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# Dignity at Work Policy

## Dignity at Work

Harassment and bullying – whether on grounds of sex, sexuality, trans-gender status, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy, race, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability or age or for any other reason is unacceptable behaviour that Radmat will not tolerate.

Every employee of Radmat has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. Appropriate disciplinary action, which may include dismissal, will be taken against any employee, of whatever seniority, who contravenes this policy.

Radmat will not tolerate retaliation against or victimisation of any employee involved in the bringing of a complaint of harassment or bullying under Radmat's procedure. Such retaliation or victimisation will itself constitute a disciplinary offence, which may in appropriate circumstances lead to dismissal.

Senior management of Radmat is fully committed to this policy and Radmat's policy has the full support of the Radmat Council.

### What Is Harassment or Bullying?

It is words or behaviour which:

- are based on the sex, sexuality, trans-gender status, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy, race, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability or age or other personal characteristic of another person, whether that characteristic is actual or perceived, are unwanted
- create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive working environment for the person who is the target of the words or behaviour;
- undermines the confidence and self-esteem of the recipient.
- bullying and harassment can take many forms and examples of what is prohibited by this policy include:
- verbal abuse or offensive jokes or pranks related to a person's sex, race, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, etc;

- lewd or suggestive comments;
- requests for sexual favours or repeated requests for dates;
- unnecessary body contact;
- threatened or actual assault or violence;
- deliberate exclusion from conversations or work activities on the basis of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation etc;
- display of 'pin-ups,' pornography, inflammatory or abusive literature or graffiti;
- using e-mail or the Internet for the purpose of bullying or making abusive or offensive remarks whether or not related to a person's race, gender, disability etc or to send pornography or inflammatory literature;
- practical jokes, initiation ceremonies or birthday rituals.

This is not an exhaustive list and many other forms of bullying or harassment are covered by this policy.

Some forms of harassment or bullying plainly constitute gross misconduct for the purposes of the Radmat's disciplinary procedure and will normally merit summary dismissal. Examples of this category would be:

- threatened or actual sexual or racial assaults;
- suggestions or threats by managers or supervisors that sexual favours or racial origins could affect someone's job security or prospects;
- other forms of harassment may constitute gross misconduct depending on the circumstances of the case.

Employees should be aware that, as well as committing a disciplinary offence, an individual found by an employment tribunal to have been harassed by a fellow employee on the grounds of sex, race, gender reassignment, disability etc. in the course of their employment may be personally liable to compensate the victim. In addition, harassment for whatever reason may constitute a crime punishable by up to six months' imprisonment or a fine of up to £5,000.

## Responsibility of Employees, Supervisors and Managers

It is the responsibility of all employees to comply with this policy. It is the particular responsibility of supervisors and managers to ensure that it is carried out and to have the view to developing and maintaining a working environment at Radmat in which harassment and bullying are understood by all to be unacceptable.

To this end, a copy of this Policy is available to all employees, who are expected to familiarise themselves with it and abide by its provisions. The Policy does not, however, form part of your contractual rights and is for guidance only. It is fully expected that all employees will act responsibly regarding this issue. False accusations of harassment or bullying can have a serious effect on innocent individuals. Therefore, should investigation show that a false accusation has been made in bad faith, appropriate disciplinary action, which could include dismissal, will follow. Bullying does not include appropriately conducted criticism of an employee's behaviour or job performance by management. However, it must be remembered that an employee can be bullied or harassed by a colleague or subordinate as well as by a manager or supervisor. However, an employee who brings a complaint in good faith will not be subject to any detriment by Radmat.

It is the responsibility of all to recognise that what one employee may find acceptable, another may find totally unacceptable and that the essence of harassment and bullying is that the words or behaviour are unwelcome to the particular person who is the target of the words or behaviour. All employees must treat their colleagues with respect and appropriate sensitivity.

## Informal Resolution

An employee who considers themselves to be the victim of harassment or bullying may, in some cases, be able satisfactorily to resolve the matter by explaining clearly to the perpetrator that their behaviour is unacceptable, contrary to the

Radmat's policy and must stop. The employee may wish to ask a colleague to put this on their behalf or to be with them when confronting the perpetrator. Employees are also encouraged to seek the assistance of a team leader or manager when they want advice regarding appropriate steps to stop the harassment or a more senior manager if that is appropriate. Any such discussion will be strictly confidential. If a complaint is resolved informally, the alleged perpetrator will not be subject to disciplinary sanctions. However, in exceptional circumstances and following consultation with the employee, Radmat may decide that it is necessary to investigate further and take more formal action.

## Formal Complaints Procedure

In the event that informal resolution of the matter is unsuccessful or considered inappropriate, the employee may make a formal written complaint of harassment to a director. In addition, Radmat may decide that it is necessary to take more formal action (see above). A formal complaint may lead ultimately to the imposition of disciplinary sanctions on the perpetrator. Should they choose to, the employee will be able to discuss their complaint at any stage of the procedure with a manager or director.

The complainant must provide the following details: the name of the alleged harasser or bully, the nature of the harassment or bullying, the dates and times the harassment or bullying occurred, the names of any witnesses and any action taken by the complainant to resolve the matter informally.

Where the complainant and the alleged harasser or bully work in proximity to each other, it may be necessary to ensure they do not continue to do so whilst the complaint is being investigated and during any consequent disciplinary proceedings. This may necessitate that one or both parties are suspended on full pay.

## Investigation

Any complaint will be investigated promptly, usually within five working days, impartially and, so far as practicable, confidentially.

The investigation will be handled with due respect for the rights of both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator. Both parties will be separately interviewed as soon as possible and granted the right, if they so wish to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative at their interview.

In advance of the interview with the alleged perpetrator they will be informed in writing of the exact nature of the complaint and given full details of any evidence against them, including any information supplied by third parties. At the interview itself the alleged perpetrator must be given a full and fair opportunity to state their side of events and explain any conduct that forms the basis of the employee's complaint against them.

Following the investigation both parties will be given a copy of the investigation report within two weeks of the completion of the investigation. If this information contains references to a third party which could mean they are identifiable then these references may not be included.

## Outcome of investigation

The outcome of the investigation into the employee's allegations of discrimination or harassment may be (depending on what is established during the investigation and the interviews) that:

- The complaint is well founded, but all agree that an informal solution is appropriate;
- The complaint is well founded and indicates that a disciplinary offence has been committed. Radmat's disciplinary procedure will then be instigated and a disciplinary hearing under that procedure will be arranged to deal with the alleged disciplinary offence. In accordance with that procedure, the alleged harasser or bully will be provided with relevant evidence about the allegations against them except in exceptional circumstances and will be given a full opportunity to respond;

- The allegations made by the employee are not viewed as discrimination or harassment and no further action is taken;
- The employee's complaint is found to be false or malicious, in which case disciplinary action may be taken against them;
- Standards for future conduct are set, which could involve training.

## Appeal

Where a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation into their complaint, they will be informed of the right to appeal to a more senior manager.

On receipt of an appeal which sets out the reasons for dissatisfaction and is submitted within 5 working days, a meeting will be convened to re-consider the employee's complaint. This will normally be held within 5 working days of receipt of the appeal. The employee will have the same right to be accompanied as before.

The manager will respond within 5 working days of the meeting. This will be the final stage of the procedure.

## Time scales

Please be aware that the time scales indicated in the policy will be adhered to on most occasions however, where this is not possible an explanation will be given and a reasonable extension agreed.