MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Phase One Report

Phase One: Positive Workplace

March 2020

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Phase One Report – Positive Workplace Outcomes

We care about each staff member at MSD. We want everyone who works for MSD to experience a positive and safe place to work. We have around 7,500 people working at MSD across 160 sites doing a wide range of work with over a million New Zealanders who need income, employment, and other support. Providing our clients with mana manaaki - a positive experience every time – is at the centre of the work our people do. For our people to provide a caring service, they also need to experience a supportive workplace environment where they are cared for.

In 2017/2018 there was growing public awareness and concern about the impacts of inappropriate behaviour, particularly sexual harassment, for example through the #metoo movement. The MSD Positive Workplace initiative was commenced proactively in 2018 to refresh our approach (including policy and procedures) to ensure that we had effective and relevant mechanisms to prevent and respond to workplace bullying and harassment. Our aim was to grow a culture in which employees have the courage to speak up and the confidence that the appropriate action will be taken when they do.

The Positive Workplace initiative took a holistic view to preventing and addressing inappropriate behaviours by emphasising the importance of building a strong, inclusive culture where people, teams and managers have the confidence to discuss behavioural norms and ensure inappropriate behaviours are not ignored.

This included looking at our policies, systems and processes for employees to be able to raise issues if they experience inappropriate behaviour, such as bullying or harassment. It is important that our people feel safe, and that appropriate action is taken when they raise concerns.

In developing our approach, we looked outside our organisation and reviewed policy and practice (international and local), in other organisations and in the relevant regulatory space, including guidance from Worksafe. We also commissioned an external agency (Humankind) to provide us with independent insights as an input into our refreshed approach towards workplace harassment and bullying (page 49 onwards). They completed an independent analysis of our (then) current state in relation to bullying and harassment and made recommendations for improvement to further strengthen our policy, processes and culture to prevent and respond to bullying and harassment. Recommendations were grouped into the areas of prevention, response and support. A summary of the 2018 review's recommendations and the relevant initiatives and intervention responses are included in the following section (page 7-11).

Substantive progress has been made and key milestones achieved in setting the foundations and expectations to prevent and respond to inappropriate behaviour, including harassment and bullying, affirming MSD's commitment as an employer that does not tolerate harmful behaviour towards employees.

We completely revised our bullying and harassment policy and guidelines with a modern approach which focuses on positive workplace behaviours. We want our people to feel empowered and to know that they can raise concerns where they see or experience behaviour that is not appropriate. Our focus is on building strong team cultures where everyone feels valued, giving guidelines to help people resolve issues early and informally if they can and where appropriate.

We're talking more openly about what's appropriate and what's not in our workplace and New Zealand society. We don't want anyone to experience the negative impacts of bullying, harassment or discrimination.

To help our leaders support their teams and grow their positive team culture, we introduced a series of team culture building activities (Brief Bites – e.g. wellbeing, developing self-worth, mental and physical health, close up with conflict, underlying anger). Specific Leadership conversations (page 43-44) introduced a series of three discussion modules for leaders to consider the current social environment and shift in tolerance towards inappropriate behaviours. They have helped our leaders consider their role in building the right culture and provided them with confidence to address issues with their teams.

Our Wellbeing resources have been enhanced and promoted with an updated intranet page and access to comprehensive wellbeing resources (e.g. self-care and work-life balance) through our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provider, Benestar (page 37). We doubled the number of EAP sessions that employees can access (from three to six), with more provided if required. Additional specialist assistance is available for managers and teams to address specific needs.

For our people to have options for raising concerns, we have invested in a new IT system for reporting health, safety and security issues, Safety, Threats, Accidents and Risks (STAR). We've included a sensitive events module in STAR for raising concerns confidentially including bullying, harassment, family violence and discrimination. These sensitive events are managed by designated Senior HR advisors who assist employees with support options (including EAP), triage and escalate issues for appropriate resolution.

So that all of our people know what's expected of them and what to do if things aren't going well, in October 2019 we introduced new online training for all managers and employees (page 45). This scenario-based training explores our new Positive Workplace policy, procedures, reporting channels and supports available. We have reinforced our commitment by including a positive workplace scenario in our annual Code of Conduct training (November 2019 page 46-48).

Our relationship with our employees and their union representatives is really important to us. We have developed a High Performance High Engagement (HPHE) partnership between MSD and the Public Service Association. Our goal is that our people are valued and can participate constructively to improve their working life quality and their wellbeing. One of our first initiatives under our HPHE partnership is to support and enhance the contributions of our Health and Safety Representatives.

In 2019 the State Sector Leadership Team made a commitment to developing and implementing a system wide programme of work to develop positive and safe workplace cultures to counteract inappropriate behaviour. The first key milestone, 'Positive and Safe Workplaces Model Standards' (August 2019) identified three key areas - providing strong leadership, fostering good working relationships, and having trusted policies and procedures. MSD is compliant with these model standards - we have the key elements in place including clear expectations of behaviour, policies, guidelines and different ways for people to raise issues. A summary of our work programme responses has been referenced against the model standards (page 7-11).

In 2020 we will launch MSD's organisational principles. This will be a key milestone that will support the Positive Workplace work already completed and provides a foundational guide on what good looks like for MSD now and in the future.

A positive workplace matters to our leaders, our staff and our clients. Phase one, the establishment of the core building blocks of a Positive Workplace is now complete.

We are now moving into our next phase, where we focus on the broader cultural elements, commencing with the launch of our organisational principles. Our next phase will include a focus on:

- broadening and 'lifting' the Positive Workplace approach to include alignment with wider cultural contributors (such as diversity, inclusion, gender pay, flexible work)
- supporting leaders, teams and individuals to build a positive and inclusive workplace, based on the application and embedding of our policies, procedures, systems and supports
- reinforcement of this priority through communication, leadership messages and leadership conversations
- reviewing progress and our growing maturity overtime.

We are committed to continuing to build a positive workplace at MSD so that each of our staff members experience a workplace where everyone feels safe.

2019 Work Programme and Linkages

Dependencies / linkages	Timeline	Everyone	Leaders
Positive workplaces initiated	2018	Communications - DCE message - zero tolerance	
High Engagement, High Performance working group design	2019 Q1	Communications - Introducing focus on positive workplaces (setting the scene and communicating the need for change)	
Health & Safety training review commenced		Learning Solution - Brief Bites - building team culture	
Bullying & Harassment - Measurement / monitoring data baseline commenced			
Wellbeing / Wellness			
Bullying & Harassment support / investigation guidelines	2019 Q2	Communications - Pink Shirt Day	Learning Solution - Leaders discussion groups (x3)
Sensitive events process launch			
STAR pilot (reporting tool)		Learning - Use of STAR (Pilot)	
		Mahi Tahi - released for Service Delivery	
Sensitive events process pilot	2019 Q3	Learning Solution - Use of STAR	
STAR launch (All MSD)			
SSC Positive Workplaces Model Standards		Wellbeing Portal launched	
Revised Positive Workplace Policy / Guidelines launched			
Workplace Support Network review		Communications - Revised Bullying and Harassment Policy	
Code of Conduct refresher	2019 Q4	Learning Solution - Recognising and responding to unacceptable behaviours	Learning Solution - Recruitment & Selection
			Learning Solution - Recognising, reporting and responding to unacceptable behaviours
STAR reporting and monitoring		Communications - Diversity and becoming more inclusive	
MSD Values - Final MSD feedback		Communications - Code of Conduct refresher	
		Learning Solution - Code of Conduct refresher	

Positive Workplace Initiatives and Interventions Summary

Providing Strong Leadership:	SSC Positive and Safe Workplaces Model Standards	2018 Review Recommendations
Expectations from senior leaders have regularly been communicated across MSD reminding people about their responsibilities to treat each other with respect, encouraging them to raise concerns and to use the policies and tools available. **Senior leaders regularly host / attend staff forums and conduct site visits** where these expectations and behaviours are reinforced / role modelled. **SSC Positive and Safe Workplaces** collateral has been promoted to MSD leaders through communications and links on our intranet (Doogle). **Organisational values / principles** that reinforce appropriate workplace behaviours have been extensively consulted across MSD and are scheduled for launch in the first quarter of 2020.	Leaders provide regular and clear statements about their commitment to creating and maintaining a safe and respectful work environment and their expectations of people's behaviour at work.	Ensure clear articulation of the Ministry's purpose, culture and behaviours so that all employees have a clear vision of the standard that is expected of them.
Leadership Conversations were released to people leaders May 2019 to raise awareness and to engage leadership teams on these matters, including providing the global and New Zealand context. There are three workshop sessions that include video and other collateral covering the following topics: • creating psychological safety in the workplace • talking about bullying and harassment • reacting and responding. **Training for people leaders** included an introduction to STAR, the Ministry's health, safety and security event reporting (mid-2019) to provide a working knowledge of the tools being used to report incidents. In October 2019, online learning focused on the use of early and open conversations to create a positive and safe workplace. **Strengths assessments**, **coaching and support** has been provided to the majority of people leaders, supporting them to build deeper more effective relationships with their direct reports and peers (remaining National Office people leaders scheduled for 2020). **Leadership development** continues to focus on building deeper coaching capabilities and better support for our new people leaders e.g. the deployment of Leader as Coach and a range of leadership core programmes. **Mental health capability, including suicide awareness**, has been provided to our people leaders for several years, and enhanced through several learning programmes for our people and leaders. This directly supports a deeper understanding of these complex issues and develops empathy at all levels of MSD. Mental health training was provided to all National Office Managers in 2019. **The Leadership Success Profile (LSP)** used across the Public Sector is promoted and used to underpin the focus of learning for new and existing people leaders, to build the broader capabilities for our leaders to be effective. **New manager learning resources** (using materials from the Leadership Development Centre [LDC]) were released late 2019 and are being used to support people new to leadership roles (alongside existing induction and skills / capability programmes).	Professional development processes support leaders to develop the skills and capabilities associated with behaviours. Leaders role model positive and productive behaviours at work.	Provide further manager development focused specifically on managing behaviours, conflict and difficult conversations, managing wellness and bullying and harassment awareness.
Recruitment training, focusing on core best practices, commenced late 2019 to provide the building blocks for effective recruitment techniques. A deeper focus on recruitment capabilities, including looking at diversity, inclusion, unconscious bias and wider behavioural considerations is being assessed (to	Recruitment and promotion processes reward	Incorporate desired behaviours and organisational

