



Policy on Prevention and Redressal of Bullying and Harassment at the Workplace

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

FPA India has zero tolerance to bullying and harassment.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- a) Provide a safe environment for its staff, consultants, volunteers and clients, in its workplace.
- b) Ensure that there is no bullying and harassment based on, but not limited to, caste, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, marital status or age.
- c) Prevent and address bullying and harassment of staff, consultants, volunteers and clients in the workplace by any individual or groups, and / or by the stakeholders.

1.2 Context

FPA India recognises that the right to be free from abuse, exploitation and harassment is enshrined in the Constitution of India as well as International human rights law namely ICERD, ICCPR, ICESCR, CEDAW, CAT, CRC, CRPD¹.

FPA India believes everyone has the right to work in a professional and supportive environment which encourages harmonious relationships where fairness, dignity and mutual respect are at the heart of all its work.

Bullying and harassment not only violates a basic human right but is also harmful to the organization and in the long run, may negatively impact the clients and stakeholders.

FPA India expects the highest standards of behaviour always and is committed to taking appropriate steps to prevent unacceptable behaviour at work.

2. Scope

FPA India will also not tolerate any bullying or harassment of staff, consultants, volunteers by any individual or groups of individuals and /or by any stakeholders at workplace.

This policy lays down principles and guidelines to prevent and redress Bullying and Harassment in the workplace of FPA India, applicable to all its staff, consultants, volunteers,

¹ International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, inhuman or Degrading treatment or Punishment, Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

and stakeholders, including clients. It has a reporting mechanism, investigation procedures and disciplinary measures to support the affected person(s).

In case, someone who is a witness to an incidence or ongoing bullying and harassment wants to report the incident/s, they should refer to FPA India's Whistle-blower policy for details.

3. Definition

3.1 Bullying

Bullying is when people repeatedly and intentionally use words or actions against someone or a group of people to cause distress and risk to their well-being.

Bullying includes behavior that intimidates, offends, degrades, or humiliates an individual. Bullies can be supervisors, subordinates, co-workers, volunteers, clients and their relatives.

Bullying behaviour includes but is not limited to negative acts directed toward individuals for example bullies may disrespect, constantly criticise, blame without factual justification, insult and indulge in constant rude and aggressive behaviour. Making unreasonable demands, use threats, shouting, abuse, and obscenities towards the individual, deliberately withhold work related information and constantly disturb, interfere and disrupt the work schedule of the individual which the person requires to do their job effectively.

Bullying can happen in-person or virtually through use of technology or social media.

3.2 Harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or belief, pregnancy, older age, disability, health or any other analogous personal status which has the purpose or effect, of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. Harassment is defined as behaviour that fails to respect the rights and feelings of an individual. It can manifest in various forms, such as discriminatory, personal, physical, power-based, or psychological harassment.

Harassers can include but are not limited to staff, consultants, supervisors, subordinates, co-workers, volunteers, vendors, donors, clients and their relatives.

3.3 Affected person / Victim

The person/s who is bullied or harassed.

3.4 Perpetrator

The person/s who perpetrate behaviours as defined above.

3.5 Concerned authority

The authority responsible for investigating the complaint is known as the concerned authority. It could be the designated Local Complaint Committee (LCC) or Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) as the case may be.

4. Guiding principles

- a) FPA India wishes to promote an environment to assist in preventing and addressing bullying and harassment of staff, consultants, volunteers and clients at the workplace. They have the right to be protected from victimisation or discrimination.
- b) FPA India works on the principle of equality and treating all concerned professionally, with respect.
- c) FPA India will take all complaints seriously and will investigate swiftly, impartially and objectively.
- d) All staff, consultants, volunteers and clients feel empowered to challenge and report if needed, inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour and language.

5. Implementation / Procedure

5.1. Step I

- (a) Wherever possible, the affected person should record details of bullying or harassment incident/s, i.e. date, time, nature of incident, name/s of Perpetrator/s & witnesses.
- (b) The details of bullying & harassment must be reported to the concerned FPA India authority as soon as possible/ immediately.
- (c) The concerned authority will facilitate resolution of the complaint amicably with mutual acceptance.
- (d) In case, the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution offered or the incident of bullying and harassment continues, then the complainant can move to step II.

5.2. Step II

The step II comprises a written complaint, an investigation and its written report with a proposed resolution plan.

- a) On receipt of a written complaint of bullying or harassment, the concerned authority shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint in writing and also informs the alleged perpetrator of the complaint.
- b) *The investigation*

- (i) The investigation will be conducted without unreasonable delay.
- (ii) The alleged perpetrator will be informed face to face where possible, followed by written confirmation. The alleged perpetrator will be given full details of the nature of the complaint.
- (iii) The designated Local Complaint Committee (LCC) or Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) as the case may be, will be responsible for investigating the complaint. (Please refer to unified complaint and redressal mechanism).

5.2.1. Report

The LCC will submit a complete report with evidence and recommendations to ICC.

5.2.2. Resolution

After approval of the proposed recommendations by the LCC, ICC will authorize disciplinary action as per the severity of the issue, findings and recommendations. The ICC would remain the final authority for all cases of bullying and harassment in FPA India.