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Dignity and Respect at Work Policy

Section 1. Introduction

Delmec is committed to providing an environment in which all those who work within the company treat each other with dignity and respect. We are committed to ensuring that our company is free from any form of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination. All employees have the right to be treated with dignity and respect at work and the right to work in an environment that is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.

It is also recognised that the work environment aims to provide high-quality services in an atmosphere of respect, cooperation, openness, safety and equality. To deliver the highest level of service to our clients, it is essential that each of us feels safe, respected and valued at work. Honesty, collegiality and inclusivity are central to Delmec's values. Our employees are our greatest asset, and they should expect respect and appreciation for their unique perspectives and contributions.

This policy sets out the expectations for all team members. Bullying, harassment or discrimination within or in connection with the work of the company will not be tolerated. Complaints of bullying or harassment will be dealt with, either formally or informally, as described below. Complaints by employees or others in the workplace regarding bullying or harassment at work will be treated fairly, sensitively, with respect and confidentiality for all parties involved. Anyone accused of bullying or harassment will be given natural justice and will be treated fairly and sensitively.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate Delmec's commitment to implementing and promoting measures to protect the dignity of employees and to encourage respect for others at work. This is done by creating a work environment free from discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying and disrespectful behaviours by dealing effectively with any complaints of such conduct, and welcoming diversity and promoting employment equality. This policy is to give practical guidance to employees on:

- What is meant by discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying and disrespectful behaviour.
- How this unacceptable behaviour may be deterred.

This policy gives employees protection from bullying, sexual harassment, harassment or discrimination, whether from a work colleague, business contact or any other person with whom employees come into contact during their work.

1.2 Scope

Our Dignity and Respect at Work Policy applies to all Delmec employees, contractors, customers, suppliers and visitors to the workplace and is the foundation of making Delmec a better place to work. This policy applies during normal working hours in Delmec premises, at work-related social events, business trips and other activities, such as training courses or conferences, whether they take place on Delmec premises or not and whether or not they take place during normal working hours.

The objectives of the policy are to:

- Foster a positive culture for working to ensure that each employee is treated with respect.
- Set the standards of conduct expected and outline the behaviours that are unacceptable in work.
- Promote and enable an inclusive environment where all employees are treated with dignity and respect, free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Ensure that occurrences of bullying, harassment and discrimination are taken seriously, and dealt with promptly.
- Set the framework for raising, addressing and resolving concerns about individual and/or organisational behaviour.

1.3 General Principles

All who work in Delmec are treated equally and respected for their individuality and diversity. Delmec will not tolerate discrimination, bullying, harassment, sexual harassment or disrespectful behaviour by one employee or group of employees against another or others for any reason.

Lack of respect may be shown in words, conduct, acts, or demeanour. The difference of opinion and disagreements sometimes happen between colleagues. They are an inevitable and natural part of working life. These incidents can trigger strong emotions and, as a result, create a challenging work environment. While it may be difficult to resolve such disputes, it is recommended that you address and resolve issues in a fair, balanced and healthy manner, without intimidating or harassing others. We should respond to others in a way that alleviates the conflict rather than escalates it. We should not make assumptions about the intentions or attitudes of others without trying to clarify them.

Good-natured humour is an important part of our working life, but we should be careful not to cross the line into behaviour that offends, intimidates, or humiliates others. In any case, we should stop any behaviour when a colleague or business contact indicates that it is unacceptable.

The obligations outlined in this policy extend to the treatment of customers, business contacts and non-employees on site. Equally, Delmec will not tolerate any inappropriate behaviour to or by customers, business contacts and non-employees. In the event of a complaint being upheld against a non-employee, appropriate sanctions may be imposed which could in particular circumstances include termination of contract, suspension of service, exclusion from the premises, etc, as appropriate. Suitable disciplinary action, including dismissal for serious offences, will be taken against any employee who violates the policy. Delmec regards any incident of bullying, harassment or discrimination as a serious matter and will respond promptly and sensitively to complaints, and where appropriate take disciplinary action.