follow the core practice work) to support further people leader training in 2020. Organisational values / principles that reinforce appropriate workplace behaviours will be added once finalised and released.	role modelling of positive and productive behaviours at work and recognise the benefits of a diverse workforce.	values into staff selection processes.
Fostering Good Working Relationships	**SSC Positive and Safe Workplaces Model Standards**	**2018 Review Recommendations**
Positive Workplace Guidelines and Policy were refreshed and released to all staff in September 2019, providing clear guidelines and examples of appropriate workplace behaviours, setting out what to do about inappropriate behaviour at work and how to access support. This policy sets out key principles, how to raise concerns, responsibilities, definitions, and other related policies and additional information. **A refreshed intranet page** was published (reflecting the policy and guide) that directs people to related supports and policies such as Wellbeing, WorkSafe tools and resources and the SSC Positive and Safe Workplaces Model Standards. **Manager and all staff training** using video-based MSD people scenarios was released in November 2019. These described appropriate behaviours, remind our people of the policies and supports, and promote the use of appropriate escalation channels. **Organisational values / principles** are planned to be launched in 2020, based on extensive input of MSD employees and leaders. These will be incorporated into Position Descriptions and other relevant communications, systems and processes. **Brief Bites** create opportunities for teams to build their relationships and enhance the culture of the workplace. Brief Bites are a series of 15-minute team-based activities developed for use in the Weekly Brief staff sessions that focus on how we make a difference in our clients' lives, celebrating working together as a great team, and dedicating time to our own wellbeing. There are three sets of these activities covering; Our Clients, Ourselves, Our Team. Our **Wellbeing work programme** includes sessions with leaders and people, on topics such as stress and workload and supports individuals to take self-responsibility and provides a substantial set of resources, supports and tools for all MSD people.	Organisational policies set out what is, and is not, appropriate work place behaviour, including definitions of: discrimination, racial harassment and sexual harassment from the Human Rights Act 1993 and the Employment Relations Act 2000; and bullying from WorkSafe's Preventing and Responding to Workplace Bullying Guidelines.	Embed organisational values into day to day operations including induction, performance reviews and Wednesday meetings.
Within the policies and guides, **self-help is an underpinning theme**, where we encourage people to take a non-adversarial position to resolve lower level issues as early as possible before they grow or escalate (reinforced in communications, policy, guidelines and training). **Induction processes** set out expectations of appropriate behaviours (for people leaders and all staff) and are being refreshed on a regular basis to reflect positive and inclusive workplace behaviours (organisational values / principles will be added once finalised and released). **Code of conduct refresher training** (including a section on workplace behaviours) was released to all staff in November 2019, reinforcing appropriate behaviours at work. **Our Client Commitments,** released in June 2019, are about recognising the relationships we have with New Zealanders and showing that we understand what is important for us and our clients. They give us benchmarks to deliver to and communicate what people expect from us. We are committed to strengthening our client-facing service culture and improving our clients' experiences.	Everyone is aware of their roles and responsibilities, in relation to appropriate behaviour at work. This should be discussed with new people during their induction process and, as appropriate, made clear to members of the public interacting with staff at work.	

In Service Delivery *Mahi Tahi* **is underpinning a focus on positive and cooperative performance and development expectations**. This is a strengths-based performance and development approach that focuses on building strong relationships between employees and people leaders (released May 2019). **A refreshed performance and development system** for Ministry staff is under development (release planned for late 2020), which will further reinforce open and positive performance and development expectations of employees and leaders. **Conversations** between people leaders and employees are changing. We are emphasising an authentic and personalised conversation model, where leaders are 'coach like' in their approach to performance and development discussions. Our focus on Strengths and coaching training is supporting people leaders with this change.	Performance expectations and policies are clearly documented and well understood by everyone at work.	
Peer Support networks across MSD are being reinforced and are to be extended into National Office areas (2020). The programme offers assistance on any personal matter affecting staff (in addition to operational matters). The **High Performance High Engagement (HPHE) partnership with PSA** is a new way of working with increased employee participation to improve organisational performance through genuine engagement. An objective for HPHE is to enhance the quality of working life for all our people so MSD is a positive place to work. This approach commenced in late 2019 and is seen as an important supporting function for MSD moving forward. **Diversity and Inclusion** thinking is increasingly informing the way we work, to support higher levels of trust and wellbeing / informing design work for related initiatives: • Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) steering group established • early D&I learning programmes (client focused) were released in late 2019 • the Positive Workplace work programme focus has expanded towards a 'Positive and *Inclusive* workplace culture' – which includes safe and inclusive priorities.		Review peer support networks to ensure both National Office and Regions have access to a network of skilled individuals who are not a manager or peer within their direct team.
Access options provided include STAR (Safety, Threats, Accidents and Risks). STAR (Risk Manager) is MSD's health, safety and security event reporting and management system that was released mid-2019. STAR includes the following features: • reporting of incidents or suspected events of a sensitive nature (sensitive events module) such as stress, bullying, family violence or harassment • a data repository and management tool for health, safety and security events • provides visibility of identified hazards/risks • provides trend analysis reporting and supports management decision-making • is integrated with other MSD systems such as corporate directory, data warehouse and CMS • assists in compliance responsibilities, e.g. Health and Safety at Work Act 2015. Training was provided on STAR when it was released mid-2019. When a sensitive event is lodged (e.g. bullying or harassment), the details for the event are secure and go to a designated Senior Advisor in HR. The advisor will contact the person who logged the event to provide initial support. Employees have the option to choose whether or not their manager will be notified. **Other options** to formally or informally raise these issues include: • manager or one up manager (reinforced through policy and communications), • the AskHR helpdesk, • a colleague, peer support, or Union delegate.	Organisations have a range of informal and formal ways in which they can receive and respond to concerns about inappropriate behaviour at work. People are aware of these options, and of how to access them.	Review the current complaints process, including the avenues through which a complaint can be raised. Consider anonymous reporting, for example through a third party.

	SSC Positive and Safe Workplaces Model Standards	2018 Review Recommendations
MSD's intranet (doogle) provides detailed guidance on access, formal and informal supports for employees and managers.		
When a **sensitive event is lodged in STAR, the details for the event are secure and go to a designated Senior Advisor** in HR. The designated Senior Advisor will contact the person who logged the event to provide initial support. **Sensitive events management** includes a triage and escalation process, providing a complexity and impact lens across situations to ensure that the appropriate level of expertise and support is accessed and provided. A range of supports, including EAP are offered. **The Positive Workplace Steering Group** maintain an active view across the nature and frequency of reported concerns and are assessing the Ministry's response and supports, ensuring that our approach and supports are fit for purpose.	Once a concern is raised, organisations give consideration as to whether they have the skills required to respond appropriately or whether it is necessary to seek external specialist support, for example from sexual abuse support organisations.	Assign neutral people to support both the respondent and complainant, throughout the complaint investigation process in addition to the EAP support employees can access.
HR policies and practices ensure that proportionate disciplinary consequences are used in these cases. The Group General Manager People has accountability to monitor practices and outcomes. The Positive Workplace Behaviours policy and guidelines were approved September 2019. **Natural justice** concepts are incorporated into our policies and guidelines. **Mediation and restorative processes** are embedded within HR practices where appropriate.	There are proportionate disciplinary consequences when inappropriate behaviour at work is confirmed. Natural justice is respected in all instances. Mediation and restorative processes are available for use in appropriate cases.	
Having trusted policies and procedures	**SSC Positive and Safe Workplaces Model Standards**	**2018 Review Recommendations**
Positive Workplace Behaviours Policy and Guidelines were refreshed in 2019 from the previous Workplace Harassment / Bullying policy. The review has included consideration of external guidelines and collateral (e.g. MSD's 2018 review, SSC guidelines, WorkSafe criteria, policies and guideline from other Government agencies). The Policy and Guidelines have been tested with Simpson Grierson (specialists in employment law), PSA and a range MSD employees and managers. **The STAR Sensitive Events tool and process released in 2019** provides all MSD people with the ability to notify incidents of inappropriate workplace behaviour confidentially if they wish (e.g. harassment, bullying, or discrimination). This includes racial or sexual harassment, intimidation, offensive behaviour and aggression from people in our work environment. **Alternative reporting mechanisms** include managers, peers, AskHR, and union delegates, which have been actively promoted through communications and other supporting resourcing. **Wellbeing** is a responsibility for everyone. MSD is committed to the wellbeing of all of our people and delivers this through our Wellbeing	Organisations have clear and easy to understand policies and procedures on appropriate behaviour at work. These contain descriptions of what behaviour is expected. They also explain how to raise concerns and the range of options for resolution that are available. Together the	Refresh the Workplace Harassment / Bullying policy to ensure it is easy to understand and provides a clear stance on these behaviours and then promote on an on-going basis. Review the Workplace Harassment / Bullying policy to ensure roles and expectations for all

