



CREST
MEDICAL

Policy | PP 008

Dignity at Work Policy

VERSION: 1.00

For a **Healthier** Tomorrow

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www.crestmedical.co.uk

1.0 Scope

The policy applies to all employees and workers at Crest Medical Holdings Ltd. This policy is non-contractual and we reserve the right to alter or withdraw it at any time.

2.0 Introduction

The Company operates a zero-tolerance approach to any act of bullying or harassment and will use the disciplinary procedure to its fullest extent up to and including dismissal where appropriate.

We strongly disapprove of all forms of harassment and will seek to ensure that the working environment is sympathetic to all of our team members. The procedure clarifies the type of behaviour that is unacceptable to us and provides a guide should you feel you are the victim of either bullying or harassment.

Harassment at work is both unlawful and can undermine your confidence. The Company unequivocally believe that you have the right to work in an environment free from intimidation.

3.0 Grounds for Harassment

People can be subject to harassment on a wide variety of grounds including:

- Their race, ethnic origin, nationality or skin colour
- Their sex or sexual orientation
- Their religious or political convictions
- Their disabilities, sensory impairments or learning difficulties
- Their status as ex-offenders
- Their age
- Their real or suspected infection with AIDS/HIV
- Their willingness to challenge harassment, leading to victimisation

This list is not exhaustive. Anyone who is perceived as different, who is a minority, or who lacks organisational power, may be vulnerable. Thus, health, physical characteristics, personal beliefs and numerous other factors may lead to harassment, and this can occur between people of the same sex or the opposite sex.



4.0 Forms of Bullying or Harassment

Bullying/Harassment can take many forms, ranging from the extreme form of violence and bullying to the less obvious actions of ignoring someone. You may not always realise that your behaviour constitutes harassment, and we expect you to recognise that a behaviour that is acceptable to one individual, may not be acceptable to another. It is how the behaviour is perceived by the receiving individual which is key. Whatever the form, harassment is unwanted behaviour by one employee towards another.

Examples of harassment may include:

- Physical contact ranging from touching to serious assault
- Verbal and written harassment through jokes, offensive language, gossip and slander
- Sectarian songs or letters
- Visual display of posters, graffiti, obscene gestures, flags and emblems
- Isolation or non-cooperation at work
- Exclusion from social activities
- Coercion, for example, pressure for sexual favours or pressure to participate in political/religious groups
- Intrusion by pestering, spying or following

Examples of bullying may include:

- Shouting or swearing at staff both in public and in private
- Personal insults and name calling
- Persistent criticism
- Spreading malicious or unfounded rumours
- Freezing out, ignoring or excluding
- Refusal to cooperate with reasonable requests
- Persecution through threats and instilling fear
- Constantly undervaluing effort
- Blocking or undermining decisions
- Dispensing punishment out of the blue
- Physical attacks
- Deliberately sabotaging or impeding work performance
- Blocking applications for leave, training or promotion.

Bullying and Harassment will be treated as a disciplinary offence under the Company's disciplinary procedure and may be a case of gross misconduct leading to summary dismissal.



5.0 Statement of Responsibilities

The Company is responsible for endeavouring to eliminate all harassment/bullying from the workplace. We will also:

- Provide a fair and effective means of resolving complaints. Where harassment/bullying has been proven, the offender will be taken through the Company's disciplinary procedures.
- Ensure that allegations of harassment/bullying are dealt with seriously and that if you bring a complaint, you will be protected against victimisation for making or being involved in that complaint.
- Provide victims of harassment/bullying with guidance and support.

Line Management is responsible for adhering to the policy and maintaining Environmental, Health & Safety standards. To that effect, they should:

- Ensure that any complaint of bullying or harassment they receive is taken seriously and that this policy and procedure is followed to ensure effective resolution of any issues.
- Attend training, to positively address any unacceptable behaviours identified, as requested in good management practice and health and safety.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment are not tolerated within their jurisdiction.
- Be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside of work e.g. bereavement or separation.

The People Function (HR) is responsible for providing training and guidance to Line Management and for monitoring the implementation of the policy to ensure procedures are managed fairly. Where disciplinary action is considered necessary, the Head of People should be involved from the outset.

Employees are asked to ensure that this policy is observed and that their behaviour could in no way be construed as harassment/bullying. They are also asked to act where they see harassment/bullying occurring. Employees should always treat each other with the dignity and respect that they think they should receive themselves.

6.0 Procedure

The Company recognises the sensitive nature of complaints of sexual/racial harassment. Employees wishing to discuss a complaint in confidence should contact the Head of People.

All new employees will be informed of the Company's policy towards bullying and harassment at their HR induction, when it will be stressed that all such complaints will be treated very seriously.

It is the responsibility of managers and supervisors to ensure that this policy is adhered to at all times.

Informal Procedure

If you are a victim of any form of bullying/harassment, you are advised to make a direct approach to your harasser making it clear that their behaviour is unacceptable and must stop.

It may be preferable to make an approach accompanied by a colleague, or to make a written approach to the harasser.

Formal Procedure

Where informal methods fail, or serious harassment occurs, you are advised to bring a formal complaint, and should seek the assistance of your line manager in the first instance in doing so. Where you feel approaching your line manager is not possible, you should contact HR.

The complaint should be in writing and where possible, state:

- The name of the harasser
- The nature of the harassment
- Date(s) and time(s) when the harassment occurred
- Names of any witnesses to any incidents of harassment

The complaint should then be sent, in confidence, to the People Function.

Immediately upon receipt of a complaint of harassment, a thorough investigation will be made, maintaining confidentiality at all times. If you are asked to be involved in the investigations, either as a victim, harasser or witness, we expect you to respect the need for confidentiality at all times. Failure to do so may be considered a disciplinary offence.

It may be necessary to separate the harasser from the complainant which may involve temporary transfer to another department or suspension with pay until the complaint has been resolved.

Any statements made by witnesses will be made available to the harasser and the complainant.

Witnesses will be encouraged to appear at the complaint hearing if requested by either party. It is acknowledged that some witnesses may be reluctant to do so. Under these circumstances, it may be necessary to adjourn the hearing to ask questions of the witness in private.

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The complainant may wish to be supported by a work colleague or Trade Union Official during the hearing.

The harasser will also have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or Trade Union Official at the hearing. Where it is concluded that harassment has taken place, the accused will have an opportunity to defend or explain his/her actions, in accordance with Company disciplinary procedures.

A penalty imposed upon an employee guilty of harassment will be consistent with those detailed in the disciplinary procedure, e.g. gross sexual harassment will normally result in summary dismissal.

Where a lesser penalty is appropriate a written warning may be given. This may be coupled with action to ensure that the victim is able to continue working without embarrassment or anxiety. After discussion with the victim, the manager may order the transfer of the harasser to a different work area, or arrange for an amendment of working practices to minimise contact between the two parties.

It may be the wish of the victim to be transferred to an alternative position/department. If so, this will be arranged subject to practical limitations. The result of the hearing will be confirmed to both parties in writing.

You have a right to appeal against the imposition of any disciplinary penalty. If you decide that you wish to appeal against a disciplinary decision, you should make the appeal within 7 days of being notified of the Company's decision. The appeal must be in writing to HR and should clearly indicate the grounds for your appeal.

Wherever possible, the appeal will be heard by a Company Director.

7.0 Related Policies

- PP01_Disciplinary Procedure

8.0 Version Control

1.0	New Policy	20 July 2023
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