



Dockside Personnel - Sexual Harassment Policy

1. Policy Statement

Dockside Personnel is committed to providing a work environment where all employees are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. Sexual harassment in the workplace is unacceptable and will not be tolerated under any circumstances. We are committed to preventing harassment and ensuring that employees feel safe to report any incidents of sexual harassment.

2. What Is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment is unwanted, inappropriate, or unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. It can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- **Verbal Harassment:** Unwelcome comments, jokes, or innuendos of a sexual nature, or derogatory remarks about someone's gender or sexual orientation.
- **Physical Harassment:** Unwelcome touching, sexual advances, or any physical contact of a sexual nature.
- **Visual Harassment:** Displaying sexually explicit images, emails, texts, or making sexually suggestive gestures or symbols.
- **Online Harassment:** Sending inappropriate sexual messages, explicit content, or making unwanted advances via social media, email, or other digital platforms.
- **Sexual Advancements or Propositions:** Unsolicited requests for sexual favours or sexual propositions.

Sexual harassment can occur between people of any gender, and both men and women can be victims or perpetrators.

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all employees, job applicants, contractors, suppliers, customers, and anyone else who interacts with Dockside Personnel in the course of their work. It covers incidents that occur at the workplace, at work-related events (conferences, business trips), or through online communication channels.

4. Responsibilities

- **Employees:** All employees are responsible for their conduct in the workplace and must not engage in or tolerate sexual harassment. They should treat all colleagues with respect and dignity.
- **Managers and Supervisors:** Managers have a responsibility to ensure that sexual harassment does not occur in their teams, to set a good example, and to respond promptly and appropriately if harassment is reported.
- **HR and Leadership:** The HR department and senior management are responsible for investigating allegations of sexual harassment, ensuring the policy is followed, and taking corrective actions where necessary.

5. Reporting Sexual Harassment

Employees who believe they have been sexually harassed, or who witness sexual harassment, should report it as soon as possible. There are several ways to report harassment:

- **Directly to Line Manager or Supervisor:** If the person experiencing harassment feels comfortable, they should report the incident to their line manager or supervisor.
- **Human Resources (HR):** If the employee prefers, they may report the incident directly to the HR department, which will handle the matter in accordance with this policy.
- **Other Reporting Channels:** If the line manager or HR is unavailable or the employee feels uncomfortable with these options, the company may provide an alternative reporting mechanism (a designated “Harassment Officer” or an anonymous reporting system).

6. How We Handle Complaints

Upon receiving a complaint, Dockside Personnel will take the following steps to ensure the matter is dealt with promptly and fairly:

- **Immediate Acknowledgment:** The complainant will be acknowledged within 5 business days, and the matter will be investigated as quickly as possible.
- **Confidentiality:** All complaints will be handled confidentially, and information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis (e.g., HR, managers, investigators).
- **Investigation:** A thorough and impartial investigation will be conducted by the HR team or an external investigator, if appropriate. The complainant and the accused will be interviewed, and any relevant evidence (e.g., witness statements, digital communications) will be gathered.
- **Resolution:** Based on the investigation, Dockside Personnel will determine whether sexual harassment occurred and take appropriate action. This may include:

- A verbal or written warning
- Mandatory training on workplace behaviour
- Suspension or demotion
- Termination of employment (in severe cases)

7. Protection Against Retaliation

Dockside Personnel will not tolerate any form of retaliation against employees who report sexual harassment or participate in investigations. This includes any negative action such as unfair treatment, exclusion, bullying, or demotion. Employees who experience retaliation should report it immediately.

8. Disciplinary Action

Any employee found to have engaged in sexual harassment will face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. The nature of the action will depend on the severity of the incident and the impact on the complainant and the workplace.

Possible outcomes include:

- **First Offense:** Written warning, mandatory harassment training, or suspension.
- **Severe or Repeated Offenses:** Dismissal or termination of employment.

9. Support for Affected Employees

Employees who experience sexual harassment may need support. Dockside Personnel offers the following resources:

- **Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** Confidential counselling and support services for employees experiencing personal issues, including harassment.
- **Adjustments to Work:** If necessary, adjustments can be made to the work environment, including a change in reporting lines or work duties to protect the complainant.
- **Legal Support:** Employees have the right to seek independent legal advice and can contact organisations such as the Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS) for further assistance.

10. Preventative Measures and Training

To prevent sexual harassment and ensure a positive and inclusive workplace, Dockside Personnel will:

- **Provide Regular Training:** All employees will undergo regular training on sexual harassment prevention, how to identify harassment, and how to report it.
- **Promote Awareness:** We will ensure that employees are aware of Dockside Personnel's sexual harassment policy and reporting procedures.

- **Monitor and Review:** Dockside Personnel will review the effectiveness of this policy regularly to ensure that it remains up to date and in compliance with UK law.

11. Legal Compliance

This policy is designed to comply with relevant UK legislation, including:

- **Equality Act 2010:** The primary piece of legislation that prohibits discrimination, including sexual harassment, in the workplace.
- **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974:** Employers are required to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of employees, which includes providing a workplace free from harassment.
- **Employment Rights Act 1996:** Provides protections for employees against unfair dismissal, which includes dismissal for raising harassment complaints.

Employees also have the right to pursue legal action through an employment tribunal if they feel their complaint has not been properly addressed or if they believe their rights have been violated.

Acknowledgment of Receipt

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understood Dockside Personnel's Sexual Harassment Policy and agree to comply with its provisions.

Employee Name: _____

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____
