

WORKPLACE BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

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APPROVALS

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CATEGORY	Statutory		
POLICY OWNER	People and Performance		
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WORKPLACE BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

OBJECTIVE

Isaac Regional Council (IRC) is committed to ensuring a healthy and safe workplace that is free from bullying and harassment and affirms the rights of individuals to be treated fairly, with dignity and respect. IRC has zero tolerance towards workplace bullying and harassment and will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour under any circumstance.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all IRC employees:

- Full time, part time, casual, permanent or temporary employees;
- Contract employees;
- Volunteers, work experience students, agency supplied staff and contractors and Councillors.

DEFINITIONS

TERM / ACRONYM	MEANING
IRC	Isaac Regional Council
Employees	IRC Employees, Volunteers, Work Experience, Agency Supplied Staff, Contractors and Councillors.
Bullying	means repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards an individual or group, that creates a risk to health and safety. It does not need to be intentional; a person's intention is irrelevant when determining if bullying has occurred.
Sexual Harassment	means any form of unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, which makes a person feel offended, humiliated, intimidated or uncomfortable. Conduct can amount to sexual harassment even if the person did not intend to offend, humiliate or intimidate the other person and may be experienced by women and men.
Harassment	means when a person is subjected to repeated, unwelcome and unsolicited behaviour, other than behaviour amounting to sexual harassment, by a person, including the person's manager, co-worker or group of co-workers of the person and; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The person considers the behaviour to be offensive, intimidating, humiliating or threatening.
Unreasonable behaviour	means behaviour that a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would expect to abuse, humiliate, undermine or threaten a person or group. Single incidents of unreasonable

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	behaviour can also create a risk to health and safety and may escalate into bullying.
Repeated behaviour	refers to the persistent nature of the behaviour and can refer to a range or pattern of behaviours over a period of time.
Reasonable Management Action	reasonable management action carried out in a reasonable manner does not constitute bullying. Managers/Supervisors have the right, and are obliged to, manage their employees in a reasonable manner. Performance counselling is a necessary part of ensuring that employees meet IRC's standards of work and behaviour.
Malicious	means intending or intended to do harm.
Vexatious	means causing or tending to cause annoyance, frustration or worry.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Chief Executive Officer

The CEO is responsible for;

- Ensuring support and consistent application of this policy;
- Promoting and modelling appropriate standards of behaviour and enforcing IRC's approach towards zero tolerance of bullying and harassment.
- **Directors, Managers and Supervisors:**
- Directors, Managers and Supervisors are responsible for;
- Complying with this policy;
- Promoting and modelling appropriate standards of behaviour;
- Treating complaints and behaviours which may constitute serious bullying and harassment and taking immediate action.

Manager People and Performance:

The Manager People and Performance is responsible for;

- Promoting the policy to ensure IRC work environment is free from bullying and harassment.
- Ensuring awareness and training program is delivered to all employees;
- Ensuring an impartial, fair and transparent process is followed.

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Employee:

Employees are responsible for;

- Complying with this policy;
- Reporting any incident of bullying and harassment that they have experienced or witnessed and not to participate in these behaviours;
- Participate in any awareness and training provided by IRC;
- Treating any allegations or complaints of bullying and harassment with appropriate confidentiality.

POLICY STATEMENT

IRC is committed to providing a workplace that is free from bullying, harassment and sexual harassment and considers these behaviours unacceptable and will not be tolerated under any circumstance. has zero tolerance for unacceptable behaviours under any circumstance. This policy covers all behaviours considered bullying and harassment within and external to the workplace such as any work-related off site, work related functions (including social functions and celebrations), on trips and attending conferences.

Workplace bullying and harassment is taken very seriously by IRC and will not be tolerated. Employees found in breach of this policy and to have participated or abetted in bullying and harassment of another employee or employee group, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Complaints Procedure

IRC has an obligation to treat all complaints of bullying and harassment seriously. All complaints will be handled confidentially and impartially, investigated promptly and recommendations implemented.

If an employee feels that they have been bullied or experiencing harassment in the workplace, they should not ignore it.

Where an employee feels they cannot address the matter directly with the person involved, or they have done so, and this has not stopped the behaviour, they can make a complaint to their Supervisor/Manager, Manager People and Performance, or a Director.

If an employee witnesses bullying and harassment in the workplace, they should encourage the other person to speak up or seek support. Otherwise, the person witnessing the incident could also make a complaint.

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Malicious or Vexatious Claims

This policy provides an avenue for employees with a genuine concern, either real or perceived, to raise the matter and have it addressed. If it is found that the complaint was malicious or vexatious, it may lead to appropriate disciplinary action.

Counselling and Support

IRC provides confidential assistance to employees in the form of wellbeing support and professional counselling. Employees are encouraged to access IRC's Employee Assistance Provider, currently Gryphon Psychology for support or counselling.

Training

IRC is committed to providing workplace bullying and harassment awareness and training to all new employees at the point of induction and subsequent employee training on an ongoing basis. The training raises awareness on what workplace bullying and harassment is and clearly outline IRC's zero tolerance stance.

LEGISLATIONS AND RELATED GUIDELINES

- *Queensland Anti-Discrimination Amendment Act 1992*
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*
- *Queensland Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
- *Queensland Industrial Relations Act 2016*
- *Local Government Act 2009*
- *Local Government Regulation 2012*
- *Equal Opportunity in Public Employment Act 1992.*
- *Queensland Criminal Code Act 1899*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Federal Sex Discrimination Act 1984*

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REFERENCES

TYPE	DOCUMENT ID/NAME
POLICY	Recruitment and Selection Policy
	Anti-Discrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity
	Code of Conduct
PROCEDURE	Employee Complaints and Grievance Handling Procedure
	Disciplinary Procedure