

Mason Electrical Engineering Contractors considers discrimination and harassment as unacceptable forms of behaviour that will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Mason Electrical Engineering Contractor's management will take all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination and harassment from occurring in the workplace.

Discrimination and harassment are serious forms of behaviour and in some cases are against State and National laws. Mason Electrical Engineering Contractors considers any breach or suspected breach of State and National legislation as potentially serious misconduct:

### **Discrimination**

Discrimination occurs when an employer or an employee treats a person or less favourably than another or others.

Under State Equal Opportunity laws, it is unlawful to discriminate because of:

- age;
- association with a child (in customer service or accommodation);
- caring responsibilities;
- chosen gender;
- disability;
- marital or domestic partnership status;
- pregnancy;
- race;
- religious appearance or dress (in work or study);
- sex;
- sexuality; and
- spouse or partner's identity.

Workplaces where bullying and harassment are happening are generally less productive and efficient. People feel afraid and insecure, there are high levels of stress and conflict among workers and, ultimately, employers have higher costs. Specifically:

- more mistakes are made by workers who can't concentrate because of their negative work environment;
- workers compensation claims increase (e.g. injuries resulting from tiredness and poor concentration);
- highly trained and experienced workers resign and leave their jobs;
- teamwork suffers because there is less cooperation and communication;
- alcohol or drug abuse at work may increase; and
- if nothing is done to stop the bullying, respect for the employer and loyalty to the company decreases.

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### **Bullying is a safe work issue**

Workplace bullying and harassment is continuous bad treatment of someone at work by one or more people. It can be harmful to a person's health and wellbeing as well as affecting the productivity of the whole organisation.

Bullying behaviour can range from very obvious verbal or physical assault to very subtle psychological abuse. This behaviour may include:

- physical or verbal abuse;
- yelling, screaming or offensive language;
- excluding or isolating employees;
- psychological harassment;
- intimidation;
- assigning meaningless tasks unrelated to the job;
- giving employees impossible jobs; and
- deliberately changed work rosters to inconvenience particular employees.

### **Harassment**

Harassment is uninvited and unwelcome behaviour directed towards an employee that is intended to:

- offend;
- humiliate; or
- intimidate; and
- that makes the workplace uncomfortable or even intolerable.

The key word is "unwelcome". The employee or person who decides whether the behaviour is unwelcome is the person who is being harassed.

Harassment can include behaviour such as:

- telling insulting jokes about particular racial groups;
- sending explicit or sexually suggestive emails;
- displaying offensive or pornographic posters or screen savers;
- making derogatory comments or taunts about someone's race or religion; and
- asking intrusive questions about someone's personal life, including their sex life.

### **Equality in the Workplace**

**Mason Electrical Engineering Contractors** is an equal opportunity employer. All employees are treated on their merits. All employees and all job applicants will be assessed according to their skills, qualifications, abilities, prior work performances and aptitudes.

Recruitment and promotion will be on the basis that each applicant will be considered fairly and equally. The selected applicant will be the person who appropriately meets the requirements of the position.

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Mason Electrical Engineering Contractor's employees have the right to expect:

- a work environment free of harassment;
- freedom from discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex, age, sexuality, disability, pregnancy or marital status;
- fairness in access to training and decisions about leave; and
- fair dismissal/redundancy procedures.

Mason Electrical Engineering Contractors employees will endeavour to:

- treat other staff and customers with dignity and respect, both verbally and physically; and
- report incidents of harassment or discrimination to management.

Mason Electrical Engineering Contractors employees are required to treat each other and our customers with respect and courtesy by:

- speaking to people politely and with respect; and
- respecting rules and guidelines ensuring a harassment and bullying free workplace.

Mason Electrical Engineering Contractors does not tolerate the following the behaviour:

- teasing, putting people down;
- shouting or yelling at people;
- repeatedly asking someone out despite their clear refusal;
- unwelcome comments about a person's personal life;
- suggestive behaviours such as leering, ogling or wolf-whistling;
- offensive jokes based on sexual reference, or a person's race, disability, pregnancy, age, religion, marital status, sexuality or physical appearance;
- physical contact, such as fondling or touching;
- displaying or sending/receiving offensive materials such as pornography; and
- indecent physical and verbal assault.

### **Company Action**

On becoming notified of any harassment, bullying or discrimination involving any person employed, involved **or under the control of, the Mason Electrical Engineering Contractors will immediately follow the Fair Work Ombudsman guide to resolving workplace issues.** A copy of any guidance material will be provided to all management and is available to employees on request.

Any employee who believes they have been or are being harassed or discriminated against are urged to advise their supervisor or manager who will investigate and take the appropriate corrective action. Alternatively, they may at any stage contact an external authority, e.g. the local Equal Opportunities Commission.

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Mason Electrical Engineering Contractors will endeavour to:

- raise awareness in the workplace about what constitutes unacceptable behaviour (which might be identified as bullying);
- train all managers and supervisors in the implementation of policies and procedures;
- monitor the workplace for indications of workplace bullying, and investigating any issues identified – records such as work-related injuries, absenteeism, productivity, customer complaints, grievances, disciplinary actions etc. may indicate an underlying problem; and
- treat complaints seriously, acting immediately and firmly to address workplace bullying incidents. This may include writing an apology to the person being bullied. For the bully it may mean a formal written warning; compulsory counselling or retraining; transfer to another part of the organisation; suspension (with or without pay); withdrawal of privileges; a fine; demotion or dismissal. Staff should be advised of these remedies within the organisation's code of conduct.

Neither complainants nor witnesses will be victimised. Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who harasses a co-worker or client.



Manager

**Mason Electrical Engineering Contractors**

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