

# Dignity at Work (Bullying & Harassment) Policy **croudacehomes**

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## 1. Introduction

1.1 Croudace Homes is committed to preventing bullying and harassment and maintaining a workplace which is free from bullying and harassment and where all people are treated with dignity.

1.2 Croudace Homes expects all employees to act in accordance with this policy and to treat each other with respect, empathy, and compassion. Employees have a duty to promote a working environment based on dignity, trust and respect and one that is free from bullying and harassment. Each employee is responsible for considering the impact their words and actions could have on others.

1.3 This policy covers harassment or bullying which occurs both in and out of the workplace, such as on business trips or at events or work-related social functions.

1.4 This policy covers bullying and harassment by employees and also by third parties such as customers, contractors, suppliers or visitors to our offices or sites. This policy sets out the standards that are expected by Croudace Homes Group Limited and its subsidiary companies ("The Group") of all its employees, agents and any other person or body acting on its behalf. Further, the Group expects the same approach to doing business from suppliers and sub-contractors and any other third party dealing with the Group. When working for or with the Group, suppliers and subcontractors and any other third party dealing with the Group agree to and are obliged to ensure that they understand and comply with this policy.

1.5 Managers are responsible for ensuring that concerns and/or complaints are taken seriously and properly addressed.

1.6 Employees should be aware that breach of the provisions of this policy may result in disciplinary action, which could lead to dismissal.

## 2. Key Principles

2.1 There is no justifiable reason to bully or harass someone else. Even if an employee does not intend to bully or harass someone else, this does not legitimise their behaviour as it is the impact on the recipient that is important.

2.2 Employees should be aware that they can be personally liable for harassment.

2.3 If an employee experiences bullying or harassment, they are encouraged to speak up without delay and to ask for appropriate support.

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Author:	S Edwards	Version number:	v3
Role	Responsibility		
Group Board	Owns and approves this Policy.		
HR	Maintains and periodically reviews this Policy.		
All Employees & Third Parties	All are to comply with this Policy.		

# Dignity at Work (Bullying & **croudacehomes** Harassment) Policy

## 2.4 What is harassment?

2.4.a Harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. A single incident can amount to harassment.

2.4.b Unlawful harassment may involve conduct of a sexual nature (sexual harassment), or it may be related to age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Harassment is unacceptable even if it does not fall within any of these categories.

2.4.c Examples of harassment include (but are not limited to):

- offensive comments between colleagues,
- emails or WhatsApp messages containing offensive jokes or remarks,
- display of offensive material.

2.4.d Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature as well as behaviour that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Gestures or remarks about an individual's appearance.
- Talking about sexual acts.
- Unwanted physical contact.
- unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour (which the harasser may perceive as harmless), and suggestions that sexual favours may further a career or that a refusal may hinder it.
- continued suggestions for social activity after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome.
- sending or displaying material that is pornographic or that some people may find offensive (including e-mails, text messages, video clips and images sent by mobile telephone or posted on the internet).

2.4.e A person may be harassed even if they were not the intended "target". For example, a person may be harassed by discriminatory comments about a different ethnic group if the comments create an offensive environment for them.

## 2.5 What is bullying?

2.5.a Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour which makes the recipient feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated and/or threatened.

2.5.b Bullying is often a form of harassment and can undermine an individual's self-confidence, competence and self-esteem. As with harassment, bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct.

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2.5.c Legitimate and constructive criticism of a worker's performance or behaviour or reasonable requests made of workers in the course of their employment will not constitute bullying.

## 3 Procedures for raising and handling complaints

### 3.1 Informal Procedure

3.1.a If an employee is being bullied or harassed by a fellow employee, they may feel able to raise the issue with the individual themselves and tell them how their behaviour makes them feel, the impact that it is having on them and ask them to stop.

3.1.b Alternatively, if the employee does not feel able to approach the individual themselves, they should speak with their line manager or HR for advice and assistance. If the employee is being harassed or bullied by their line manager, they may speak with their Director or Human Resources.