approach, provision of information, supports and other specific interventions on Doogle and in the workplace. **EAP / WellNZ contracts** have expanded initial numbers of EAP sessions from three to six as well as an enhanced support available on our intranet (Doogle). The Health, Safety and Security team can arrange support for managers and staff from Benestar and WellNZ when teams are facing significant challenges. **Human Resources Senior Advisors have undergone training** to support the introduction of the policy, practices and other collateral, to ensure they are well equipped to support those within the organisation who require additional support.	policies and procedures provide a logical and consistent framework.	parties involved with formal complaints is clearly identified. Ensure all HR staff are clear on the Workplace Harassment / Bullying policy and the role they have in supporting managers / employees with prevention, complaints, response and support.
The Positive Workplace Behaviours Policy is planned to be reviewed in the final quarter of 2020 (12 months after the initial launch) to assess its effectiveness and to take into consideration other external developments. **MSD Risk Framework** includes organisational risk *Psychosocial Harm to Staff*, which is one of the Ministry's three critical Health Safety and Security risks – this has high visibility through Governance structures. Improving our performance in this area is one of the key controls to mitigate this risk and will contribute to the wellbeing of our people. **Positive Workplace Steering and Reference Groups** (that includes the PSA) are establishing a cross organisational view of priorities and implications which will direct our efforts and focus for the 2020/21 workplan and are ensuring that we effectively embed new practices. **Human Resources Senior Advisors** undertaking investigations are qualified and experienced. **Progress review** (including assessment against SSC Positive and Safe Workplaces Model Standards) is planned for mid-2020	An appropriate mechanism is put in place to ensure that policies are developed and periodically reviewed in a collaborative way with staff.	Build confidence with employees in the investigation process, through consistent management of complaints / investigations. Select investigators based on skills, experience and expertise.
Control Measures to understand the progress MSD is making towards a positive and safe workplace are under development. These will help us understand how effective our policies, processes and culture are, and what further work is needed to maintain them as fit for purpose (e.g. notifications and outcomes via STAR sensitive events). **MSD monitors risk through Governance processes**. Organisational risk *Psychosocial Harm to Staff* includes focus on bullying and harassment, which will continue to be regularly reviewed and oversight provided through our Governance structures.	Organisations regularly evaluate their own performance in preventing inappropriate behaviour and responding to complaints. This may involve gathering data and consulting with people who are particularly affected.	Review the reporting and monitoring mechanisms currently in place to enable HR and the Ministry's Leadership Team to identify areas of concern and evaluate organisational effectiveness.

Jan 17, 2020

Message from Viv - Wellbeing in 2020

Kia ora

Welcome to the new decade – I hope you had a good break, or have one coming up. As we get into what'll be another busy year, it's a good time to think about what we're going to do to keep ourselves well. Now, I'm no expert and I don't always model the best behaviour, but I will try harder this year.

Here's some suggestions for good habits to get into:

- Disconnect: when you're not at work, don't work – those emails can wait. Give your brain a rest, so it's in good shape when you're back in the office.
- Take your breaks. Aim to make the most of summer and get outside during them.
- Walk when you can, whether it's to or from work, taking the stairs rather than the lift or wandering over to see a colleague rather than emailing them.
- Keep connected to the people you care about and, if something's troubling you, seek help early. As well as friends and family, there's our peer supporters, and counsellors available through Need to Talk on 1737 or our Employee Assistance Programme with Benestar.
- Be kind to yourself. Mistakes actually help us become more resilient (and make us human). I have made heaps of mistakes!

There's lots more useful stuff on the Wellbeing@MSD Doogle page.

For me, this year I'm aiming to:

- Try and start a little bit later. Usually I am in before 7, but I'll stay at the gym a bit longer.
- Try and make it home before the sports news!

Now sticking with the changes – that's the challenge!

New year new job

Speaking about doing things differently, now more than any other time of the year is when people think about career changes - January has the highest number of job searches. If that's you, have you thought about making a change within MSD? There are loads of opportunities - secondments, professional development, a new role in a different area, getting a mentor or being a mentor. Doogle has a lot of information to get you started.

Viv Rickard

Acting Chief Executive

Message from Merv - Acknowledging diversity and becoming more inclusive

Hi everyone,

Every day we talk with and support people with diverse backgrounds and situations. Our people also reflect this diversity – it's one of our greatest strengths.

We want to be a trusted and proactive organisation that supports New Zealanders to thrive and reach their potential. We can do this by tailoring our policies, systems and services to better meet the diverse and changing needs of New Zealanders.

It's also important we acknowledge who we are as kaimahi (employees), recognising our diversity and ensuring our workplace is inclusive and respectful.

One of the things that we are doing to better reflect diversity is adding a third gender option to our systems and forms for clients.

From 2 December 2019, clients will be able to choose the gender option they identify with most from male, female and gender diverse.

There's more information about this on Doogle.

We will also be updating MyHR to provide these same options for staff.

We've also created some activities that teams can do to get us thinking about why diversity is so important in helping people to thrive and reach their potential. It's important we take the time to work through these activities within our teams and have meaningful conversations about this topic.

You can find them here.

Acknowledging the diversity of our people and those we support will help us continue to weave mana manaaki into the work we do every day.

Merv Dacre

Associate DCE People and Capability

Message from Stephen - New Positive Workplace Behaviour policy

Hi everyone,

We spend a large amount of time at work together which ideally is an enjoyable and positive experience. While work can be challenging and sometimes we have tough days, the way we work together and support each other helps to make this a positive workplace – it's really all about us as people.

We all have responsibility for how we behave at work, to treat each other with respect and to build great teams in which we can all contribute and be valued. In the Belonging@MSD survey many of you described experiencing mana manaaki, respect and inclusion at work. We also heard that some people feel they are not able to raise concerns.

If there is inappropriate behaviour going on at work which impacts people, then I encourage you to speak up, either on your own behalf or for someone else that may need your support. Don't just put up with it. We want everyone to feel safe and supported to do this and have confidence that the appropriate action will be taken to address any concerns.

The new Positive Workplace Behaviours policy is now available along with guidelines for "What to do about inappropriate behaviour at work". This new policy replaces the old Workplace Harassment and Bullying policy and provides more guidance on inappropriate workplace behaviours and clarifies the expectations and responsibilities we all have. It also provides guidance on support and options available.

If you experience inappropriate behaviour I encourage you to raise this with your manager, a colleague or another manager. If you don't feel you can do that, you can talk confidentially with an advisor in the AskHR team

If you are experiencing bullying or harassment you can report this in STAR (sensitive events) so that you get the support you need and we can address the issue appropriately.

- Positive Workplace Behaviour - addressing harassment and bullying
- Positive Workplace Behaviour policy
- A guide for what to do about inappropriate behaviour at work
- Acting in the Spirit of Service – Positive and Safe Workplaces Model Standards – State Services Commission

Regards

Stephen Crombie
DCE Corporate Solutions

Message from Debbie - Kōrero Mai, Kōrero Atu, Mauri Tū, Mauri Ora

Kia ora koutou,

It's Pink Shirt Day this Friday – Kōrero Mai, Kōrero Atu, Mauri Tū, Mauri Ora – Speak Up, Stand Together, Stop Bullying!

I'll be wearing a pink shirt (even though pink isn't really my favourite colour) and I'm looking forward to celebrating it with our people in Hamilton when I'm up there next Friday.

Pink Shirt Day aims to reduce bullying in New Zealand by celebrating diversity in all its forms and supporting workplaces, communities and schools to be safe, supportive, welcoming and inclusive of all people.

Experiencing mana manaaki at work

It's really important to me that here at MSD we have an environment where everyone experiences mana manaaki and we treat each other with respect, openness and fairness.

Our recent Belonging@MSD survey has helped us to understand how diverse and inclusive we are as an organisation. The results are being collated and will be available on Doogle in a couple of weeks' time.

Many of you have described experiencing mana manaaki, respect and inclusion at work. But, we have also received feedback that tells us we need to make it safer for people to raise concerns.

