

What is an Anti-Harassment and Discrimination policy and why do you need one?

An Anti-Harassment and Discrimination policy outlines your company's commitment to creating working lives free of harassment, bullying and discrimination. It may be used as part of a suite of policies or be combined within an Employee Handbook or Code of Conduct.

The policy should act as an internal set of rules to help employees understand what behaviour is expected of them and what behaviour they should expect from their colleagues. It also sets out the process of how they should report harassment, bullying and/or discrimination within the company and what action will be taken by the company to address the complaint.

Ensure when you are drafting your policy that you do so in line with the relevant laws and regulations of your local jurisdiction and you are aware of your liabilities as an employer and the rights of your employees.

Example Template

Commitment / statement:

Define your commitment to eliminating harassment, bullying and discrimination in the workplace and why it's important to your company.

Purpose / Scope of policy:

Describe the objective of the policy and whom and what it affects.

1. Definition and examples of harassment, bullying and discrimination
Set out how your company defines harassment, bullying and discrimination, including sexual misconduct, and give clear examples of behaviours that may take place within your working environment which are not tolerated
2. What to do if you have/are being harassed, bullied or discriminated against or you have witnessed someone else experiencing these behaviours
Give clear guidance on how the employee should report the behaviours they are experiencing. Who should they report it to and in what format? What other options does the employee have if they do not wish to make a formal report or complaint? Can they make it anonymously?
3. How the will company enforce the policy
Set out the process for the company to respond to, investigate and deal with the report / complaint. What should the employee expect in terms of communication, process, timeline and ultimate action from the company? What rights do they have and what protection and support is available to them? What should they expect whilst the investigation is ongoing?

4. What to do if you have been accused of harassment, bullying or discrimination
*What process will be followed? What support is available? What might the outcome be?
What should they expect whilst the investigation is ongoing? What are their rights?*

5. How the company ensures the policy is upheld
*Who is responsible for the policy? How are records kept? Is there periodic monitoring? Do
you provide training to employees?*

Policy approval:

Who is responsible for it? How often do you intend to review and update the policy?