

VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT POLICY CHECKLIST FOR EMPLOYEERS

Policy:

A distinction should be made between the policy and the guidelines which accompany the policy. The policy is generally a shorter document which aims to clearly and concisely lay the ground rules for conduct within or in relation to the workplace. When someone reads the policy, he or she should obtain a clear picture of what is expected of him or her. If further understanding, clarification or rationale is required then the reader should be referred to the Guidelines which provide a much more comprehensive discussion.

The Policy should be posted in various visible locations throughout the workplace (Health and Safety Board, Lunch/break rooms, staff bulletin board, meeting rooms, front entrance, and locker rooms). Only the Policy should be posted. Guidelines should be easily accessed, online and given to staff during training sessions. In preparing your policy on violence and harassment prevention, consider including the following items:

1. The purpose of the policy
2. How the policy fits with the vision and occupational health and safety management plan of the organization (brief statement)
3. Who the policy applies to (scope, application)
4. Who the policy does not apply to
5. A commitment to protecting the rights of both complainants and respondents under the policy (respect, professionalism, and as much as possible respect for confidentiality)
6. The designated workplace coordinator and/or main contact people to administer / enforce the policy (always include numbers for staff to contact after regular hours)
7. After hours contact numbers for emergencies
8. (within the first few pages of the policy) A summary page of all Time frames for mandatory conduct falling under the policy (such as periodic follow ups with complainants/victims, supervisor's report, investigations completed) Include the name / position and contact information of the person responsible for ensuring that these time frames are met
9. The date of the last revision
10. The date of the next revision
11. Where to submit suggested changes, questions or clarifications of the policy
12. Definitions of key concepts (use both legal definitions right out of the relevant legislation and also non-legal definitions which can broaden the range of behavior being governed by the policy)
13. Responsibilities of all stakeholders under the policy
14. Clear identification of behavior and conduct which is discretionary and that which is non-discretionary or mandatory
15. Mandatory requirement for reporting violations of the policy
16. A defined method to exit out of the policy in a mutually agreeable and discretionary manner only through the department that enforces the policy (where appropriate)
- 17.

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Policy (cont'd):

18. Anticipated time frames for various steps in the process
19. Possible consequences for policy violations
20. Direction to refer to the Guidelines for all steps , procedures and considerations under this policy
21. The list of documents required to be completed and supporting documentation required
22. Dated signature of most senior management person in the organization.

Guidelines: (Longer, more detailed, clearly elaborating on the following)

1. Vision
2. Values, Principles governing policy
3. Detailed procedural reporting process (in chronological order of steps taken)
4. Detailed procedural investigation process (in chronological order of steps taken)
5. Objectives
6. Considerations
7. Decision making
8. Accountability structures / internal controls built into the policy (methods for ensuring that steps are being followed, and that nothing is overlooked, usually best to have original reports and investigations and final reports go to at least two different people, in different departments such as the CEO, Director of HR, OHS Manager and the Designated Workplace Coordinator in order to ensure greater accountability)
9. How to work with overlapping obligations (policy, law, and practice)
10. Auditing/revisions/review
11. Data collection / storage / privacy issues
12. Outside resources and referral sources

Appendices which provide:

1. the full text of the sections in each Act or statute for all applicable laws
2. the full text of the sections in each Act or statute for all applicable regulations
3. the full text of the relevant guidelines
4. copies of each related company policy
5. copies of all required documentation / forms