I want you to speak up – we will support you

In recent months an across-MSD working group, including the PSA, has put a lot of work into strengthening our Workplace Harassment and Bullying policies, systems and processes. A new Positive Workplace Behaviours policy and guide will be rolled out shortly – along with a programme of activities.

This will include support and encouragement for people to report inappropriate behaviour, resources and educational material, and training for managers and staff.

If you experience bullying, harassment or discrimination I want you to speak up – and you can be confident that we will listen to your concerns, be respectful and take action – your safety is our priority.

Please talk to your manager or you can talk confidentially with an advisor in the AskHR team S 9(2)(k)

New way to report inappropriate behaviour

Our new 'STAR' (Safety, Threats, Accidents and Risks) health and safety reporting system will provide you with another way to confidentially report inappropriate behaviour and other sensitive issues. It's replacing the existing SOSHI system.

We have two sites going live in the next couple of weeks and you'll hear more about it before it's fully launched on 22 July. I can assure you that your information will remain confidential, secure and it can only be accessed by a small group of specialist advisors.

I'm looking forward to seeing lots of pink shirts next Friday – and seeing your photos on the Pink Shirt Doogle page!

Let's work together to make MSD the best place to work!

Debbie

Chief Executive

Message from Brendan – Keeping well

13 September 2018.

Kia ora koutou

I am writing to you today about personal wellness and to encourage you to continue to look after yourselves and others.

I am very conscious that there are times when work or personal pressures can impact on you and your well-being, and I want to make sure that you know where you can go for support or assistance if you feel you need it.

Please do talk with your manager when times are tough or you may prefer to chat with a colleague. We also offer support through our Employee Assistance Programme. There are other resources available to help you stay well and manage pressure when it comes. I would encourage you to take a look at these resources:

- Well-being gateway - tools and information
- Keeping healthy and safe in the workplace and your wellbeing
- Psychosocial support in times of work or home pressures

Your wellness is important - it's not always easy to ask for help, but I'd encourage you to reach out to others if you need support.

Ngā mihi
Brendan

Message from Stephen – Zero tolerance to sexual harassment

03 September 2018.

Hi everyone

Many of you will have seen the story in yesterday's Sunday Star Times about sexual harassment in the public sector in New Zealand which included information relating to MSD.

On behalf of the Leadership Team, I want to reassure you that we take the safety, security and wellbeing of our staff very seriously. We have zero tolerance for this kind of behaviour in our workplace.

It is important we all understand what is acceptable behaviour and are willing to be accountable – and to hold others to account – for the way we behave. We will be developing resources to help with this. We have very clear expectations in our Code of Conduct and Positive Workplace Behaviour policy.

The Leadership Team is determined that MSD has a culture in which people feel they can speak up and be confident that action will be taken when they do. We have been proactively working on strengthening our approach to harassment, both in terms of the Workplace Harassment policy, but also the systems and processes that surround the policy.

As part of this we asked consultancy firm *HumanKind* to carry out a Bullying and Harassment Discovery in which they talked to a wide range of people across the organisation to assess MSD's current environment. They have made a number of recommendations for improvement which we will be following up on.

It is very disappointing when these cases arise. However, I want to assure you that appropriate action was taken in relation to the claims mentioned in the article and the people involved were fully supported by MSD both during and after the investigation.

We encourage you to come forward if you feel you have been harassed or bullied. We guarantee you will be listened to, it will be appropriately followed up and you will get the support you need.

Whilst your manager is the usual first point of contact. if you feel you cannot raise this with your manager you can talk confidentially with an advisor in the AskHR team S 9(2)(a)   Your discussion will not be recorded in your myHR.

Regards

Stephen Crombie
DCE Corporate Solutions

Positive Workplace Behaviours Policy – Addressing Harassment and Bullying

Last Review Date:	21 August 2019
Next Review Date:	21 August 2020
Approved by:	[Governance Committee; month; year]
Owner:	Human Resources

Purpose

MSD's aim is for our people to work in a positive environment free from bullying, discrimination and all forms of harassment. This policy outlines the workplace behaviours, expectations and responsibilities for our people, as well as the support and options available for dealing with inappropriate behaviour.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees who work in the business of MSD, whether they experience inappropriate behaviour by another employee, contractor, visitor, volunteer or member of the public.

This policy applies to workplace behaviours at work and all work-related events, including social activities and those not held on MSD premises. It also applies to inappropriate behaviour towards a colleague or client on social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, text, etc).

Inappropriate workplace behaviour includes any form of harassment, bullying, or discrimination. It includes racial or sexual harassment, intimidation, offensive behaviour or aggression from people in our work environment.

Building a safe and supportive work environment

We expect all people working at MSD to treat each other with respect and courtesy, and behave consistently with MSD values and our Code of Conduct.

All of our people should feel safe and supported at work, and everyone should feel comfortable being themselves.

We encourage all our people to:

- **Show mana manaaki** and look after the dignity of people
- **Speak up** if you notice inappropriate behaviour, bullying, harassment or discrimination
- **Speak out** if someone does something that makes you feel uncomfortable, or that is inconsistent with our Code of Conduct
- **Be open and honest** with each other
- **Look out** for and take care of each other
- **Check in** if something doesn't seem right.

Our psychological wellbeing is as important as our physical safety. We have resources available through the Wellbeing page.

Supporting positive workplace behaviours

The following examples show some of the behaviours which contribute to (or inhibit) a positive work environment.

	Contribute (appropriate)	Inhibit (inappropriate)
Diversity	Embracing and valuing differences in each other; people sharing their cultures, being comfortable in doing this	Making fun/telling jokes relating to different cultures, beliefs, gender, physical abilities or perspectives
Value Opinions	Listening; reflecting; providing constructive feedback	Ignoring; not acknowledging; belittling ideas; taking credit for others ideas
Respect	Being polite and considerate; treating others as you want to be treated	Ridiculing; talking over someone; condescending; breaking promises
Individuals	Valuing diversity; encouraging individualism of thought; listening to ideas	Excluding individuals from group discussions/activities; ridiculing ideas; not allowing individual opinion; misuse of power; not acknowledging others; favouritism
Teams	Celebrating joint work achievements; acknowledging	Being disrespectful about other work groups; undermining others;

	contributions across business groups; supporting ministry goals	blaming other work groups
Organisational Initiatives	Engaging constructively and with an open mind to change	Making derogatory or undermining remarks; refusing to engage in implementing approved plans
Code of Conduct	Setting expected behaviours, practices and responsibilities; reinforcing standards through role modelling	Not addressing behaviours that are contradictory (or breach) the Code of Conduct

Key Principles: Acceptable Behaviour

We need to be considerate in all of our dealings with colleagues and clients to ensure our behaviour is acceptable and appropriate. What is perceived acceptable behaviour to one person may not be viewed the same way to someone else. What is acceptable behaviour can be different for people due to our different backgrounds, experiences, or beliefs.

Additional details on appropriate behaviour can be found in MSD's Code of Conduct, which reflects the State Services Standards of Integrity and Conduct: fair, impartial, responsible and trustworthy.

Key Principles: Inappropriate Behaviour

What people consider inappropriate behaviour may also differ from one person to another. Unreasonable behaviour is defined by WorkSafe as actions that a reasonable person in the same circumstances would see as unreasonable.

MSD values provide guidance on how we should behave with our clients and colleagues. We are expected to be considerate and caring, to work with integrity and show respect for all people in our work environment.

How to raise concerns about inappropriate workplace behaviour

If you feel you have experienced or observed inappropriate workplace behaviour there are a number of ways for you to raise your concerns. How you do this will depend on how you feel, the circumstances and how serious the behaviour is.

- If you have observed general inappropriate behaviour (e.g. behaviour that is not as serious as harassment, bullying or discrimination but still impacts people in a negative way) you can raise this directly with the person, through a peer or support person, your manager or another manager (see Resolving issues - General inappropriate behaviour below)
- If you feel harassed, bullied or discriminated against, speak with your immediate manager.
- If you feel unable to raise your concerns with your immediate manager, talk to another manager.
- If these options aren't suitable, contact AskHR. They will listen to your concerns and refer you to appropriate support and a manager for follow up. AskHR can be reached via extension S 9(2)(k)
- You can use STAR (Health & Safety reporting tool) which contains a module for sensitive events to report harassment, bullying or discrimination. A HR Advisor will then contact you, discuss your concerns and refer you to appropriate support and a manager for follow up.
- You can seek support from a peer, support person or a union delegate.

Resolving issues

General inappropriate behaviour

People may not be aware that their behaviour is considered inappropriate by others, or the impact it has. This can include individual or team behaviour. Providing feedback on how you perceive the behaviour, how it impacts you or others, listening and clarifying understanding can lead to finding constructive ways to resolve issues. It is better to address issues early in a constructive way than for things to escalate and become more significant.

- If you feel safe doing so, you can raise the issue in an appropriate way directly with the other person (e.g. a private conversation)
- You can seek support from a peer, support person or a union delegate to help raise the issue
- You can talk to your manager

Harassment, bullying or discrimination

MSD encourages people who experience harassment, bullying or discrimination to take action to try to stop the behaviour and prevent it happening again.

