

## **FirstGroup plc**

### **Dignity at Work Policy**

**THIS POLICY IS ALSO AVAILABLE IN LARGE TYPE.**

REFERENCE:	HR35
OWNER:	Group HR Director
VERSION NUMBER:	1.3
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## Dignity at Work

### 1 Policy statement

- 1.1 FirstGroup plc (“**we/us/our**”) is committed to a working environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. Bullying and harassment, victimisation and discrimination are not acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- 1.2 We recognise the physical and psychological harm that can be caused by this type of behaviour and we will take action when needed to investigate reports and create a workplace that is respectful and free from abuses of power.
- 1.3 These principles are in line with our company Values of “Supportive of Each Other”, “Accountable for Performance”, “Setting the highest standards” and “Dedicated to Safety”.
- 1.4 The aim of this policy is to put our principles and Values into practice and, where required, provide a framework for resolving allegations of behaviour covered by this policy.

### 2 Scope and application

- 2.1 This policy has been implemented by FirstGroup plc and applies to FirstGroup plc and all its subsidiary and associated companies. “FirstGroup” (“**us/we/our**”) is used throughout this policy to apply either to FirstGroup plc or to the applicable subsidiary or associated company by whom the employee, worker or contractor (“**you/yours**”) may be employed, engaged or contracted as appropriate.
- 2.2 It is recognised that all our operating companies will have locally agreed policies in place to deal with bullying and harassment in the workplace. This policy reflects the **minimum standard** that all locally agreed policies should adhere to.
- 2.3 The contents of this policy do not form part of individual terms and conditions of employment or engagement. We reserve the right to make such changes as may from time to time be necessary.

### 3 Purpose

- 3.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that everyone who comes into contact with FirstGroup is treated fairly, respected and valued, which will ultimately benefit all.
- 3.2 This policy seeks to prevent any form of bullying or harassment through several principles.
- 3.3 These principles are:
  - Ensuring that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect;
  - By stating that bullying and harassment, victimisation and discrimination are not acceptable and will not be tolerated;
  - By raising awareness of the effect of one person’s behaviour and actions to another individual’s physical or mental health and wellbeing;
  - By making employees aware of the routes available to deal with behaviours they find difficult and/or unreasonable;

- By making managers and employees aware of their personal responsibility for the practical application of this policy in their day-to-day activities and must support it at all times; and
- By raising awareness that non-compliance with this policy will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including summary dismissal.

#### **4 Policy**

- 4.1 We will promote and create an environment that supports the dignity of all, and is free from bullying and any form of harassment. This policy should be read in conjunction with our Group Code of Ethics, Group Equal Opportunities and Diversity policy, and any local Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy, which aims to ensure that all employees or other workers are treated fairly and with dignity and respect and are not subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.
- 4.2 This policy recognises the link between a lack or absence of dignity at work, and the negative effect this can have on both physical and mental health.
- 4.3 This policy covers bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination in the workplace, social and electronic media and in any work related setting, for example, at work related social events.

#### **5 What is Bullying?**

- 5.1 Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.
- 5.2 Each of us has a responsibility to acknowledge that views and opinions held by others and decisions made by managers and supervisors may not always coincide with our own. Bullying is to be distinguished from vigorous debate or the actions of a manager making reasonable (but perhaps unpopular) requests of their colleagues.

#### **6 What is Harassment?**

- 6.1 Harassment is unwanted conduct, often related to a relevant protected characteristic. The relevant characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.
- 6.1.1 You do not have to possess a relevant protected characteristic to make a claim, as you can make a claim where you are associated to someone with a protected characteristic or because you are wrongly perceived to have one or are treated as if you do.
- 6.1.2 ACAS states that 'harassment applies to all the protected characteristics except for pregnancy and maternity where any unfavourable treatment may be considered discrimination, and marriage and civil partnership where there is no significant evidence that is needed'.

#### **7 What is Victimisation?**

- 7.1 Victimisation is deliberately treating a colleague less favourably than others because they have complained (whether formally or otherwise) that a colleague has been bullying

or harassing them, or someone else, or supported a colleague in relation to making a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint.

## **8 What is Discrimination?**

8.1 Discrimination is when a person is disadvantaged because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or trade union membership.

## **9 What is Unacceptable Behaviour?**

9.1 Examples of behaviours that are unacceptable include, but are not limited to:

### **9.1.1 Behaviour that offends or insults**

9.1.1.1 Shouting at a colleague alone or in front of others; Criticising, belittling or patronising a colleague, alone or in front of others; Using foul, obscene, malicious or offensive language; 'Back stabbing', sniping, 'mudslinging' etc; Spreading rumours and gossip; Telling tales to discredit; Displaying offensive and insulting pictures, graffiti, emblems etc; Inappropriate jokes, banter, comments, or suggestions about a colleague; Snide remarks, jibes, name calling, use of offensive nicknames; Being 'two faced', saying one thing to a colleague's face, and something else, normally the opposite, to others.