3.1.c In the case of incidents involving third parties (such as customers, suppliers or visitors), the employee should report this to their manager so that they can advise and support the employee on the best course of action.

3.1.d If the employee is not certain whether an incident or series of incidents amounts to bullying or harassment, they should initially contact their line manager or Human Resources informally for confidential advice.

3.1.e Complaints of bullying and harassment will be taken seriously. Complaints may be investigated independently, even if a complaint has been raised by an employee 'in confidence' as Croudace Homes has a duty of care to protect their employees.

### 3.2 Formal Procedure

3.2.a If an employee wishes to raise a formal complaint about bullying and harassment or where attempts to resolve the complaint informally do not work, an employee may raise a formal complaint about bullying and harassment in accordance with the Grievance Policy and Procedure.

3.2.b In line with our Grievance Policy and Procedure, the employee will be required to set out details of their complaint in writing. They may be requested to attend a meeting during which their concerns will be noted. The employee will also be required to provide the name(s) of any persons they believe have bullied or harassed them and the names of any potential witnesses to the incident(s).

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### 4 Possible Outcomes

4.1 If the outcome of the investigation indicates that harassment or bullying may have occurred, prompt action will be taken to stop the behaviour immediately and prevent its recurrence. Efforts will also be made to address any working relationship issues that may arise as a result.

4.2 In appropriate circumstances and in line with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, may be taken against an employee who has bullied or harassed another person.

4.3 Where an employee's complaint is about someone other than an employee, such as a contractor, customer, supplier, or visitor, appropriate action will be considered to protect them and anyone else involved pending the outcome of the investigation, bearing in mind the reasonable needs of the organisation and the rights of that person. Where appropriate, attempts will be made to discuss the matter with the third party.

4.4 If an employee's complaint is not upheld this will be confirmed to them in writing and a discussion will be held with them about how the situation can be managed. The employee will have the right to appeal against this decision in accordance with the Grievance Policy & Procedure.

4.5 Vexatious allegations, false allegations made in bad faith or a breach of this policy, may be considered a disciplinary offence and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including summary dismissal or summary termination of contract.

### 5 Confidentiality

5.1 Confidentiality will be maintained where possible and information will be disclosed on a "need to know" basis to those individuals involved in any investigation into bullying or harassment. All employees involved, including the employee making the complaint, the subject of the complaint, potential witnesses, the investigator and note-taker(s) are responsible for observing the high level of confidentiality required.

5.2 A breach of confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

### 6 Cooperation

6.1 All employees have a duty to co-operate with any investigations into complaints of or concerns about bullying and harassment or any other issues that may have an impact on dignity in the workplace.

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6.2 It is in the interests of everyone involved and the organisation as a whole that concerns of this nature are addressed promptly. Employees will be expected to co-operate and assist with investigations. Where an employee is not well enough to attend a meeting, medical confirmation of this will be required and alternative arrangements, such as requests for written information, will be implemented.

6.3 Failure to cooperate with an investigation may be regarded as a failure to comply with a reasonable management instruction and could lead to disciplinary action.

6.4 Any employee who is found to have deliberately provided false or misleading information, or to have acted in bad faith, may be subject to disciplinary action.

## 7 Protection and support for those involved

7.1 Employees who make complaints or who participate in good faith in an investigation will be protected from any form of intimidation or victimisation as a result of their involvement.

7.2 Anyone found to have retaliated against or victimised someone in this way will be subject to disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Procedure.

7.3 Croudace Homes understands that anyone affected by, or involved with, a complaint of bullying or harassment may feel anxious or upset. The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is available for all employees, details are available on the Company Intranet and the Wellbeing Hub. Where appropriate, employees should also speak with their line manager for support.

*Please note that these are policy guidelines setting out the standards that we expect you to adhere to under this policy. They are not incorporated into your contractual terms and the Company reserves the right to amend them from time to time or withdraw entirely.*

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