There are a number of ways to resolve an issue or instance of inappropriate behaviour. Informal approaches are generally preferable because they help maintain a positive working relationship.

Ways to resolve issues include:

- Resolve it yourself – for example, where you speak directly to the person involved and request they stop the behaviour that is viewed as inappropriate

- Informal intervention – for example, if you ask a colleague, union delegate or manager to raise the matter with the person involved
- Facilitated discussion (e.g. mediation) - having an independent third party act as facilitator in either an informal or formal setting to discuss and resolve the issue
- Formal complaint and investigation – an HR Consultant or external investigator works with the manager to investigate the complaint
- External processes (such as lodging a complaint with the Human Rights Commission, seeking resolution through an external mediator, or lodging a personal grievance).

Additional information on what to do about inappropriate behaviour at work can be found in MSD's Positive Workplace Behaviour Guide (link).

The Outcome(s)

The outcome(s) depends on the seriousness, circumstances and impact of the behaviour. Potential outcomes may include:

- An apology (in person or written) to the person who was subjected to the inappropriate behaviour or wider team
- Coaching or training to address certain behaviour
- Counselling
- Agreement to work or behave in a different manner
- An investigation that could result in formal disciplinary action such as a warning or dismissal in the case of serious misconduct.
- Other outcomes that are appropriate in the circumstances.

Where allegations are not substantiated, it may still be appropriate to undertake some action, for example communications training.

Malicious or vexatious complaints

If an employee makes a complaint, it will be assumed that they genuinely believe they have witnessed or been subject to inappropriate behaviour.

MSD cares about the wellbeing of all our people which means we will support all employees involved in an allegation of inappropriate behaviour. Where, through an investigation, it is found that a complaint has been made with a malicious or vexatious intent, this will be treated seriously and could lead to disciplinary action. However, just because a complaint is not upheld does not mean that it is vexatious or malicious.

Responsibilities

Person/Party	Responsibilities
MSD	MSD is committed to being a good employer and providing a safe working environment where all staff are treated fairly and with respect. MSD will: • monitor workplace behaviour as outlined in the Monitoring and Reporting section of this policy • provide our people with guidance to comply with the policy • promote the policy including posting it on Doogle • not tolerate any form of workplace harassment, bullying or discrimination • treat all concerns raised seriously and sensitively • take all reasonable steps to prevent workplace harassment, bullying or discrimination • provide a range of methods to resolve issues raised • promote informal solutions before formal actions, where appropriate • ensure any real or perceived risk of retaliation or harm is assessed and steps taken to prevent or reduce the risk • manage concerns raised promptly and fairly, taking into account the nature of the concern and all relevant circumstances • provide information and support to all employees involved in a formal complaint investigation.
Managers	It is the responsibility of all our people to promote and maintain a work environment free of inappropriate behaviour and to behave in a manner that is respectful of others. Managers will: • ensure they are familiar with the policies and guidelines and guide their people on their use • ensure the wider organisational responsibilities as outlined above are met • take time to listen to their people and understand the impact language and behaviour has on people • listen and empower people to support engagement and improve team dynamics • be responsible for intervening early to call out and address inappropriate behaviour before it escalates • seek support from HR Consultants on how to record, process and investigate concerns and complaints • make sure issues raised are managed sensitively, promptly, fairly and without discrimination • support the wellbeing of their team

Person/Party	Responsibilities
	- meet our good employer and health and safety responsibilities - make appropriate decisions within their delegations or recommendations to the appropriate delegated person - consult their 'one up' manager for more serious issues. **Mental Health Condition:** It is important that where a mental health condition may be a factor, managers reference to MSD's guidance on managing performance issues that may result from the mental health condition. Prior to any action being taken, such as talking to, meeting with or writing to an employee, managers must seek advice from the HR Consultancy team.
All employees	All employees are responsible for ensuring that they become familiar with the terms of this policy and expectations for behaviour. Employees are also responsible for ensuring that they behave appropriately and do not breach this policy.
Employee raising concerns that they have been subject to inappropriate behaviour	Speak out – speaking out is about having courage to raise an issue but also about seeking help. Employees are responsible for: - telling their manager (or another manager) if you experience or see inappropriate behaviour - documenting the details of any incidents, detailing when, where, what occurred, and witnesses (if any) - being prepared to try informal solutions and follow MSD's informal and formal processes.
Employee/s who witness inappropriate behaviour	Speak up, look out for and take care of each other. All employees play a part in ensuring MSD maintains a safe work environment for all its people. If you see a colleague behaving inappropriately or undermining positive workplace behaviours, take action by either saying something to that person or promptly raising it with a manager.
Employee subject to allegation of inappropriate behaviour	Listen to what is being said. Reflect and consider how another person may have interpreted your action or words. Try not to be defensive. Seek support. This can help address any behaviour that needs to change, or help get past an allegation that isn't substantiated.

Person/Party	Responsibilities
	Take responsibility for any behaviour that is seen as inappropriate. Make genuine efforts to change that behaviour.
Health and Safety / HR	The type of behaviour considered inappropriate will determine which part of MSD provides support to help managers address concerns. This may fall into the responsibility of the Health Safety and Security team and/or HR. The relevant group will: • provide advice on process • help resolve the issue • work with agencies such as Worksafe, Mediation Services, Employment Relations Authority. The support will be professional, fair and courteous to all involved.
Human Resources (HR)	If people feel unable to raise their concerns with their immediate manager or 'one up' manager, they can contact AskHR who will listen to the concern and refer to: • appropriate support • an appropriate manager and/or HR Consultant for follow-up. HR Consultants are available to support and provide advice to managers to work through concerns.

Definitions

Inappropriate Behaviour	Definition and Examples
Workplace Harassment	Workplace harassment is unwanted and unprovoked behaviour that is offensive, intimidating or humiliating to another person. It is either repetitive or of such a significant nature that it has a detrimental effect on a person's dignity, safety or sense of wellbeing. Workplace harassment may be unwelcome and offensive behaviour towards an employee by: • another employee(s), • a contractor or consultant with MSD, • a client or volunteer of MSD.

	Examples of workplace harassment or bullying could include: • repeated, unfounded criticism in front of colleagues • the use of offensive language • isolating an employee (e.g. not including someone in workplace activities that all employees in a similar position can expect to be involved in) • withholding information to ensure an employee fails to achieve a given task • making derogatory and frequent inappropriate comments about an employee's appearance or dress • spreading malicious rumours or insulting an employee by word or action • overbearing supervision • misuse of power or position. **Note**: the above list is not complete. Workplace harassment and bullying can take many forms.
Bullying	Bullying is characterised by repeated and persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour. It is repeated, intentional and unreasonable behaviour towards an employee or a group of employees that can lead to physical or psychological harm. • Repeated behaviour is persistent (occurs more than once and can involve a range of actions over time) • Unreasonable behaviour as defined by WorkSafe means actions that a reasonable person in the same circumstances would see as unreasonable. It includes victimising, humiliating, intimidating and threatening a person • Bullying may also include harassment, discrimination or violence. Bullying can be physical, verbal or social (e.g. excluding someone from a peer group or spreading rumours) Common bullying behaviours fit in two main categories: • direct and personal or • indirect and task-related.
Discrimination	When a person is disadvantaged on the grounds of gender, marital status, religious or ethical beliefs, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, political opinion, employment status, family status or sexual orientation.
Sexual Harassment	Sexual harassment is unwelcome or offensive verbal or physical behaviour of a sexual nature that is repeated or is significant enough to have a harmful effect on an individual's employment, job performance or job satisfaction. Unwelcome means behaviours that are unwanted, and are regarded by a person on the receiving end as undesirable or offensive at the time.

	Behaviour includes the use of language (written or spoken), visual material, or physical behaviour, and includes requests of a sexual nature to an employee (directly or indirectly) that contain an implied or overt promise of preferential treatment or threat of detrimental treatment
	Examples of sexual harassment may include: • offensive gestures or verbal comments • unwanted and deliberate physical contact • unwelcome comments, questions about an employee's sexual activities, orientation or private life • sexual propositions or requests for dates, especially after prior refusal • continued unwelcome social invitations, phone calls or texts from a work colleague or a client • display of pictures, screensavers or other material of a sexual nature • sexual behaviour such as leering or staring at an employee's body • unwelcome sexual or smutty jokes • offensive email messages or texts • suggestions for preferential treatment at work in return for sexual favours • threats or suggestions of a negative impact on an employee's position if favours are not granted. **Note**: the above list is not complete. Sexual harassment can take many forms.
Racial Harassment	Racial harassment includes the use of language (written or spoken), visual material, or physical behaviour that directly or indirectly: • expresses hostility against, or ridicules any employee on the grounds of their colour, race, ethnic or national origins • either by its nature or through repetition is hurtful, humiliating, intimidating or offensive to an employee • has a negative impact on an employee. Examples of racial harassment include: • making offensive remarks or jokes about a person's race • mimicking the way a person speaks • calling people racist names • deliberately pronouncing people's names incorrectly. **Note**: the above list is not complete. Racial harassment can take many forms.

