allegations of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment as required by the General Secretary.

For roles and responsibilities of Contact Officers and Equal Opportunity Officers, please refer to the Bullying, Harassment & Sexual Harassment procedure.

Consequences of policy breaches

Where it is found that behaviour which constitutes a breach of the Synod Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment policy has occurred, immediate action will be taken. Such action includes, but is not restricted to, disciplinary action including termination of employment.

Scope

This policy applies to all Synod workplaces and work related activities.

Definitions

Bullying: is repeated unreasonable behaviour to another person including offensive or abusive language or conduct, behaviour which belittles, threatens or intimidates another person. Workplace bullying is unreasonable behaviour directed toward an employee or group of employees that creates a risk to health and safety.

Contact officer: A trained advisor who provides information about options for resolving issues relating to bullying or harassment. Contact Officers are not responsible for investigating complaints. A list of Contact Officers can be found on the intranet or OHS notice boards.

Discrimination: is treating a person (or group or people) unfairly and or disadvantaging them because



of the following actual or assumed personal characteristic(s):

- age
- carer status, family responsibilities, parental status
- disability / impairment (including physical, sensory and intellectual disability, work related injury, medical conditions, mental, psychological and learning disabilities)
- employment activity
- gender identity, lawful sexual activity, sexual orientation
- industrial activity
- marital status
- physical features
- political belief or activity
- pregnancy, breastfeeding
- race (including colour, nationality, ethnicity and ethnic origin)
- religious belief or activity
- sex
- personal association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, one of these personal characteristics.

Equal Opportunity Officer: Trained advisors and investigators who have experience and expertise in understanding and ensuring compliance in equal opportunity and employment law frameworks. Equal Opportunity Officers will assist to informally resolve behavioural issues with colleagues and to investigate formal complaints as required by the General Secretary. A list of Equal Opportunity Officers can be found on the intranet or on OHS notice boards.

Harassment: Unwelcome behaviour or language that has the effect of offending, intimidating or humiliating a person.

Manager: At the Synod, this term refers to managers, directors, executive directors and the General Secretary.

Natural justice: refers to a due process that displays fairness to all parties. It includes the right to be heard, the right of reply, the right of support during processes, the right to be treated fairly, the right to be informed of allegation(s) being made and the right to objective consideration of allegations and responses, all within a timely manner.

Sexual harassment: Unwelcome sexual behaviour or sexual innuendo that has the effect of offending, intimidating or humiliating another person.

Synod: The Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

Related policies and procedures

Bullying, harassment & sexual harassment procedure

EAP Emotional Psychological Support procedure

Inclusion policy

Conflict of interest policy

Grievance resolution policy

Keeping Children Safe policy

Workplace Ethos & Values

Related documents

EAP brochure

Lay Staff Collective Employment Agreement

UC Camping Lay Staff Collective Employment Agreement
 Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)
 Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
 Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
 Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
 Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
 Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
 Protected Disclosure Act 2012 (Vic)
 Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
 Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)
 Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

Ethos and Values of the Uniting Church in Australia

As an employer, we express the ethos of Christianity to love one another, to live justly and to seek the reconciliation and renewal of all creation by respecting ourselves and all whom we serve and employ. We strive to do so by:

- Being inclusive
- Acting and advocating for a just society
- Working for peace and justice in the World
- Having an openness to the wisdom of people of other faiths and views
- Implementing environmentally sustainable practices

In our workplace we value justice, inclusion, compassion, shared leadership, respect, integrity, wise stewardship and innovation. The Uniting Church in Australia is committed to keeping children safe.

The Ethos and Values of the Uniting Church in Australia should be considered in the interpretation of this policy.

VERSION: APPROVAL	POLICY MANAGER	REVIEW DATE
1: Senior Leadership Team	Director People & Culture	7 May 2012
2: Senior Leadership Team	Director People & Culture	29 August 2014
3: Senior Leadership Team	Director People & Culture	26 October 2019

Further assistance

Contact People & Culture for interpretation and assistance with this policy.