Section 2. Policy Definitions

2.1 What is the Meaning of Dignity and Respect at Work?

A dignified workplace with mutual respect involves:

- taking a positive attitude to yourself and others
- being receptive to the views and values of others
- valuing the contribution of others and feeling valued in your own contribution

To maintain a dignified and respectful working environment, we need to be aware of our behaviour and its effect on others. Our intentions are not the issue; it is the impact of how we behave that matters. As a starting point we should:

- Listen and try to understand one another
- Be sensitive to the reactions of others, verbal and non-verbal
- Acknowledge our mistakes and work to put them right
- Be willing to apologise sincerely to people if we do or say something that reasonably offends them
- Constructively challenge inappropriate behaviours in others

2.2 Discrimination

Discrimination is defined as less favourable treatment. A person is said to be discriminated against if they are treated less favourably than another is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation on any of the grounds listed below.

While not restricted to the grounds listed below, the policy prevents any form of discrimination based on:

- Gender
- Marital status
- Family status

- Sexual orientation
- Religious belief or lack of religious belief
- Age
- Disability or the nature of the disability
- Race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins
- Membership or non-membership of the Traveller community

Delmec values the contribution of all employees and requires them to refrain from any behaviour that may be interpreted as offending.

2.3 Harassment

Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the discriminatory grounds covered by the Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2008 (the “Act”). Harassment has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity and/or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. It may be targeted at one employee or a group of employees. Harassment may consist of a single incident or repeated inappropriate behaviour. An act of harassment may occur outside the work premises or normal working hours provided the perpetrator was acting in the course of employment, for example, at a training course, conference or work-related social event.

The following examples of inappropriate behaviour may constitute harassment:

- Verbal harassment – jokes, derogatory comments, ridicule, or songs
- Written harassment – including faxes, text messages, emails/notices/written offensive articles
- Physical harassment – jostling, pushing, or any form of assault
- Visual displays – posters, emblems or badges
- Isolation or exclusion – from social activities
- Intimidatory harassment – gestures or threatening poses
- Pressure – to behave in a manner that the employee thinks is inappropriate, for example being required to dress in a manner unsuited to a person’s ethnic or religious background
- Inappropriate harassment through the use of social media

These examples are illustrative but not exhaustive.

2.4 Bullying

Workplace bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual’s right to dignity at work. An isolated incident of this type of behaviour may be an affront to a person’s dignity at work but as a once off incident is not considered to be bullying.

The intention of the person against whom the complaint is being made (the respondent) is irrelevant. The fact that the respondent may not intend to bully/harass/sexually harass an employee is not a defence. The effect of the behaviour on the employee is what is relevant.

The following are common, but not exclusive examples of bullying behaviour and do not represent an exhaustive list:

- Verbal abuse/insults
- Victimisation
- Physical abuse
- Intrusion – pestering, spying, or stalking
- Exclusion and isolation
- Intimidation

- Aggression
- Undermining an individual's right to dignity at work
- Excessive monitoring of work
- Repeated requests giving impossible deadlines or impossible tasks
- Humiliation
- Withholding work-related information
- Blame for things beyond the person's control

The main characteristic of bullying is that it is regular and persistent inappropriate behaviour, specifically targeted at one employee or group of employees. It may be perpetrated by someone in a position of authority, by employees against a manager or by employees at the same level. Bullying at work does not include reasonable and essential feedback or constructive criticism from the management or actions taken that can be justified on grounds such as safety, health, and welfare at work.

2.5 What Bullying is Not

Bullying at work does not include:

- Feedback that is objective, professionally communicated and has the intention of improving an employee's performance or standard of behaviour
- Reasonable and essential disciplining from the good management of an employee's performance or standard of behaviour at work
- Actions taken to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the employee
- Exercise of legitimate employee rights and responsibilities
- Differences of opinion
- Complaints related to the assignment of duties, terms and conditions of employment and other matters that may be referred under the company's normal grievance procedure

2.6 Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. Without prejudice to the generality of the above, such unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material. Sexual harassment may consist of a single incident or repeated inappropriate behaviour.

Sexual harassment includes:

- Sexual gestures or advances
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, calendars
- Sending suggestive and pornographic correspondence, pictures, emails or text messages
- Unwelcome sexual advances, unwanted or offensive flirtations, suggestive remarks, innuendoes, comments and jokes
- Unwelcome physical contact with a person, for example, patting or pinching a person, brushing against another body, putting your hands on a person unnecessarily, etc.

The examples above are for illustrative purposes only and do not represent an exhaustive list.

Section 3. Context

3.1 Responsibilities

All employees have a responsibility to read, support and comply with this policy. Both the company's management and its employees have responsibilities for creating and contributing to the maintenance of a work environment free

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from bullying, harassment and discrimination and to improve dignity and respect in the workplace. Under this policy, it is each employee's duty, irrespective of their role, to treat their colleagues with dignity and respect and create a working environment where bullying, harassment and discrimination are not tolerated.