What is NOT harassment/bullying/discrimination?

The following examples are <u>not</u> considered to be workplace harassment or bullying:

- one-off instances of forgetfulness, rudeness or tactlessness
- a single incident of unreasonable behaviour (unless of such significant nature to have a detrimental effect on dignity, safety or wellbeing)
- mutually acceptable friendly banter, light-hearted exchanges, jokes and compliments
- friendships, sexual or otherwise, where both people consent to the relationship
- requiring lawful and reasonable work instructions to be carried out
- warning or disciplining someone in line with MSD policy
- setting reasonable and fair standards of performance in terms of quality, safety and team cooperation
- giving legitimate constructive feedback, including in a performance appraisal, and requiring justified performance improvement
- differences in opinion or personality clashes that do not escalate into bullying or harassment
- assertively expressing opinions different from others.

Just because an incident or behaviour would not be classified as bullying, harassment or discrimination doesn't mean that it shouldn't be addressed. It may still be appropriate to raise and have something which is considered a one-off inappropriate behaviour/event addressed.

Monitoring and Reporting

MSD will monitor and review indicators of positive working environments and inappropriate behaviours such as workplace harassment and bullying complaints, exit interviews, staff engagement and culture surveys.

Confidentiality

Information will be kept confidential where possible. Respecting privacy and confidentiality helps resolve matters effectively and ensures we are demonstrating mana manaaki.

If you want to make a complaint, then the person who is accused of inappropriate behaviour has the right to know what the concerns are and to respond to them.

Information may need to be disclosed to other parties if there is a risk of harm to a person or to uphold the maintenance of the law.

Related policies / additional information

Further guidance is available for employees who believe they have been harassed or bullied and for managers involved in carrying out a formal investigation of a complaint of harassment or bullying.

- Positive Workplace Behaviour Guide - What to do about inappropriate behaviour at work
- Positive Workplace Behaviour - guide for formally investigating a complaint of workplace harassment or bullying

Other information that may be useful:

- MSD Code of Conduct
- Work and Income – Professional supervision services
- Wellbeing page on Doogle
- Safe to Talk helpline
- Managers Toolkit: Leading after Traumatic or Critical Incidents
- Preventing and Responding to Workplace Bullying guidance by WorkSafe NZ
- Bullying prevention toolbox by WorkSafe NZ
- Acting in the Spirit of Service – Positive and Safe Workplaces Model Standards – State Services Commission – August 2019

What to do about inappropriate behaviour at work (including harassment or bullying)

Inappropriate behaviour at work (including harassment or bullying)

At MSD we want to work in a place free from bullying, discrimination and all forms of harassment. That's why we don't put up with inappropriate behaviour. We don't put up with it from each other. We don't put up with it from managers. We don't put up with it from clients. It's hard to show mana manaaki and look after the dignity of people with warmth, respect, compassion, openness and fairness if you don't feel looked after and respected yourself. Unfortunately, inappropriate behaviour does sometimes happen and when it does, we're there to support our people.

We'll work with our people to resolve issues and make sure they feel safe and supported at work. We want to be part of an organisation where people are open, honest and non-judgmental; where we treat each other with respect, consideration and civility; and where if an issue comes up, it's managed effectively and fairly.

To maintain a positive and supportive workplace environment, we'll make sure:

- our people are supported and able to raise issues
- our people are confident issues are taken seriously and will be managed in a sensitive and timely way
- we create a safe work environment where people can express themselves without judgement
- our people aren't at risk of retaliation or disadvantaged by raising a concern. We'll assess each situation and take steps to prevent or reduce any risks
- our people can get independent and confidential assistance through EAP or other employee support and a variety of internal wellbeing resources
- our managers lead by example as role models of positive workplace behaviour
- we encourage resolution that supports and maintains working relationships wherever possible

What is inappropriate workplace behaviour?

Inappropriate workplace behaviour includes any form of harassment, bullying, or discrimination. It includes racial or sexual harassment, intimidation, offensive behaviour and aggression from people in our work environment.

For a full description of harassment and bullying, including examples, see MSD's Positive Workplace Behaviour Policy.

People have different ideas about what is and isn't appropriate behaviour at work. However, if someone or a group of people at work are acting in a way that is having a negative impact on your wellbeing, or work, it should be addressed.

What to do

Regardless of whether it is you directly involved, or if you have seen someone acting inappropriately to another person, tell your manager as soon as possible. If that is not appropriate, feel free to approach your manager's manager, colleague or a peer support person.

Write down your concerns, including details of what happened and when. Include times, dates, places and what was said or done. Keep any emails, voicemails or other examples that support the complaint.

At MSD, we'll work with our people to address inappropriate behaviour whenever it is reported. What action happens depends on the situation, what outcome you are wanting and the individual circumstances.

Options may include:

- resolving it yourself
- informal intervention
- facilitated discussion
- support for all parties[1]
- referral to appropriate support services
- formal complaint and investigation
- external complaint process
- risk assessment of your workplace, with suggestions for improvement

Where possible, we'll work with you to resolve the issue informally. You can seek independent advice at any stage.

The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is also available at any stage to provide confidential counseling and additional support – www.benestar.com They can help you by livechat, on the phone, email or face to face.

Wellbeing at MSD

Resolve it yourself

Sometimes people may not realise their behaviour is inappropriate. If you feel comfortable dealing with this yourself you can let the person know their behaviour is unwelcome or offensive and needs to stop. This allows the problem to be kept informal and for them to change their behaviour. You can:

- Talk to the person to let them know their behaviour is inappropriate or how it makes you feel. Let them know you would like it to stop. You can have a support person with you.

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[1] Both physical and psychosocial support

- Write a private letter or email asking the person to stop behaving in the way you find inappropriate.

You should not approach someone directly about their behaviour if by doing so you would feel unsafe or threatened in any way.

Principles of how to talk to a person whose behaviour has a negative impact on you

- Ask to speak with them in private
- Make sure you feel calm before the meeting
- Avoid being judgemental, aggressive or critical
- Talk about the behaviour that bothers you (not the person) and explain how this makes you feel
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help this behaviour to stop and listen to their side of the story

If you feel you need some coaching prior to having this difficult conversation, feel free to phone a Benestar coach S 9(2)(k) – you can explain the situation in detail and they can guide you through the process as well as debriefing you afterwards.

Informal Intervention

You may prefer to ask someone else to intervene on your behalf informally, either through a manager or support person. A manager working to resolve an issue can seek support from an HR Consultant. They'll make sure your complaint is taken seriously, managed with impartiality and resolved in as timely a manner as possible. They'll listen to your needs and handle the matter in a sensitive way.

You will be given an opportunity to describe the events, the impact they have had and how you would like the issue resolved.

The other person/group involved will also have the opportunity to present their perspective.

If you and the other person/group agree about what will resolve the issue, you can arrange this between you and those involved, making sure the outcome is approved by the appropriate delegated person where necessary.

Informal intervention:

- allows you to be heard
- helps clarify what you would like to happen (including no further action if that's what you want)
- provides advice and additional support, as well as different approaches that might be effective
- is less intimidating for both the person raising the concern and the person the complaint is about
- allows for informal and confidential discussions with those directly involved
- can resolve issues faster and informally, reducing the pressure of more formal processes
- gives more local input into the outcomes

Facilitated Discussion

In some circumstances, a facilitated discussion may be an option. A facilitated discussion is where an independent person helps resolve an issue in a semi-formal and confidential environment. The aim is for both the person raising the concern and the person the complaint is about to reach an agreement to resolve the issue.

Facilitated discussions are appropriate if other forms of informal intervention have failed to resolve the issue. HR Consultants can give advice and assistance about the process. Both parties need to agree to attend a facilitated discussion.

Formal Complaint and Investigation

If things can't be resolved by talking to the other person directly, informally or through facilitated discussion, you can make a formal complaint. This may be because the allegations are very serious or the working relationship has broken down.

You'll need to make a written complaint that details:

- Who the complaint is about
- What has happened
- When and where the inappropriate behaviour has happened
- Whether anyone else witnessed the behaviour; and
- What you would like to see happen as a result of the complaint.

You'll need to give enough detail so the person accused of inappropriate behaviour can respond to the complaint.

After making the formal complaint, the manager you went to with your concerns will decide if a formal investigation is needed after speaking to an HR Consultant. They'll consider all information and take all reasonable steps to address inappropriate behaviour and prevent harassment and bullying reoccurring.

In the event that a formal investigation is needed, the investigator will gather the facts and determine whether inappropriate behaviour has occurred. You can refer to the guide to formally investigate a complaint for an outline of that process.

For more information on the formal investigation process go to MSD's Positive Workplace Behaviour - guide for formally investigating a complaint of workplace harassment or bullying.

External complaint process

Your safety is our primary concern. If you believe you've been the victim of a criminal offence or it's an allegation of assault or serious intimidation, you should seek independent legal advice and also consider reporting this to the police.

