



POLICY: ANTI-BULLYING AND ANTI-HARASSMENT

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Copies of this Policy are available in alternative formats.

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POLICY: ANTI-BULLYING AND ANTI-HARASSMENT

All reference to 'we', 'our' or 'us' in this Policy should be read as meaning Sandbourne Housing Association.

1. Purpose and aim of the Policy

1.1 We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of its residents and staff so that they can both live and work in a relaxed and secure atmosphere free from intimidation, aggression, coercion and victimisation. Bullying and harassment of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying or harassment does occur, victims should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying or harassment is happening is expected to inform their line manager.

2. What is bullying/harassment?

2.1 Bullying/harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

2.2 Bullying/harassment often (but not exclusively) targets the gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender re-assignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability or age of the victim.

2.3 A single incident of unwanted or offensive behaviour to one individual can amount to harassment.

2.4 Examples of bullying/harassment can include:

- 2.4.1 Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (eg hiding books, threatening gestures)
- 2.4.2 Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any other use of violence
- 2.4.3 Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- 2.4.4 Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- 2.4.5 Homophobic - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- 2.4.6 Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

- 2.4.7 Cyber - all areas of internet such as email and internet chat room misuse, mobile phone threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology, ie camera and video facilities.

2.5 This is by no means an exhaustive list.

3. Who may be a bully?

3.1 Bullying and harassment can be carried out by other residents, relatives, carers or external workers, and even by staff.

4. Why is it important to respond to bullying?

4.1 Bullying and harassment hurts. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying or harassment. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. People who are bullying or harassing others need to learn different ways of behaving.

4.2 Housing and care providers have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying and harassment.

5. Objectives of this Policy

5.1 All Board members, staff, residents and relatives should have an understanding of what bullying and harassment is.

5.2 All Board members and staff should know what our policy is on bullying and harassment, and follow it when bullying or harassment is reported.

5.3 All residents and relatives should know what our policy is on bullying and harassment, and what they should do if bullying or harassment arises.

5.4 As an organisation, we take bullying and harassment seriously. Residents and relatives, as well as staff, should be assured that they will be supported when bullying or harassment is reported.

5.5 To affirm that we will not tolerate bullying or harassment.

6. Signs and symptoms

6.1 Residents or staff may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied or harassed. Staff should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a resident or another member of staff:

6.1.1 is frightened of going out or of joining in social events

6.1.2 changes their usual routine

6.1.3 becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence

6.1.4 starts stammering

6.1.5 threatens suicide

- 6.1.6 has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
 - 6.1.7 has unexplained cuts or bruises
 - 6.1.8 becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
 - 6.1.9 is bullying other residents and/or staff
 - 6.1.10 stops eating
 - 6.1.11 is frightened to say what is wrong
 - 6.1.12 give improbable excuses for any of the above.
- 6.2 These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying and harassment should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

7. Outcomes

- 7.1 The bully/harasser (bullies/harassers) will be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may also be considered such as reporting the matter to the police, or taking disciplinary action against a staff member and/or if a resident or visitor is concerned, taking action under the Tenancy Agreement.
- 7.2 After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying or harassment does not take place.

8. Prevention

- 8.1 We will use various methods for helping prevent bullying and harassment, as and when appropriate, these may include:
 - 8.1.1 ensuring residents and staff are aware of their rights and external organisations that can assist
 - 8.1.2 having discussions about bullying and harassment and why it matters
 - 8.1.3 providing regular awareness training for staff.

9. Equality impact assessment

Age	Neutral
Being or becoming a transsexual person	Neutral
Being married or in a civil partnership	Neutral
Being pregnant or on maternity leave	Neutral
Disability	Neutral
Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin	Neutral
Religion, belief or lack of religion/belief	Neutral
Sex	Neutral
Sexual orientation	Neutral

10. Consultation arrangements

- 10.1 We will consult all residents and recognised residents' bodies on this Policy and their views will be taken into account by the Board before adopting it. Our staff will also be consulted on this Policy. Any reasonable suggestions will be taken into account before the Policy is approved by the Board.