Employees of Delmec have a responsibility to:

- Demonstrate respect and integrity in our interactions with individuals and groups.
- Work collaboratively, collegially and effectively in teams within and across organisational units.
- Identify and challenge unacceptable behaviour when it occurs, even if it is not directed at themselves.
- Address and resolve matters themselves, where reasonably possible, in a positive and constructive way.
- Raise concerns with relevant management and HR and participate positively in approaches to resolve them.
- Modify their behaviour should they become aware that they have behaved unacceptably concerning this policy, even if no complaint has been made.
- Fully co-operate with informal and formal investigation procedures, where required.
- Report to their Manager or HR representative if they feel that they are being bullied
- Treat all colleagues and customers with respect and dignity
- Each complaint or issue received in connection with bullying, harassment or sexual harassment, will be dealt with in a sensitive, fair and confidential manner.

Managers have a particular responsibility to implement this policy and to make every effort to ensure that bullying and harassment does not occur, especially in work areas for which they are responsible. They have an obligation to deal promptly and effectively with any incidents of bullying or harassment of which they are aware or ought to be aware.

Each Manager in Delmec has a responsibility to:

- Be vigilant for signs of inappropriate behaviours, bullying and harassment.
- Lead in promoting a culture of dignity and respect.
- Set a good example by dealing with every person in a courteous and deferential manner.
- Treat employees with openness, respect and dignity at all times.
- Monitor for any signs of harassment and take steps before the issues worsen.
- Promote awareness of the organisation's policies and procedures.
- Treat complaints of harassment, bullying or discrimination seriously and with discretion.
- Deal promptly and appropriately with issues of inappropriate behaviour, bullying and harassment.

3.2 Communication and Body Language

Effective workplace communication is based on interpersonal, professional relationships that are developed through a keen awareness of courtesy, attentive listening, active participation and situation appropriate body language. Ninety percent of communication is nonverbal, so it is important that you are conscious of how you are presenting yourself.

This means:

- Being aware of someone's personal space.
- Avoiding aggressive conduct, abusive language and arguments.
- Maintaining a positive and friendly attitude.
- Assuring your tone cannot be misconstrued as negative or abrupt

It is extremely important how we nonverbally communicate with our colleagues, customers, business contacts and non-employees. At all time we must act and respond in a professional manner.

The obligations outlined in this policy extend to the treatment of customers, business contacts and non-employees on site. Equally, Delmec will not tolerate any inappropriate behaviour to or by customers, business contacts and non-employees.

3.3 Unacceptable Behaviour

Delmec expects all its employees to treat others with dignity and respect and regards bullying, harassment or discrimination as unacceptable behaviour. Delmec will respond promptly and sensitively to formal complaints, and where appropriate take disciplinary action.

Examples of unacceptable behaviours in the workplace can include, but are not limited to:

- Unwelcome physical contact ranging from unnecessary touching to serious assault
- Intimidating or threatening behaviour, or language
- Unwelcome attention or advances of a sexual nature
- Disparaging, ridiculing or insulting behaviour, language or gestures
- Inappropriate communication or visual display of offensive material
- Isolation, non-cooperation, or deliberate exclusion of an individual from a work situation (including work-related social events)
- Undermining of an individual through unfair work allocation or persistent unjustified criticism

3.4 Procedure for Employees dealing with incidences of inappropriate behaviour, bullying or harassment

Employees are encouraged, where possible, to resolve concerns informally. They may wish to seek advice and support from a Manager or HR, who can provide assistance and appropriate support to employees when they believe they have identified or been accused of behaviour contrary to this policy.

Complaints of discrimination, bullying, harassment or sexual harassment will be treated with fairness, sensitivity and respect. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout to the greatest extent possible, consistent with the requirements of a fair investigation.

While investigating the complaint, no assumptions shall be made about the culpability of the alleged perpetrator. Employees who make complaints of discrimination, bullying, harassment or sexual harassment will not be victimised, even if the complaint is not upheld. Making a complaint under this policy will not affect an employee's statutory rights or entitlement to make a claim to the Workplace Relations Commission.