### **9.1.2 Behaviour that intimidates or threatens**

9.1.2.1 Threatening violence; Physically attacking a colleague; Pointing and wagging of fingers; Thumping a table; Screaming at others; Having a temper tantrum; Intrusion of a colleague's personal and intimate space; Inappropriate touching, caressing, holding, grabbing etc; Shoving, barging and pushing; Blocking or barring the way; Vandalism of a colleague's property; Spying, pestering or other inappropriate questioning, particularly into the colleague's personal or domestic life.

### **9.1.3 Behaviour that isolates or excludes**

9.1.3.1 Giving a colleague the 'cold shoulder'; Ignoring a colleague's views or opinions;

9.1.3.2 Excluding a colleague from social activities; Limiting communication to memo, e-mail or via a third party to avoid speaking directly to them; Forcing a colleague to sit apart from their colleagues; Ending conversations when a colleague enters the room; Whispering about a colleague in their presence or behind their back.

### **9.1.4 Behaviour that is directly work related**

9.1.4.1 Setting a colleague up to fail; Changing a colleagues deadlines without consultation and for no good reason or at short notice; Constantly highlighting errors or mistakes; Denying the colleague the resources or equipment necessary to do the job, whilst allowing others the resources and equipment as and when required; Inappropriate, overbearing or excessive supervision; Claims of misconduct, breach of discipline etc. but refusal to formalise or put in writing; Making threats of disciplinary action for trivial or fabricated incidents but refusal to discipline other staff for severely disruptive behaviour.

## **10 What should be expected of us all?**

10.1 Everyone should treat each other with dignity and respect. You should consider whether your words and/or actions could be offensive to others. It is the attitude of the person to whom the words or actions are received that is important. An individual may be guilty of bullying or harassment without having intended to be in any way offensive.

**You** can help stop bullying and harassment by:

- being aware of the behaviours that could be considered bullying or harassment;
- making sure our own conduct does not cause offence or misunderstanding and that it supports the values and code of behaviour expected by us;
- being prepared to stand up against bullying or harassment at work or to support colleagues who are being harassed; and
- seeking advice and support.

**Managers** can help stop bullying and harassment by:

- maintaining and promoting a working environment where bullying or harassment is not tolerated;
- setting examples and standards of behaviour which support this policy and those set out in our Group Code of Ethics and any local Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy; and
- taking prompt action to resolve any issue relating to bullying or harassment.

## 11 How do I report breaches of this policy?

11.1 You are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying or harassment that you experience or witness to your line manager so that they can investigate and resolve it. If appropriate there may need to be a formal investigation undertaken following a locally agreed grievance procedure. All complaints of bullying and harassment will be taken seriously whilst ensuring confidentiality is maintained.

11.2 If you do not feel comfortable raising the matter with your line manager, or the issue relates to your line manager, then you should contact your local Human Resources representative.

11.3 Should you feel unable to raise your concerns using the normal reporting lines you can report matters confidentially and anonymously by phone or web portal via EthicsPoint, our Confidential Reporting Hotline. This service is operated independently of FirstGroup and is completely confidential. You can report concerns anonymously if you wish, or you can give your name and how you can be contacted as this may assist with any investigation.

- Telephone: Contact details are contained in internal policy
- Web portal: Contact details are contained in internal policy

## 12 Investigation outcomes

12.1 If the matter is investigated in line with any relevant grievance policy or process, the Investigating Manager will decide whether to uphold the grievance. If the grievance is upheld then the Investigating Manager may decide that mediation is appropriate (i.e. bring the parties together to resolve the issue), counselling or that the matter should be considered under the Company's disciplinary procedure.

12.2 Where any allegation is found to have been made in bad faith or maliciously then the complainant may be subject to any local disciplinary procedure.

### **13 What support is available to employees?**

13.1 You can access free and confidential support through your local Employee Assistance Programme (Tel: Details are contained in the internal policy document) and where appropriate by referral to your relevant Occupational Health provider for additional support and guidance.

### **14 Document history and change control**

14.1 This document will be reviewed by the Owner within twenty-four months of the issue date and at least once every twelve months thereafter. It will be reviewed at other times as dictated by operational needs and changes to the underlying legal position.

14.2 Requests for changes to this document must be sent to the Owner. All requests must provide details of the required changes and the reasons for the changes being requested. All changes will be noted in the table below by the Owner.