



Navigating a bullying or harassment allegation

Your guide



Your guide if you've been accused of bullying or harassment

Hearing that a concern has been raised about your behaviour can feel upsetting, confusing, or even overwhelming. At Highland Hospice, we want you to feel informed, supported, and treated with fairness and dignity throughout the process. This guide is here to help you understand what will happen, what your rights are, and how we will work with you to ensure the situation is handled respectfully and transparently.

Our commitment to you

We aim to:

- Provide a **supportive environment** where issues can be resolved constructively.
- Ensure a **fair and transparent process** if the concern is serious or cannot be resolved informally.

What this means for you

We cover behaviours that may be:

- Face to face
- Written or verbal
- Online, including cyberbullying or harassment

What counts as bullying or harassment?

- **Bullying** is behaviour that intimidates, humiliates, or undermines someone. It can be offensive, malicious, or an abuse of power.
- **Harassment** is unwanted behaviour linked to a personal characteristic that makes someone feel degraded, offended, or unsafe.

Protected characteristics include:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity



- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Harassment can also relate to other traits, such as appearance or social status.

What happens next

Early resolution

If the concern can be resolved informally, you may be invited to take part in:

- A conversation with the other person to understand their perspective.
- A supported discussion with a manager or HR present.
- Mediation, a confidential process led by an impartial mediator to help both sides find a way forward.

These steps are designed to rebuild trust and working relationships. You can bring a colleague for support.

Formal procedure

If the issue is serious or cannot be resolved informally:

- An investigation will take place.
- You will have the chance to share your side of the story.
- You will be kept informed at every stage.

Possible outcomes include:

- The complaint is not upheld.
- The complaint is upheld with learning actions.
- The complaint is upheld and referred to a formal conduct hearing.

You will receive feedback and a written outcome.



Your Role

- Stay calm and engage with the process.
- Be open and constructive in discussions.
- Maintain confidentiality to protect everyone involved.
- Access support if you need it – HR, occupational health, or your confidential contact are here to help.

Our Role

- Treat you fairly and respectfully.
- Make sure the process is impartial.
- Offer wellbeing support throughout.

If you're unhappy with the outcome

You can appeal within 14 days of receiving your outcome letter. We will explain how to do this when we share the decision with you.

Working together after a complaint

If you and the other person need to continue working together, we'll help by:

- Offering support and check ins.
- Facilitating conversations to rebuild trust.
- Considering mediation if helpful.

Remember

Being accused of bullying or harassment does not mean you are guilty. The process is about understanding what happened and finding a fair resolution. You will be supported every step of the way.



Further information

You can find the Bullying and Harassment Policy, along with the Grievance Policy, on the G-Drive and the staff intranet. If you're unsure how to access them, your line manager or a member of the HR team will be happy to help.



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