Delmec places a strong emphasis on empowering employees to manage inappropriate behaviour, bullying and harassment as soon as possible. Allegations of serious once-off or repeated incidents of inappropriate behaviour may be more appropriately considered under the company's grievance and disciplinary procedures and/or through a formal investigation. However, in accordance with the Code of Practice, Delmec considers as a general rule that an attempt should be made to address an allegation of inappropriate behaviour as informally as possible through agreed procedures. The objective of this approach is to promote understanding between the parties and to resolve difficulties with the minimum of conflict and stress for the individuals involved. Delmec will therefore facilitate and encourage all reasonable approaches to resolve the issue informally.

Satisfactory resolution may entail, but is not limited to:

- An employee confirming that he/she is satisfied the inappropriate behaviour will not be repeated and, as a result, is withdrawing the complaint
- Progression to another stage of the policy, for example mediation or formal investigation
- Resolution through any stage of this policy
- Withdrawal of the complaint for another reasonable cause

There are two stages for dealing with cases of alleged bullying and harassment:

Stage 1: Informal Procedure

Sometimes individuals may be unaware of the negative effects of their behaviour on other employees in the workplace. Such individuals may simply need to be told. At times incidents of bullying can be handled effectively in

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an informal way, under Stage 1. If an offensive incident occurs, it may be sufficient to explain clearly to the offender that the behaviour is unacceptable. While in no way diminishing the issue or the effects on individuals, an informal approach can often resolve matters. Therefore, an attempt should be made to address an allegation of bullying or harassment as informally as possible through an agreed informal procedure. The objective is to resolve the difficulty with the minimum of conflict and stress for the individuals involved.

Any employee who believes they are being bullied or harassed should explain clearly to the alleged perpetrator(s) that the behaviour in question is unacceptable. In circumstances where the complainant finds it difficult to approach the alleged perpetrator(s) directly, they should seek help and advice, on a strictly confidential basis, from a Manager or HR Representative.

A complainant may decide, for whatever reason, to bypass the informal procedure. Choosing not to use the informal procedure should not reflect negatively on a complainant in the formal procedure.

Stage 2: Formal Procedure

If an informal approach is inappropriate or if after the informal stage, the bullying persists, the following formal procedures should be invoked:

- The complainant should make a formal complaint in writing to their Manager or HR representative. If the Manager is the subject of the complaint, the formal complaint should be made to the HR Representative or a member of Senior Management.
- The alleged perpetrator(s) should be notified in writing that an allegation of bullying or harassment has been made against them. They should be given a copy of the complainant's statement and advised that they shall be afforded a fair opportunity to respond to the allegation(s).

The complaint should be subject to an initial examination by a designated member of management, who can be considered impartial, to determine an appropriate course of action. It could be, for example, exploring a mediated solution that would require the agreement of all parties or a view that the issue can be resolved informally. Should either of these approaches be deemed inappropriate or inconclusive, a formal investigation of the complaint should take place to determine the facts and the validity (or otherwise) of the allegation(s).

Investigation

The investigation should be conducted by either a designated member of management or, if deemed appropriate, an agreed third party. It should be conducted thoroughly, objectively, with sensitivity, utmost confidentiality, and with due respect for the rights of both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator(s). The investigation should be governed by terms of reference, preferably agreed between the parties in advance.

The investigator(s) should meet with the complainant and alleged perpetrator(s), any witnesses or relevant persons on an individual confidential basis to establish the facts surrounding the allegation(s). Both the complainant and alleged perpetrator(s) may be accompanied by a work colleague if desired. Every effort should be made to conduct and complete the investigation as quickly as possible, preferably within the agreed timeframe. Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator(s) should submit a written report to the Head of HR or Senior Management containing the findings of the investigation.

The complainant and the alleged perpetrator(s) should be informed in writing of the findings of the investigation. Both parties should be given the opportunity to comment on the findings before any action is decided upon by the Head of HR or Senior Management.

Outcome

If the Management decide that the complaint is well-founded, the alleged perpetrator(s) should be given a formal interview to determine an appropriate course of action. Such action could involve counselling and/or monitoring or progressing the issue through Delmec's disciplinary and grievance procedures.


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Confidentiality

Under this policy, all parties are required to maintain strict confidentiality in any informal or formal process. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. However, it must be noted that managers may be required to advise the relevant HR representative in confidence that a complaint has been raised and/or has been resolved informally.

Note: This policy is to be read in conjunction with other Delmec related policies and procedures:

- Disciplinary Policy and procedures
- Grievance Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy

Signature: 

Date: 14/07/2023

Position: CEO