

# BULLYING AND HARASSMENT COMPLAINTS – A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

- Please use this as a quick reference to the new procedure.
- **Remember** that in all cases, you should always refer to the full procedure document for more detailed information.
- The full document is available at your place of work, through your line manager and on the Royal Mail Lotus Notes database (People Management Framework)

**Step 1** Complainant experiences bullying and/or harassment and considers/attempts local informal resolution **before** submitting complaint form (See Notes Overleaf)

**Step 2** P&OS at Rugby receive and record the complaint, copying it to the relevant Regional Case Manager (RCM) for action.

**Step 3** RCM contacts Complainant to discuss the case. (Includes the opportunity to consider possibility of informal resolution).

**Step 4** Investigator receives case papers from Regional Case Manager (RCM). Investigator writes to Complainant to arrange interview and aims to interview Complainant within 3 working days.

**Step 5** Investigator considers the possibility of an informal resolution and decides on the need for any Precautionary Action.

**Step 6** Line Manager/Investigator contacts Respondent(s) to arrange interview and takes any Precautionary Action deemed necessary.

**Step 7** Investigator interviews Respondent(s) allowing minimum 48 hours notice

**Step 8** Investigator considers and decides on appropriate **next** action. (Including any further opportunity for informal resolution)

**Step 9** Investigator identifies, contacts and interviews relevant witness(s)

**Step 10** Investigator reviews all information and carefully decides if there is a need to re-interview Complainant, Respondent, Witness(s) or potential Witness(s) to clarify any points.

**Step 11** Investigator deliberates his/her decision

**Step 12** Communicates outcome of investigation to Complainant, Respondent(s), RCM and relevant Line Manager within 7 days of the completion of the investigation.

**During these Steps, Investigator provides weekly updates to RCM.**

## After the Investigation is completed

### The Investigator:

Sends completed case file to RCM,  
Follows up recommendations, and  
Seeks progress updates 8 weeks after case conclusion.

### The RCM:

Makes contact after 8 weeks, to verify progress check has been carried out.  
Is able to spot and share good practice.

## **Bullying and Harassment procedure - Key principles**

### **What is Harassment?**

Harassment is: INAPPROPRIATE and UNWANTED behaviour that could reasonably be perceived by the recipient or any other person, as affecting their dignity.

### **What the revised Bullying and Harassment procedure means**

The revised procedure is designed to enable individuals to raise bullying, and harassment complaints they have in connection with their treatment at work. It has a strong emphasis on early and informal resolution, recognising that many individuals simply want an apology, and want bad behaviour to stop. It also provides an approach that treats complaints and individuals fairly, clearly and consistently.

### **Promoting high standards of behaviour**

It has been developed with the support of our Trade Unions and demonstrates a joint commitment to promoting the highest standards of professional behaviour, consistent with our business standards. Our personal behaviour should focus on treating colleagues and customers with dignity and respect. Unacceptable behaviours and actions will not be tolerated.

### **Raising a complaint**

People are encouraged to raise complaints as soon as they arise or as soon as they feel able to do so. Complainants should try to deal with the issue informally if they feel able to. In all cases, and before making a formal complaint, the Complainant should consider the following:

1. If possible, has the matter been raised with the Respondent? Very often, the person causing offence may not be aware they have done so.
2. Has the matter been brought to the attention of a line manager? The involvement of a third party can sometimes help in finding a quick and satisfactory resolution.
3. Have any attempts been made to resolve this matter other than by making a formal complaint?
4. Has any contact been made with the Bullying & Harassment Helpline?

A complaint can be reported to:

- Your line manager
- Your line manager's manager
- Personnel colleagues
- By completing and returning a complaint form (H1) or letter sent to **FREEPOST, ER Operations Team, Royal Mail, Coton House, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV23 0AA** – a supply of these should be available in a public place in your work area. Alternatively you can telephone the People Contact Centre on 0845 60 60 603 to obtain a complaint form.
- Your Trade Union representative.

### **Bullying and Harassment Helpline**

To obtain confidential advice and extra support you can contact the bullying & harassment helpline on freephone 0800 58 74 777. Open 24 hours a day and run by an external company called Care First, professional counsellors can provide advice, including guidance on how to make a complaint.

**For further advice and support, contact:** Royal Mail's network of professional diversity and Personnel managers or your business unit head of diversity:

Ninian Le-Blanc - Royal Mail UK

Paul Da-Gama - Post Office Ltd

Simon Pont - Royal Mail Networks

David Vaughan - Central Functions, UK Commercial and Parcelforce Worldwide.