

# Anti-Bullying Policy

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## 1. Purpose

1.1. This policy is designed to ensure that MSA complies with all of its obligations under relevant legislation. This document is to be read in conjunction with any relevant industrial instrument.

## 2. Application of this policy

2.1. This policy applies to the following persons, collectively referred to in this policy as ‘workplace participants’:

- a) all prospective and current full-time, part-time and casual employees of MSA;
- b) all volunteers engaged by MSA;
- c) all agents and contractors engaged from time to time by MSA;
- d) all office bearers and members of MSA bodies.

2.2. This policy is not restricted to the workplace or work hours. The obligations in this policy are also applicable to any work related events or functions.

2.3. A “work related event or function” means any event or function that is connected to MSA. These may include, for example:

- a) MSA events,
- b) conferences,
- c) work lunches,
- d) Christmas parties

- 2.4. All workplace participants are expected to comply with this policy at work related events or functions.

### **3. Definitions**

- 3.1. Bullying is behaviour that intimidates, offends, degrades, insults or humiliates another member of MSA. Bullying can be physical or psychological.
- 3.2. Bullying is unwelcome or unreasonable behaviour that demeans, intimidates or humiliates people either as individuals or as a group.
- 3.3. Bullying behaviour is often persistent and part of a pattern, but it can also occur as a single incident.
- 3.4. It is usually carried out by an individual but can also be an aspect of group behaviour.

### **4. Some examples of bullying behaviour**

#### **4.1. Verbal communication**

- a) Abusive and offensive language
- b) Aggressive, offensive or frightening behaviour (e.g. shouting or threatening violence);
- c) Insults
- d) Teasing
- e) Spreading rumours and innuendo
- f) Unreasonable criticism
- g) Trivialising of work and achievements
- h) Threats of assault against a work colleague or damage to their property or equipment;
- i) Rude or belittling comments
- j) Unfair allocation of menial tasks or duties;
- k) Abusing or intimidating phone calls, emails etc.
- l) Intimidating behaviour or behaving in an intimidating manner.

#### **4.2. Manipulating the work environment**

- a) Ignoring or isolating people during normal work interaction
- b) Excessive demands
- c) Intentionally under-using a person's time and skills
- d) Setting impossible deadlines
- e) Deliberately changing work rosters to inconvenience an employee

#### **4.3. Psychological manipulation**

- a) Unfairly blaming for mistakes
- b) Setting people up for failure
- c) Deliberate exclusion
- d) Excessive supervision
- e) Practical jokes
- f) Belittling or disregarding opinions or suggestions
- g) Criticising in public
- h) Deliberately withholding information that is vital for effective work performance
- i) Repeatedly changing work targets

#### 4.4. Mobbing

- a) Mobbing is a particular type of bullying behaviour carried out by a group rather than by an individual. Mobbing is the bullying or social isolation of a workplace participant through collective unjustified accusations, humiliation, general harassment or emotional abuse. Although it is group behaviour, specific incidents such as an insult or a practical joke may be carried out by an individual as part of mobbing behaviour.

### 5. Policy

- 5.1. MSA is actively committed to protecting the rights, health and wellbeing of both clients and workplace participants, allowing them to achieve their full potential in an environment which values and affirms diversity and is free from bullying.
- 5.2. MSA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that workplace participants and clients will be treated fairly and with dignity and respect whilst working or receiving services at MSA.
- 5.3. Individuals are responsible for making themselves aware of and adhering to MSA policies.

### 6. Procedure

- 6.1. Bullying will not be tolerated at MSA under any circumstances and may in fact be unlawful under State or Commonwealth law.

### 7. Dealing with Bullying Behaviour

- 7.1. Workplace participants who believe they have been the victim of bullying can inform their manager/supervisor or make a complaint. Details of how to lodge a complaint and how complaints will be handled are outlined in the **MSA Complaint Handling Policy**.

### 8. Responsibilities

- 8.1. It is the responsibility of MSA Executive to ensure that:
  - a) all management group members and workplace participants are aware of their obligations, responsibilities, and rights in relation to the prevention of unlawful bullying, harassment etc.
  - b) Any matter which does not comply with these principles is identified and addressed as promptly and sensitively as possible
  - c) Ongoing support and guidance is provided to all workplace participants in relation to these principles and practice
  - d) Education and training campaigns are conducted within MSA to eliminate bullying;
  - e) Advice is provided to managers and supervisors on bullying;
  - f) Advice is provided to workplace participants on bullying;
  - g) External Mediators and Investigators are nominated for inclusion on the approved list of external Mediators and Investigators;
  - h) All documentation pertaining to complaints is kept secure and confidential;
- 8.2. Managers, supervisors have a particular responsibility to:
  - a) Ensure that their workplace is free from bullying behaviour;
  - b) Inform all workplace participants and clients clearly of what is and is not acceptable behaviour and advise that if claims of bullying are substantiated, then disciplinary procedures may be invoked;
  - c) Inform workplace participants and clients of how to resolve informal complaints.

- d) Inform workplace participants and clients who experience discrimination and harassment of their rights and provide them with the appropriate policy and procedures to resolve their concerns;
- e) Ensure that the workplace participant or client not be made to feel that they should take certain action, or no action because of their responsibility to employees or other clients;
- f) Ensure that workplace participants and clients who make a complaint are not victimised for doing so and respect their privacy and confidentiality at all times;
- g) Ensure that the policies and procedures in relation to the resolution of a grievance/complaint are followed as written;
- h) Seek appropriate assistance from the Executive, HR or Management when required.

8.3. Individual workplace participants and clients have a responsibility:

- a) Not to participate in bullying behaviour within the workplace and
- b) Behave in a respectful, tolerant and equitable manner to all members of the MSA community.

## 9. Related Policies and Procedures

[Code of Conduct](#)

[Complaints Handling Procedure](#)

[Complaints Handling Flowchart](#)

[Equal Opportunity Policy](#)

[Freedom from Harassment Policy](#)

[Occupational Health and Safety Policy](#)

## 10. Related Legislation

MSA acknowledges its obligations under Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination legislation including, but not limited to:

- [\*Disability Discrimination and Other Human Rights Legislation Amendment Act 2009 \(Commonwealth\)\*](#);
- [\*Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Amendment Bill 2012 \(Commonwealth\)\*](#);
- [\*Equal Opportunity Act 2010 \(Victoria\)\*](#);
- [\*Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 \(Victoria\)\*](#);
- [\*Sex Discrimination Act, 1984 \(Commonwealth\)\*](#);
- [\*Racial Discrimination Act 1975 \(Commonwealth\)\*](#);
- [\*Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Commonwealth\)\*](#);
- [\*Fair Work Act 2009 \(Commonwealth\)\*](#);
- [\*Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 \(Victoria\)\*](#).

## 11. Version History

### **Current Version**

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### **Prior Versions**

Author: TL Consult  
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