

# Prevention & Response to Bullying & Violence Policy

## Introduction

Bell People is committed to the prevention of bullying and violence in the workplace.

This policy is intended to provide all workers with information to assist Bell People achieve its policy objectives by outlining expectations of behaviour and procedures for dealing with complaints.

We expect all workers to behave in a professional manner and to treat each other with dignity and respect when they are at work. We encourage all workers who experience bullying or violence to report it. When reported, it will be a serious matter and will be investigated in a timely manner.

Workers must always comply with this policy during work, or when representing or acting on behalf of Bell People at work related events and social functions.

## Policy

Bell People is committed to providing workers, a workplace, free of bullying and violence.

Behaviour that is inconsistent with this policy will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of a workers' employment or engagement.

Where a worker is working for clients of Bell People ("Host employer"), they must comply with the Host employer's policies relating to bullying and violence. Behaviour that is inconsistent with a Host employer's policy will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action which may include termination of assignment and/or termination of employment with Bell People.

## Responsibilities

Bell People has a duty of care to its workers to take reasonable steps to prevent bullying and violence.

Managers have a responsibility to:

- comply with this policy;
- monitor the working environment to ensure that acceptable standards of conduct are always observed;
- model appropriate behaviour;
- seek appropriate advice and assistance when dealing with formal or informal complaints.

All persons have a responsibility to:

- comply with this policy;
- cooperate with Bell People in the event of an investigation;
- when appropriate, deal with sensitive information in a confidential manner.

## Bullying

A worker is bullied at work if a person or group repeatedly act unreasonably towards them or a group of workers and the behaviour creates a risk to their health and safety.

Bullying may involve physical or verbal abuse, aggression or intimidation, but it may also be more subtle or indirect and include:

- putting new staff through "initiation rituals";

- verbal abuse, threats, sarcasm or other forms of demeaning or intimidating language or communication;
- constant negative criticism;
- threatening to take unjustified action against a person unless they comply with unreasonable requests;
- placing unreasonable work demands on people;
- deliberately isolating staff members.

Bullying will not be tolerated by Bell People and any worker found to have been involved in bullying another worker may be subject to disciplinary action including termination of an workers' employment or engagement.

### **Violence**

A worker may be exposed to work-related violence as a victim or witness to a violent incident.

Work-related violence is any incident in which a person is abused, threatened, or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work. Violence at work can come from a member of the public, a customer or even a colleague.

The term 'work-related violence' covers a broad range of actions and behaviours that can create a risk to workers' health and safety, such as:

- verbal threats;
- threatening someone with a weapon;
- throwing objects;
- pushing, shoving and hitting;
- spitting and biting;
- sexual abuse

There will be no tolerance of violence. All incidents of violence and aggression will be reported and investigated. All causes will be identified, and appropriate action taken to prevent it happening again. If any worker is found to have been violent to another person within the workplace, the worker may be subject to disciplinary action including termination of a worker's employment or engagement.

### **Complaints regarding bullying and violence**

Breaches of this policy will be treated seriously.

Workers who become aware of a breach or suspected breach of this policy are encouraged to discuss this matter with his or her manager on a confidential basis.

A worker who believes they are a victim of bullying or violence may deal with the matter:

- Informally - by confronting the person with whom they are aggrieved (if the worker feels safe to do so); and/or
- Formally - by using Bell People's issue resolution procedure

Should the worker elects to raise a formal grievance, Bell People may carry out an investigation. Alternatively, Bell People may take whatever action it deems necessary to attempt to resolve the workers' grievance.

If after an investigation by Bell People, an workers' complaint or statement is found to be false and malicious, disciplinary action may be taken against the worker up to and including termination of the workers' employment or engagement.



If a workers' complaint is substantiated, Bell People may take disciplinary action against the perpetrator. Depending upon the seriousness of the breach of this policy, such action may include termination of a workers' employment or engagement.

**Breach of this Policy**

Any worker who is found to have breached this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or assignment.

**Sue Bell**

**Director, Bell People**

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25 November 2019