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WORKPLACE HARASSMENT PREVENTION POLICY

(Can be standalone or incorporated into a broader HR policy)

A Policy Objectives

This policy provides employees with information and procedures on preventing and handling workplace harassment and complements the Company's grievance handling procedures.

B Guiding Principles

The Company is committed to maintaining a work environment that is safe from harassment for its employees. Every employee shall be treated with respect and dignity. No employee shall be subject to any physical, psychological, verbal or sexual abuse. Employees should be culturally sensitive, tolerant and respectful towards each other, taking into consideration the workplace environment and Singapore's multi-culturalism.

This policy extends to dealing with incidents involving external customers/stakeholders who conduct themselves in a manner that constitutes harassment of the employees, within and beyond company premises.

C Definitions of Workplace Harassment

Workplace harassment can occur when one party at the workplace demonstrates behaviour that causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to another party. Such behaviour can violate a person's dignity or create an unfavourable work environment for him/her, which poses a risk to the person's safety and health.

Workplace harassment can take different forms. Examples of behaviour that may be considered harassment include but are not limited to:

- Threatening, abusive or insulting language, comments or other non-verbal gestures
- Physical violence
- Bullying, including cyber-bullying
- Sexual harassment
- Stalking

Workplace harassment can also take place through different modes of communications, such as email, text messaging or social media. It can occur outside of the office space, such as on business trips, clients' premises or other work-related occasions.

Workplace harassment can be directed at and/or carried out by:

- Co-workers
- Managers
- Other people at the workplace e.g. customers, contractors, interns and volunteers

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Workplace harassment cases may also be addressed under the Protection from Harassment Act (POHA) – an Act to protect persons against harassment and unlawful stalking and to create offences, and provide civil remedies related thereto or in relation to false statements of fact.