You may be able to seek outside assistance by:

- lodging a complaint with the Human Rights Commission under the Human Rights Act 1993; or
- raising a personal grievance under the Employment Relations Act 2000 within 90 days of the incident occurring.
- lodging a complaint through the protected disclosures regime (see MSD's Protected Disclosure policy for more information)
- referring the problem to WorkSafe New Zealand
- referring the problem to an external mediator for resolution

Support

There's a variety of support for you and managers to assist throughout the process, within MSD and externally:

Internal resources:

- Your manager, another manager or a colleague you trust

- EAP (Benestar – www.benestar.com) – counselling, coaching, support

- Peer support person

- Wellbeing Doogle page

- Local union delegate

- HR Consultant (support for managers)

External resources:

- Need to talk (Free call or text 1737)

- The Depression Helpline (0800 111 757)

- Lifeline (0800 543 354)

- www.depression.org.nz (free text 4202)

- www.skylight.org.nz (grief, loss and trauma support)

- www.griefcentre.org.nz (support, advice and counselling)

- Alcohol and drug helpline (0800 787 797 or free text 8681)

- OUTLine (sexuality and gender; 0800 688 5463)

- www.mentalhealth.org.nz

- Safe to Talk (Sexual harm/violence, 0800 044 334, text 4334)

- Suicide Crisis Helpline (0508 828 865)

- Healthline 0800 61 11 16

- SHINE (Domestic abuse helpline 0508 74 46 33)

- Netsafe – www.netsafe.org.nz (online bullying help)

- Mensline (0800 63 67 54)

- Parent Helpline 0800 56 88 56

Other useful resources:

Positive Workplace Behaviour Policy

Positive Workplace Behaviour – guide to formally investigate a complaint of workplace harassment or bullying

Personal Grievance Policy

Traumatic Incident Management Guidelines for Managers

Respecting others

As a Ministry staff member you need to make sure you respect the rights of other people, all the time. This includes any client, colleague or member of the public.
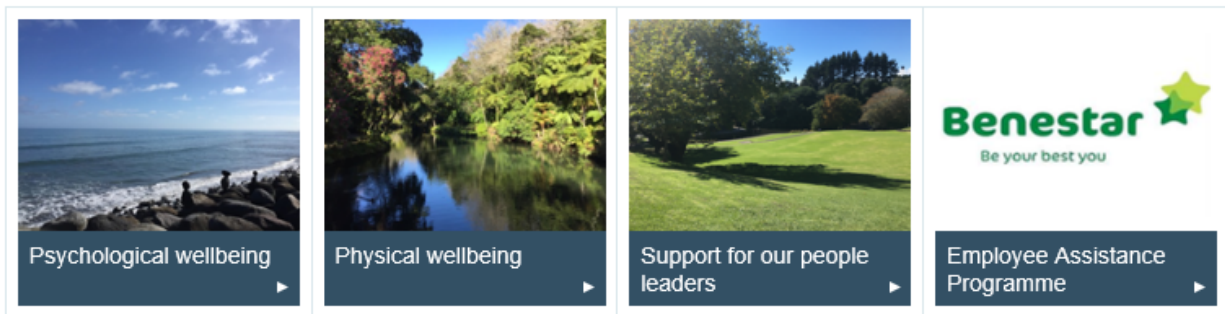
In particular, you must:

- ensure any workplace relationships with colleagues don't have a negative effect on your work
- respect others' dignity and worth
- not bring anything to work that could be seen as offensive to any person or group of people
- always be professional and unbiased in the work you do, or the advice you give
- be fair and unbiased, no matter who you are dealing with
- not bully, intimidate or threaten others
- remember that everyone has the right to privacy and confidentiality
- avoid acting in a way that could upset people, or cause harm or disruption
- make sure you don't abuse your position at the Ministry, or any power delegated to you in your role.

We understand that sometimes you may need to do something as part of your role that conflicts with your personal beliefs. If you find yourself in this position, talk to your manager. They will be able to discuss this with you and help you find the right solution.

Wellbeing@MSD

The Ministry is committed to the wellbeing of all our people. Everybody in the Ministry has a responsibility for workplace wellbeing and we support our people to take steps to maximise their own wellbeing. On this page you'll find relevant resources and support to help you keep healthy and well. Click on the tiles below to find out more.

Psychological wellbeing ►	Physical wellbeing ►	Support for our people leaders ►	**Benestar** Be your best you — Employee Assistance Programme ►

» Wellbeing Newsletters

Our Wellbeing page offers support and resources for all of our people to help cope with stress, unexpected events, trauma or anything else that may affect your psychological and/or physical wellness. The wellbeing resources include information on how to deal with specific issues, how to self-manage and where to go for internal and external support.

If you have any questions about Wellbeing or anything on this page, please get in touch with us at S 9(2)(k)

BeneHub Wellbeing Portal

BeneHub Wellbeing Portal

BeneHub - The always-on, always accessible resource that lets you take charge of your own wellbeing with access to information, resources and to book appointments with a Benestar counsellor.

Click the logo to login to BeneHub. You will need these details for your first login:
S 9(2)(k)

You'll then need to enter your details to set up a personal log on. Once you have a log on, you'll also be able to access the Benestar app (search Benestar in your app store).

If you need support

If you are finding it difficult to cope, feel stressed or under pressure:

- Talk to your manager if you are comfortable doing so. This could be about the demands on you at work, working conditions, control over how and when work is done, support and resources available, as well as your own healthy lifestyle behaviours and how these could help in reducing stress.

- Contact the Ministry's EAP provider.

- Talk to a peer supporter.

- Some roles may also qualify for Professional Supervision to help you with your day to day work.

- Look after yourself with good self-care during times of stress by taking breaks, exercising, eating healthy and having good sleep patterns. Please see the self-care factsheet.

- Keep in regular contact with your GP.

Wellbeing External Support

Service	Description	Text	Phone	Website
Need to talk	We're here. Free call or text 1737 any time, 24 hours a day. You'll get to talk to (or text with) a trained counsellor. Our service is completely free.	1737	1737	www.1737.org.nz
Family Violence Line	It is OK to ask for helpIt's OK to help if you are worried someone is living with family violence.		0800 456 450	www.areyouok.org.nz
Parenting Helpline			0800 568 856	www.parenthelp.org.nz
The Depression Helpline			0800 111 757	www.depression.org.nz
Lifeline			0800 543 354	www.lifeline.org.nz
The lowdown	Sometimes life's ups and downs are more than just the usual ups and downs. If you're stuck feeling bad we'll help you figure out if it could be *anxiety* or *depression*. Whatever's going on you'll find ideas and people who can help you get unstuck.	5626	0800 111 757	www.thelowdown.co.nz
Depression.org.nz		4202	0800 111 757	www.depression.org.nz
Skylight			0800 299 100	www.skylight.org.nz
Grief Centre				www.griefcentre.org.nz
Alcohol and Drug helpline		8681	0800 787 797	www.alcoholdrughelp.org.nz
OUTLine			0800 6885463	www.outline.org.nz
Women's refuge			0800 733 843	www.womensrefuge.org.nz
Mental Health				www.mentalhealth.org.nz
Safe to Talk		4334	0800 044 334	www.safetotalk.nz
Suicide Crisis Helpline	The Suicide Crisis Helpline is a free, nationwide service available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and is operated by highly trained and experienced telephone counsellors who have undergone advanced suicide prevention training.		0508 828 865	www.lifeline.org.nz
Healthline			0800 611 116	www.health.govt.nz
SHINE			0508 744 633	www.2shine.org.nz
Parent Helpline			0800 568 856	www.parenthelp.org.nz
ThisWayUp				www.thiswayup.org.au
Head Space				www.headspace.com
Buddhify				www.buddhify.com
CALM	Computer Assisted Learning for the Mind.			www.calm.auckland.ac.nz
Samaritans			0800 726 666	www.samaritans.org.nz
Youthline			0800 376 633	www.youthline.co.nz
Age Concern				www.ageconcern.org.nz
Carers NZ			0800 376 633	www.carers.net.nz
Dementia Caregivers support				www.helpguide.org
Men's Health NZ				www.menshealthnz.org.nz
Health Navigator				www.healthnavigator.org.nz
Mental Health Foundation				www.mentalhealth.org.nz
Health App Library				www.healthnavigator.org.nz
Maori Health				www.healthnavigator.org.nz
Maori Health Models				www.health.govt.nz
Sparklers	Sparklers is an online toolkit developed to help support and promote the mental wellbeing of school children and is available free to anyone nationwide			www.sparklers.org.nz

Equality and Diversity Commitment

Equality and Diversity Commitment

MSD is committed to being a good employer and applying the principles of equal employment opportunities. This page outlines the values of equal employment opportunities and what these mean for both staff and the Ministry.

The Ministry of Social Development is committed to:

- promoting equality and diversity within a positive work culture that is based on respect, fairness and valuing of individual difference
- enhancing work practices and performance that integrate diverse perspectives
- complying with all relevant equality legislation, Government strategies and policies, and best practice guidelines

Scope

- This commitment applies to all employment practices at the Ministry and to all Ministry employees (permanent, fixed term, temporary and casual), people applying for employment (including potential applicants) at the Ministry and contractors.

