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|  | Third Party Abuse and Harassment Policy |

Document Overview

PCC/PARISH LOGO

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| **Purpose** | The purpose of this policy is to ensure that staff are not subject to abuse, harassment bullying and hate crimes from third party service users and providers and where this occurs, provides detail on how this will be dealt with. This policy applies to all third party service users and providers of the PCC/PARISH |
| **Confidentiality** | This document is not confidential. |
| **Document owner** |  |
| **Status note** | Draft |
| **Distribution** | All PCC/PARISH staff, Diocesan website |
| **Required action** |  |
| **Proposed next step** |  |

Version History

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| **Version** | **Date** | **Status Note** |
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1. Introduction
   1. We have a zero-tolerance approach to any incident involving harassment or abuse against our staff. Any form of abuse is unacceptable, and the DBF is committed to taking the strongest possible action to tackle any incidents and protect staff. The PCC/PARISH has a responsibility to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all staff, in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974). We are responsible for ensuring that the working environment for staff is one in which all staff are treated with respect, and any abuse or harassment by third parties is not tolerated. ‘Third party’ means someone that workers interact with as part of their role but who are not employed by the PCC/PARISH, for example service users, contractors, Parish representatives and anyone else we are connected to or do business with.
   2. Third party abuse or harassment can have a severe impact on staff and can lead to feelings of anxiety or fear in the workplace as well as undermine an individual’s self-confidence. This in turn can lead to a wide range of issues including physical and/or mental health problems, and in some cases result in staff leaving the PCC/PARISH. Whilst Managers have a responsibility to take action to prevent abusive incidents or harassment, this policy is victim centred to ensure that victims have a high degree of control over what type of actions are taken to protect them in their role.
   3. We will ensure the safety, protection and welfare of our staff at all times by:
      1. reducing the risk of harassment or abuse of staff by ensuring that this policy document is utilised,
      2. taking appropriate action against the third party who perpetrated the harassment or abuse,
      3. providing appropriate support to staff following an abusive or harassment incident,
      4. making sure staff who have experienced or witnessed incidents feel able to report them and have the matter treated seriously and dealt with effectively.
2. About This Policy
   1. The purpose of this policy is to outline the PCC/PARISH’s approach to tackling incidents of third-party abuse against workers, including harassment, bullying and hate crime.
   2. This policy covers any kind of unwanted behaviour from third parties that humiliates, victimises or threatens any of our staff, for example:
      1. Using aggressive, abusive, offensive or derogatory language (Whether by telephone, email, letter, social media or face-to-face),
      2. Physical abuse,
      3. Racial slurs,
      4. Sexual harassment,
      5. Violence,
      6. Intimidation or threats of violence,
      7. Discrimination,
      8. Bullying,
      9. Harassment.
   3. Abuse or harassment can take place online, face to face, by email or over the phone. This list is not exhaustive. Abuse or harassment by a third party can be just as devastating for a worker as incident/s perpetrated by a colleague.
3. Dealing with incident(s) of abuse or harassment
   1. Any member of staff who directly experiences any type of abuse or harassment has the authority to deal immediately with the behaviour in the following way:
      1. Where the abuse or harassment is over the telephone or face-to-face, the member of staff should initially seek to de-escalate the behaviour by remaining calm and explaining to the third party that their behaviour is unacceptable and that if they do not cease their behaviour then they will refuse to communicate any further with them. If the behaviour does not stop, then the member of staff will tell the third party that they will not communicate any further with them and that they will report the incident to their line manager for further action. The member of staff should keep a written note about the incident including the date and time, and forward this to their line manager.
      2. If the abuse or harassment is in the form of an email, letter or via social media channels, then the member of staff should write back to the third party with a copy of this policy and explain that their written behaviour is unacceptable and that should they wish for their issue to be dealt with then they need to amend the wording of their document to remove all abusive or harassing content. If the third-party refuses to do this then the staff member should notify them that they have made a complaint about this to their line manager, who will be in touch directly with them. As above the staff member should make a note about the incident and send this to the line manager for action.
      3. Where the abuse or harassment relates to physical assault, threats of violence, or sexual harassment the employee should cease contact with that person immediately and report the issue to another colleague or to their line manager. The member of staff can also report this to the police. The member of staff should make a note of the incident for their line manager and for the police.
   2. If the third party still does not cease their offensive behaviour, then the member of staff should report this to their line manager who may take the following actions:
      1. Place a time limit on telephone conversations and personal contact with the third party.
      2. Banning the third party from sending emails and limiting them to only one form of communication such as letters,
      3. Requiring that any personal contact is always done in the presence of a witness,
      4. Banning a third party from the premises or from communicating with the staff member,
      5. Insisting that all contact is made through a third party such as a solicitor/friend,
      6. Where the issue is so extreme or it threatens the immediate safety of a member of staff, the line manager will consider other options such as reporting them to the Police or taking legal action,
      7. Notify other service users of the person’s behaviour in case this behaviour is used across multiple teams in the Diocesan Office.
      8. This is not an exhaustive list.
   3. The line manager will write to the third party to explain the following:
      1. What action is being taken,
      2. Why they have taken that decision,
      3. The duration of the action,
      4. The right to appeal to the PCC/PARISH CHAIR/VICAR if they feel that the decision is unfair.
   4. Personal details about the third party will be managed and stored appropriately in line with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.
4. Support for Staff who have experienced abuse or harassment at work.
   1. Following the staff member reporting an incident of abuse or harassment, the line manager should have a debrief meeting with them to check on their welfare and understand fully the details of the complaint.
   2. The staff member should be notified of the options to speak to one of the Mental Health Supporters, the Diocesan Counsellor or the Employment Assistance Programme. The line manager should be led by the staff member’s feedback on what support they need.
   3. Where possible the line manager should look at moving the contact with the third party to be dealt with by themselves or another member of staff.