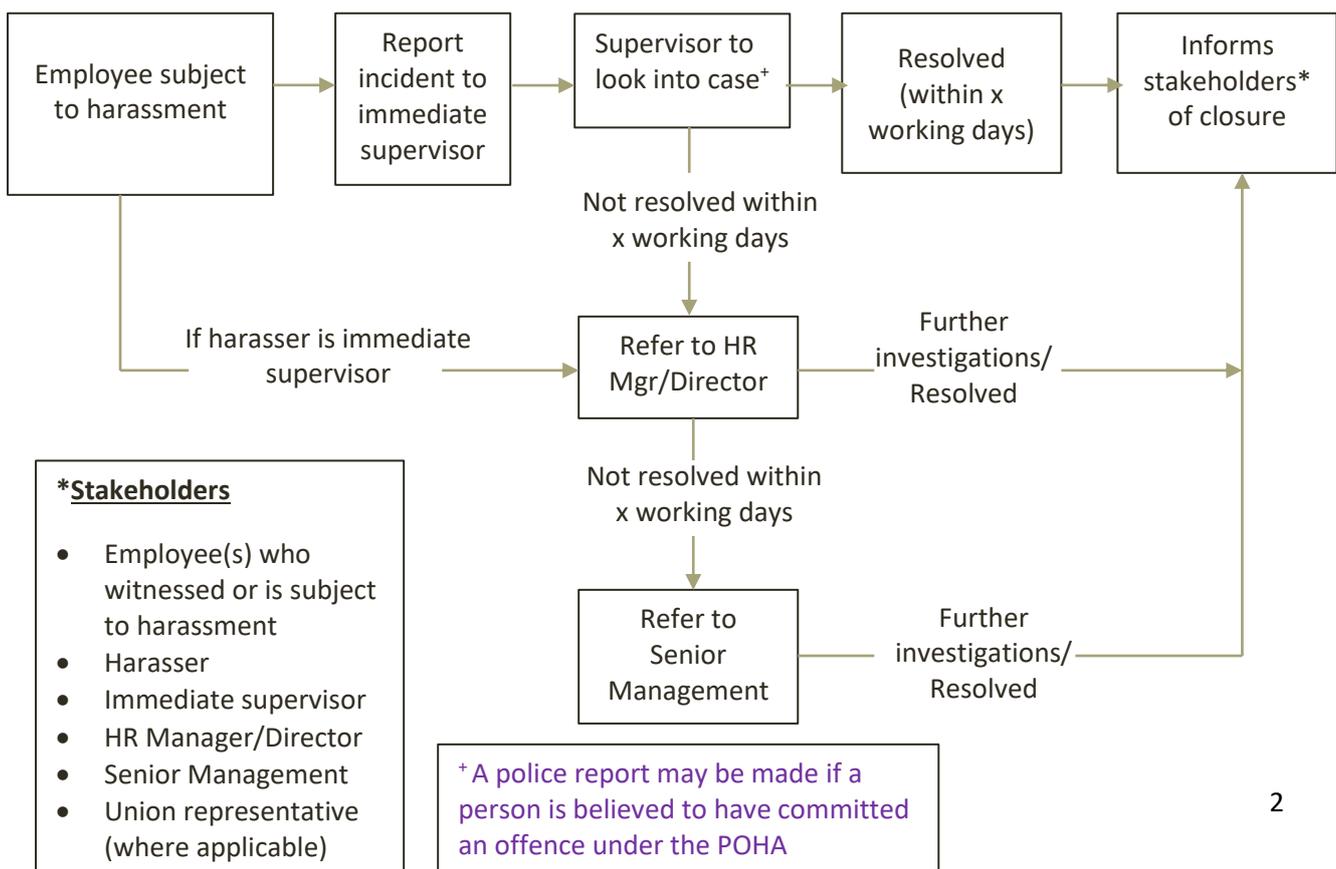
D Early Prevention

The company has a set of values / code of conduct / service policy* (to be worded appropriately for the organisation) to guide behaviours and should be communicated to and complied with by all employees. Managers, supervisors and employees at all levels need to be professional in their own behaviour and ensure that appropriate standards of behaviour are maintained in the workplace. Managers and supervisors should identify potential acts of harassment either within the Company or by external customers/stakeholders against employees through regular communications with their employees.

Once an incident is raised, the manager/supervisor must talk with the parties concerned and ensure that appropriate action is taken to manage the issue at the onset. The manager/supervisor should also advise the affected person to make a police report if the case contravenes the POHA. A safe environment should be provided for the employee to speak up about their discomfort and concerns to allow for early intervention.

E Reporting and Investigation Procedures

An employee who witnessed or was subjected to workplace harassment is encouraged to put a stop to it as early as possible by making it clearly known to the alleged harasser, that his/her behaviour is not appropriate and that it should cease immediately. The affected employee should also report his/her case to management in accordance with the company's grievance handling process. The diagram below illustrates this process:



SAMPLE

In addition to the above measures, union members can contact their union representatives to seek advice and recourse if they face any situations involving workplace harassment.

Investigation shall be prompt and thorough and appropriate action shall be taken to protect the employees from any further harassment. The Company shall be guided by its *disciplinary inquiry procedure / grievance handling procedure / whistle blowing policy** (to be worded appropriately for the organisation) to address the complaint. All complaints shall be dealt with fairly, with sensitivity, respect and in confidence for all parties concerned.

Every reasonable effort shall be made both by the Company and the parties concerned to handle grievances/complaints from employees as soon as possible.

F Disciplinary Action and Closure of Incident

An employee who has harassed his/her co-worker or has participated in an act of harassment or encouraged such conduct by others, shall be subject to disciplinary action. For severe cases, a police report may be made. Company disciplinary actions can include written warning and or demotion for more serious transgressions.

To ensure proper closure of the harassment incident, the Company may take further actions (e.g. redeploy or relocate the harasser to avoid future conflicts; monitor the harasser after the incident so that he/she does not repeat the act and monitor the well-being of the affected employee; positive interventions such as coaching and counselling for both harasser and the harassed).

If the harassment involves an external customer/stakeholder, the Company shall take appropriate actions to prevent recurrence.

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Optional Clauses:

a) Training on Workplace Harassment

The Company shall provide regular training to all its employees, including managers and supervisors, on appropriate and acceptable conduct at the workplace, including what constitutes workplace harassment as well as harassment by external customers/stakeholders, together with its remedial actions. HR personnel as well as managers and supervisors shall be trained to manage workplace harassment incidents.