



## Policy & Procedure

### BULLYING POLICY & PROCEDURE

Policy number:	1	Version:	4
Responsible Person:	CEO	Reviewed by:	CEO
NRCH Area:	Operational / Risk	Review Date:	6/5/2022
Approved and adopted by:	Board of Governance	Next Review Date:	May 2025

### Scope

This policy applies to all NRCHI Staff, Volunteers, Contractors and Patrons

### Objective

North Ringwood Community House Inc is committed to ensuring that employees, volunteers, contractors and patrons attend an environment where people are treated with mutual respect. It is important for a productive and harmonious workplace that staff are aware of the impact of their behaviours on others. Bullying in the workplace is inappropriate and unacceptable behavior.

All employees have a legal responsibility to care for their own health and safety and that of co-workers, and therefore must treat other staff with respect and courtesy and not engage in acts which constitute bullying behaviour.

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#### What is bullying?

Workplace bullying is repeated, unreasonable behavior directed toward an employee or group of employees that creates a risk to health and safety. The following types of behavior where directed towards an individual and repeated, or occurring as part of a pattern of behavior, could be considered to be bullying:

- Demeaning language or verbal abuse
- Threats, physical or verbal intimidation
- Outbursts of anger or aggression
- Excluding or isolating employees
- Giving employees impossible tasks
- Deliberately changing work rosters to inconvenience particular employees

The above list is not exhaustive. Other types of behavior may also constitute bullying.

#### What is NOT bullying?

Reasonable management actions carried out in a fair way are not bullying. For example:

- Setting performance goals, standards and deadlines
- Deciding not to select a worker for promotion
- Informing a worker about unsatisfactory work performance
- Informing a worker about inappropriate behavior



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- Implementing organisational changes

All forms of bullying are taken seriously and are unacceptable. North Ringwood Community House Inc. takes bullying very seriously, with a zero tolerance approach to it.

To achieve this goal North Ringwood Community House Inc. will put in place measures that demonstrate that everyone is equally valued and everyone is treated with respect. These measures include the following commitments:

- The elimination of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion & belief, gender, sexual orientation
- The right of every person to be onsite without fear of harassment, victimisation or bullying
- The provision of an environment in which all individuals can operate effectively, confidently and competently
- The provision of a safe and healthy environment
- Staff and volunteers modelling behaviours that promote good working and learning
- The allowance of all people to make a positive contribution to the NRCHI and to the wider community.

North Ringwood Community House Inc. strongly encourages any person who feels they have been bullied onsite to take immediate action by consulting with the CEO.

Any reports of bullying will be treated seriously and promptly with sensitivity. Such reports will be treated as completely confidential but the subject of the complaint must be notified under the rules of natural justice. NRCHI will protect all those involved from victimisation.

Complainants have the right to determine how their complaints are treated, to have support or representation throughout the process, and the option to discontinue a complaint at any stage of the process.

The alleged harasser also has the right to have support or representation during any investigation, as well as the right to respond fully to any formal allegations made. There will be no presumptions of guilt and no determination made until a full investigation has been completed.

Disciplinary action may be taken against anyone who victimises or retaliates against a person who has complained of bullying, or against anyone who has been alleged to be a harasser.

All staff, volunteers and patrons have the right to seek the assistance of the relevant tribunal or legislative body to assist them in the resolution of any concerns.

Staff found to have either committed or condoned such behavior in the workplace will be subject to disciplinary action which may include termination of employment.

### **What can I do if I believe I am being bullied?**

Below is a summary of the steps that can be taken to address individual concerns and who to contact.

- If you can, try to resolve the problem yourself with the person(s) involved as soon as possible. You may find that they didn't mean to do what they did.



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- If you're unsure of how to handle the problem yourself, you can report your complaint verbally by talking to the CEO or in writing by completing an Incident Report form and giving it to the CEO.
- If your complaint is about the CEO you can report your complaint directly to a Board of Governance member.

If you observe an incident in which another employee is being bullied, bring it to the attention of the CEO.

If you do make a complaint about bullying you are responsible for ensuring that you:

- Make the complaint honestly and in good faith.
- Provide all the facts relevant to the complaint.
- Co-operate with the investigation and resolution processes.

If a complaint of bullying has been made about you, you are responsible for ensuring that you:

- Co-operate with the investigation and resolution processes and maintain confidentiality.
- Provide a written or verbal response to the complaint which has been made.
- Provide all relevant facts to the person conducting the investigation.

### Management responsibility

If an employee brings an allegation of bullying to the CEO's attention.

#### DO NOT

- Ignore the complaint.
- Tell the employee making the complaint to sort it out themselves.
- Make judgement about whether the complaint is true or not
- Say that the employee should put up with the bullying.
- Talk to anyone about the issue except those involved in the investigation and resolution of the complaint.

#### DO

- Behave consistently with the Workplace Bullying Policy.
- Resolve the complaint as quickly as possible.
- Be sympathetic, sensitive and serious, the complaint is obviously serious to the person making it.
- Enquire into the matter within 2 working days, and attempt to resolve it as soon as possible.

### Manager's action steps:

1. Document the complaint using **the Incident Report Form**
2. Determine who should investigate, and if possible mediate the complaint.

### Investigation and mediation:

- Investigation of the complaint of bullying must commence within 2 working days of receipt of the complaint.
- The CEO will determine who is the appropriate person to investigate the complaint, ie CEO or Board of Governance
- The investigator must be someone who is impartial. This person may need to be sourced from outside the organisation.
- Mediation may be a consideration in resolving a bullying complaint. This form of dispute resolution is appropriate only if the person making the complaint agrees.



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### Outcome

In situations where bullying complaints are substantiated, management may take the following actions.

- Require an apology from the respondent.
- Make changes to work practices.
- Undertake disciplinary action.
- Require employees to participate in training.
- Place notes in personnel file.
- Any other action deemed fair and reasonable.

### Grievances and Dispute Resolution

Refer to NRCHI Complaints & Appeals Policy

### Procedures for Dealing with Criminal Conduct

Some forms of bullying (e.g. physical assault, sexual assault, stalking, physical molestation, obscene phone calls) may constitute criminal conduct.

Such complaints should be dealt with by the relevant authorities (such as the police) as part of the criminal justice system.

### Related Documents

- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Complaints & Appeals Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Emergency Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Safety of Students Policy
- Equal Employment Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Workplace bullying - prevention and response - Guidance Material October 2012 (Worksafe Victoria)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004.

### Document Locations

Electronic file folders accessible by NRCH Administration staff  
Policy & Procedure Manual

Date reviewed	Version	Details of changes (if any)	Date of next review
6/5/2022	4	Addition of WorkSafe Bullying Policy example: "What is Bullying" Addition of Worksafe Bullying Policy example: "What can I do if I believe I am being bullied"	May 2025



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- ❖ *Statement to be signed by Staff, Volunteers, Members and Contractors declaring they have read, understood and will abide by this policy*

### **Bullying Policy Statement**

NAME .....

#### **Statement**

I have read and understand my obligations under the North Ringwood Community House Bullying Policy, and will abide by it.

Signed .....

Date .....