



## Podium 4 Sport Ltd - Harassment Policy

As part of its overall commitment to equality of opportunity, Podium 4 Sport Ltd. aims to promote a good and harmonious working environment where every employee is treated with respect and dignity and in which no employee feels threatened or intimidated because of his or her age disability, marital or civil partnership status, political opinion, race, religious belief, sex (including gender reassignment) or sexual orientation. The aim of this policy is to prevent harassment by communicating clearly the type of behaviour that is not acceptable in our workplace and the action that will be taken should harassment occur.

Harassment at work in any form is unacceptable behaviour and will not be permitted or condoned. Sexual, sectarian and racial harassment, harassing a disabled person on account of disability or harassing someone on grounds of sexual orientation (or age) is unlawful under the sex discrimination, fair employment, race relations, disability and sexual orientation (and age) legislation. It may also be a civil offence, a criminal offence and it may contravene health and safety legislation.

Harassment detracts from a productive working environment and can affect the health, confidence, morale and performance of those affected by it, including anyone who witnesses or knows about the unwanted behaviour. This can have a direct impact on the employee relations climate and the profitability and efficiency of the organisation.

Harassment is inappropriate behaviour at work and may be unlawful conduct. It will be treated by this organisation as misconduct, up to and including gross misconduct warranting dismissal. All those who work for us must comply with this policy.

### What is harassment?

In general terms, harassment is unwanted conduct related to a particular characteristic (age, disability, marital or civil partnership status, sex, sexual orientation, race, religious belief or political opinion) which violates the dignity of women and men at work. This can include unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct.

Harassment in the employment context has now been defined explicitly in key pieces of anti-discrimination legislation. Under the legislation covering religious belief and political opinion, race, disability, sex and sexual orientation, harassment is defined as “unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect” of “violating a person’s dignity” or “creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person”.

Harassment as defined in the legislation will amount to unlawful discrimination. This organisation is committed, however, to discouraging all forms of harassment and discrimination, whether unlawful or not.

Many forms of behaviour can constitute harassment; these are just some examples:

- Physical conduct ranging from touching to serious assault
- Verbal and written harassment through jokes, racist, sexist or sectarian remarks, homophobic comments, comments about a person’s disability, offensive language, gossip and slander, sectarian songs, mobile telephone ring tones, threats, letters, emails

- Visual displays of posters, computer screen savers, downloaded images, graffiti, obscene gestures, flags, bunting or emblems, or any other offensive material
- Isolation or non-co-operation at work, exclusion from social activities
- Coercion, including pressure for sexual favours, pressure to participate in political or religious groups
- Intrusion by pestering, spying, following, etc.

If any of the above behaviour is not related to an equality ground covered by anti-discrimination legislation, this could amount to bullying.

### **Employees' rights**

All those who work for us have the right to work in an environment which is free from any form of harassment. This includes protection from harassment from work colleagues and clients/customers. Podium 4 Sport Ltd. recognises fully the right of employees to complain about harassment should it occur. All complaints will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

Individuals have the right to complain through our Grievance procedure.

Our internal procedure does not prevent employees from pursuing a complaint of harassment under the sex/race relations/disability/sexual orientation legislation to an industrial tribunal and, under the fair employment legislation, for example, to the Fair Employment Tribunal, in the case of sectarian harassment. However, there are strict time limits for making complaints to a tribunal and complainants normally will be expected to have raised their complaint under an employer's grievance procedures first.

Every effort will be made to ensure that employees making complaints of harassment, and others who give evidence or information in connection with a complaint, will not be victimised. Victimisation is discrimination contrary to the anti-discrimination legislation. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Victimisation will result in disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.

### **Employees' responsibilities**

All those who work for this organisation have a responsibility to help ensure a working environment in which the dignity of all employees, clients and customers is respected. Everyone must comply with this policy and employees should ensure that their behaviour to colleagues, clients and customers does not cause offence and could not in any way be considered to be harassment.

Employees should discourage harassment by making it clear that they find such behaviour unacceptable and by supporting colleagues who suffer such treatment and are considering making a complaint. Any employee who is aware of any incident of harassment should alert a manager (or supervisor) to enable the organisation to deal with it.

## **Management's responsibilities**

Managers and supervisors have a duty to implement this policy and to make every effort to ensure that harassment does not occur, particularly in work areas for which they are responsible. Managers and supervisors have responsibility for dealing appropriately with any incidents of harassment which they are aware of, or ought to be aware of. If harassment does occur, they must deal effectively with the situation.

Managers and supervisors should:

- Explain the organisation's policy to staff and take steps to promote awareness of the procedures for dealing with complaints. Ensure that each member of staff has ready access to a copy of the policy.
- Be responsive and supportive to any member of staff who makes an allegation of harassment, provide clear advice on the procedure to be adopted, maintain confidentiality and seek to ensure that there is no further problem of harassment or victimisation while a complaint is being dealt with or after it has been resolved
- Set a good example by treating all staff, clients and customers with dignity and respect
- Be alert and proactive to unacceptable behaviour and take appropriate action in accordance with our policy and procedures
- Ensure that staff know how to raise harassment problems.

## **The organisation's responsibilities**

Podium 4 Sport Ltd. will ensure that adequate resources are made available to promote respect and dignity in the workplace and to deal effectively with complaints of harassment. This policy and our procedures for dealing with complaints will be communicated effectively to all employees and others who work for us. We will ensure that all employees and managers/supervisors are aware of their responsibilities.

All complaints of harassment will be dealt with promptly, seriously and confidentially.

## **Review**

We will monitor all incidents of harassment and will review the effectiveness of this policy and associated procedures annually.