

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Northern Occupational Support Service Inc (NOSS) is an Equal Opportunity Employer with a positive awareness of the spirit and intent of the Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination laws.

Under federal and state legislation, discrimination in employment is against the law.

NOSS will not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment. All employees and service users have the right to enjoy an environment free of discrimination and harassment.

Discrimination undermines proper working relationships and may cause low morale, stress related illness, absenteeism or resignations. All employees at all levels are responsible for adherence to this Policy.

DEFINITIONS

1. Discrimination

Discrimination occurs when someone is treated unfavourably because of one of his or her personal characteristics including, but not confined to, the following areas:

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| • Gender | • Sexual preference |
| • Pregnancy | • Political belief and activity |
| • Age | • Trade union activity |
| • Disability | • Marital status |
| • Physical characteristic | • Race |
| • Parental status | • Irrelevant criminal record |
| • Religion | • HIV/AIDS status |
| • Social status | |

Discrimination may involve, but is not confined to, the following:

- ‘jokes’ or comments about another workers racial or ethnic background, sex, sexual preference, age, disability or physical appearance.
- displaying pictures or posters which are offensive or derogatory, expressing negative stereotypes of particular groups.
- judging someone on their beliefs, origins, appearance, sex rather than their work performance.
- undermining a person’s authority or work performance because you dislike one or some of their personal characteristics.

2. Harassment

- Harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour, which makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended, for example bullying or offensive verbal comments.
- Sexual Harassment is a legally recognised form of sex discrimination
- Acts of sexual harassment can take many different forms, including but not confined to:
 - unwanted physical contact such as kissing, patting, touching, grabbing;
 - sexual propositions;

- . sexual intercourse under threat of loss of employment;
 - . unwelcome remarks or insinuations about a person's sex or private life;
 - . suggestive comments about a person's appearance or body;
 - . sexually explicit conversations;
 - . sexual or smutty jokes;
 - . inferences to sexual morality i.e. prude, tart, slut;
 - . offensive telephone calls;
 - . gender-based insults or taunting;
 - . being followed home from work or repeated requests for dates or drinks particularly after prior refusal;
 - . offensive hand or body gestures
 - . Offensive, humiliating or intimidating displays of sexually graphic material including posters, pictures, cartoons, graffiti or messages left on boards, desks or lockers.
- Behaviour that constitutes sexual harassment is illegal during any work-related function and will be subject to disciplinary action.
 - Sexual harassment is not consensual sexual behaviour between two people who are attracted to each other. However, such behaviour is still inappropriate in the workplace.

PROCEDURES

1. NOSS will:
 - do all that is reasonable to prevent discrimination from occurring at the workplace or work related environment;
 - treat all employees on their merits without regard to race, age, sex, marital status, sexual preference, disability, religion or political conviction.
 - investigate complaints of discrimination in the workplace professionally, confidentially and in a non judgemental manner ensuring there is no presumption of guilt.
 - provide information and support to complainants and advise on available options
 - implement training and raise the awareness of appropriate standards of conduct;
 - not tolerate any victimisation or reprisals for making complaints;
 - maintain confidentiality of all matters relating to a complaint
 - not tolerate any misuse of this policy.
2. All employees have a responsibility to:
 - report any form of discrimination observed within the workplace.
 - offer support to victims by directing them to the most appropriate channel for help
 - maintain confidentiality of all matters relating to a complaint
3. Should an incident occur:
 - if possible, the victim should tell the offender of your objection to their behaviour and that you don't want it repeated.
 - if the matter cannot be resolved, the victim should record what took place, who was involved, where the incident(s) occurred, witnesses, and other observations on an Incident Report Form and give it to a member of NOSS Management as soon as possible.
 - the NOSS Manager will follow the NOSS Grievance Procedure.

PENALTIES

1. Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who discriminates against another person in the workplace or work related environment in accordance with the NOSS Counselling and Discipline Policy.
2. Anyone who harasses or victimises a person who makes a complaint under this policy will face disciplinary action.
3. Any person who, without authorisation from the Manager, passes on confidential information regarding an investigation under this policy will face disciplinary action.
4. Disciplinary Action may involve a warning (verbal or written), transfer, or termination of employment.
5. Serious breaches of this policy may result in employment being terminated immediately. This means that no warnings will be given.