

Anti-Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy

1. Policy Description

The policy of Mukti Australia Inc. (hereafter MA) on Anti-Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying confirms MA's commitment to a safe workplace, where the rights of employees are protected, and its rejection of behaviour that is discriminatory, harassing or bullying, and establishes the procedures for dealing with complaints of discrimination, harassment or bullying.

2. Policy

Discrimination, harassment and bullying is unacceptable and unlawful pursuant to Victorian State legislation (Equal Opportunity Act 2010, Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001, Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006), and Federal legislation (Sex Discrimination Act, 1984; Racial Discrimination Act 1975; Disability Discrimination Act 1992; Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986; Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012, Age Discrimination Act 2004), and various Occupational Health and Safety legislation.

MA will take all practicable steps to ensure that the work environment is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying. MA will ensure all allegations of discrimination, harassment and bullying are treated confidentially, seriously and sympathetically and are investigated thoroughly. Relevant disciplinary action will be taken against anyone found to have breached this policy.

Employees and volunteers have the right to protect themselves against harassment, bullying and discrimination. No employee will be penalised as a result of raising concerns or complaints relating to discrimination, harassment or bullying or for giving support to a colleague who has suffered discrimination, harassment or bullying.

Employees may be personally liable for proven discriminatory, harassing or bullying behaviour. Mukti may incur liability if it does not:

- Take all practicable steps to prevent harassment, bullying and discrimination.
- Address all complaints.
- Institute disciplinary action where it finds that harassment, bullying or discrimination is proven.

What can you do if you feel you are being discriminated against?

If you consider you have been discriminated against, speak to the Office Manager or National Director, who should be able to give you the rationale behind any decision which may have caused you to feel disadvantaged.

What can you do if you feel you are being harassed or bullied?

Harassment and bullying behaviour is unacceptable, and is a significant occupational health and safety consideration, as it can cause harm to a person's health and well being, both physical and psychological. Anybody who experiences or witnesses harassment or bullying is encouraged to either:

- Inform the offender that the behaviour is offensive and unacceptable and against MA's policy; or
- Seek assistance in having the behaviour stopped. This may include making a report or a complaint.

Who can assist you in making a report or a complaint?

If you are unable to handle the matter yourself then the following people are able to assist you:

- The Office manager or National Director.
- The Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission or Worksafe Victoria may be approached for advice at any time.

Complaints Procedures for MA Employees

MA recognises that external avenues for complaints of bullying and harassment are available to all employees as a right. However, MA aims to provide an internal complaint procedure for all employees that is effective and user friendly.

It is important to recognise that the best way to stop harassment or bullying is to take a counselling or problem solving approach. The aim is mutual resolution and to remove the cause(s) of the problem.

The two courses of action that can be taken by a person making a complaint are:

- Making an Informal Complaint.
- Making a Formal Complaint.

Making an Informal Complaint

Speak to the Office manager or National Director, who will hear your complaint in confidence, and will provide you with information and assist you in approaching the person to stop the offending behaviour. Where this does not stop the offending behaviour, the Office Manager or National Director can assist you in formalising a complaint for investigation.

Making a Formal Complaint

Submit your written complaint to the National Director, who will treat it seriously, impartially and sympathetically, and will maintain appropriate confidentiality. The National Director conducts the formal investigation into the complaint, and will give feedback to both parties as to the outcome of the investigation. Once you make a Formal Complaint you should keep

notes of all relevant incidents, including dates, times, the people involved and any relevant conversations that occur while the complaint is being processed.

Resolution of a Complaint

A complaint is resolved when the subject of concern has been dealt with and resolution strategies are in place, which may involve:

- Dismissal of the complaint as lacking substance
- Verbal or written apology to the Complainant as appropriate
- Verbal or written apology to the Respondent if falsely accused.
- A commitment by the Respondent to make amends.
- Mediation between the parties as appropriate

Depending on the nature of the complaint, discipline will range in severity from a warning to termination of employment

When a Complaint Is Not Resolved

Where you cannot agree that there is a mutual resolution, you may direct the National Director to take the matter to the Mukti Board. Further, if you are not satisfied with any of the above steps, or you feel that your case has not been properly heard, you have the right to take your case to the Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission.

Rights of the Parties

Allegations of harassment or bullying will be investigated in line with the Principles of Natural Justice.

Allegations against Senior Personnel

If the person who allegedly offends you is the National Director, and after making reasonable attempts you are unable to resolve the complaint directly with the National Director, you are advised to go directly to the Chair of the MA Board, who will ensure that the MA Complaints Procedures are followed without prejudice. An external party may be engaged to handle a complaint where required.