Critical Success Factors

Our commitment will be demonstrated by the Ministry of Social Development:

- leaders valuing and promoting equality and diversity
- strategic and operational plans incorporating equality and diversity
- diverse workforce being capable to deliver MSD's purpose and principles
- employment practices recognising equity, and ensuring equal opportunity for participation
- promoting respect and fairness
- advancing the aspirations of Māori and Pacific staff in accordance with the Māori and Pacific People strategies, and disabled staff in accordance with Disability strategies
- promoting and supporting work / life balance

Definitions

Equality and diversity means:

- treating people fairly and with respect, ensuring equality of access to opportunities (equality)
- understanding, appreciating and realising the benefits of individual differences (diversity)

Related Guidelines

- Promoting equality and diversity
- Accommodating diversity in the workplace

Legislation and Reference Documents

- Employment Relations Act 2000
- Human Rights Act 1993
- Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992
- NZ Bill of Rights Act 1990
- State Sector Act 1988
- Parental Leave and Protection of Employment Act 1987
- Equal Pay Act 1972
- Equality and Diversity - New Zealand Public Service Equal Employment Opportunity Policy 2008
- New Zealand Disability Strategy 2000
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Diversity and Inclusion at MSD

On this page you will find information about Diversity and Inclusion at MSD, including what we want to achieve and the details of our work programme.

Our aspiration for Diversity and Inclusion at MSD

We want to be a trusted and proactive organisation that supports New Zealanders to thrive by tailoring our policies, systems and services to people's diverse needs, in a way that understands, values and enables people, their whānau and their communities.

What is Diversity and Inclusion?

Diversity encompasses a broad spread of experience, culture, perspective and lifestyle. Everyone is diverse in interrelated ways and this can include (but is not limited to) nationality, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, education, national origin, and religion.

Inclusion is about being aware that people have different needs and aspirations and adapting how you do things to help meet those needs and aspirations.

To put it simply diversity is the 'who' and 'what': we are all unique and bring individual qualities and strengths to our working environment. Inclusion is the 'how': Creating and supporting a safe, positive and nurturing environment that allows us to understand and utilise one anothers individual qualities, strengths and value differences.

Why Diversity and Inclusion?

We want everyone (our people and clients) to thrive, be who they are and have a strong sense of wellbeing. Being inclusive helps our people to thrive, builds their mana and supports a sense of belonging at MSD.

When we have a diverse and inclusive environment that truly enables our people and our clients, the outcomes we expect to see are:

- people get what they need in a way that is appropriate to them
- equal outcomes and opportunities for all
- high levels of trust and wellbeing
- strong communities that support the social and economic development of NZ

Safe to talk helpline

New Safe to talk helpline

18 April 2018.

A new national helpline called Safe to talk He pai ki te kōrero is now available 24/7 to provide free and confidential support to people affected by sexual harm.

People can get advice and support from trained specialists and be connected to support services in their community.

It is the first time people affected by sexual harm have been able to seek help anonymously at any time from one central place.

The Safe to talk helpline went live nationally on 16 April 2018 after being trialled in Canterbury from 19 February. In total, more than 3,600 people have visited the website. And there have been 224 direct contacts via phone, email, text or webchat.

Safe to talk is available for free 24 hours a day, seven days a week by:

- Calling: 0800 044 334
- Texting: 4334
- Emailing: support@safetotalk.nz
- Live webchat on www.safetotalk.nz which also has a range of resources and information about sexual harm.

If someone asks you about support, you can let them know about the helpline. A captioned video on www.safetotalk.nz provides a good idea of the services available.

The helpline is available to anyone affected in any way by sexual harm – this includes those who have harmed someone else or have thoughts about causing harm. Concerned friends, family and whānau can also seek information and advice.

The new service was developed by the Safe, Strong Families and Communities team in MSD's Community Partnerships and Programmes Group headed by Marama Edwards. She talked about the helpline on RNZ's Nine to Noon programme this week.

Safe to talk is being run by Homecare Medical who run a number of other helplines including Healthline and Quitline.

Safe to talk has been set up as part of the Government's commitment to better support people affected by sexual harm and to prevent sexual harm by ensuring more people get the help they need at the right time.
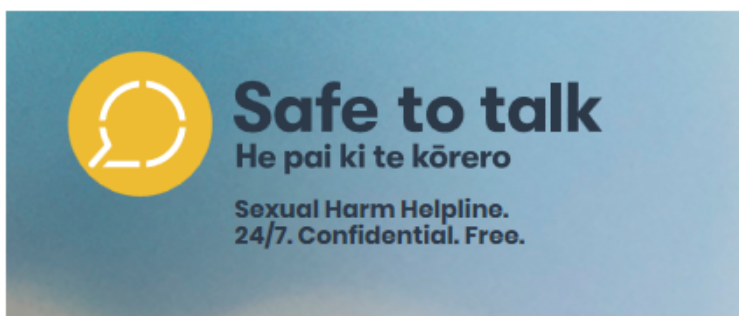
Peer Support Programme

Peer Support Programme

Your discussions are private and confidential - What you tell your Peer Support remains entirely private and confidential unless your safety, the safety of others or the integrity of the Ministry is at risk, in which case information may need to be shared.

The Peer Support Programme

The Peer Support Programme provides an initial point of contact for staff who need advice and support on a personal matter.

It provides a semi-formal first point of call for staff who want to talk to someone in-house about their issue or to explore the type of specialist support that might be available through the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).

Peer Support is not a counselling service and it will not overlap or replace in any way the more specialised support available through EAP. You can be referred for specialised support if that's what you want.

You have a choice of seeking advice from any other staff member or manager you feel comfortable talking to, or go straight to EAP.

Peer Support Presentation (Powerpoint 569.5KB)

S 9(2)(a)

Training Programmes (overview) – Manager Conversations:

The 'Creating a positive and safe workplace' managers discussion groups provided an opportunity to initiate open and thought-provoking conversations about building a positive workplace where inappropriate behaviours do not thrive and preventing workplace bullying and harassment. They were designed to be run by people leaders, for people leaders - to explore and generate new thinking.

There are three conversations:

- Conversation one - **Creating psychological safety**. Content / focus includes:
    - To bring life to these behaviours, we need to hear from our people. To speak up, people need to feel psychologically safe. This is critical in creating a successful and safe workplace.
    - Use the video of Dr Amy Edmondson from Harvard University discussing recent research that highlights the importance of psychological safety at work. The video explains what psychological safety is and why it is something we need in our teams if we are to be successful.
    - Ask the group to work in pairs and discuss a specific time when you or someone else didn't speak up, what do you think contributed to the not speaking up, what impact did this have? Invite people to share general themes with the group if they wish.
    - What are the specific behaviours of a people leader that create this kind of psychological safety? Write up on flip chart and keep for next session.
    - Explain that these workshops aim to start a conversation about creating a positive workplace. Look at a recent social media advertisement that had the same aim – to start a conversation. Use the Gillette advertisements.

- Conversation two - **Talking about bullying and harassment**. Content / focus includes:
    - Remind people of the discussions from the last session about psychological safety and behaviours which support psychological safety. Refer to the flip chart from last session, ask people to have a quick read back over this. Remind participants that team performance is less to do with who is in the team and more to do with how team members interact and treat each other - that is why this is important.
    - Share facts and international research provided. Discuss and assess reaction.
    - Share and discuss definition of workplace bullying:
        - Bullying may also include harassment, discrimination or violence
    - Emphasise – it is important to remember that these things are often not black and white. It can be helpful to think and talk about inappropriate behaviours, rather than focussing on what the label might be. If a behaviour is inappropriate then it should be addressed irrespective of whether someone is or isn't labelling it as bullying / harassment.
    - Ask: What are some examples of inappropriate behaviours that could be considered bullying behaviours? Write responses up on flip chart and keep for the next session
    - Ask What are some examples of behaviours which are inappropriate but might not be bullying?
    - Summarise by emphasising the importance of addressing inappropriate behaviours early, rather than leaving them to cause harm. Looking after people's wellbeing includes addressing behaviours that are causing distress or harm.
    - Ask individuals to think about the discussions over the past few weeks / months regarding creating positive workplaces which are free from inappropriate behaviours, bullying and harassment and the phrase "The behaviour you walk past is the behaviour you accept."
    - Ask What do we as a leadership team see as appropriate and inappropriate behaviours in our workplaces?

- o Ask What do we as a leadership team need to do within our team(s) to build awareness of appropriate / inappropriate behaviours and build psychological safety?
  - o Write comments / thoughts on a white board / flip chart and ask for leadership commitment to these.

- Conversation three - **Reacting and responding**. Content / focus includes:
  - o Ask What can make it hard for people to speak up about inappropriate workplace behaviours, including bullying or harassment?
  - o Emily's Story is an activity that involves listening to a true account of harassment and of speaking out against it. Ask: What does this video raise for you in terms of:
    - the environment you want to create to enable people to speak up safely?
    - the way you want to support people who do raise a concern?
  - o Explain part of building a positive workplace, where we talk about these issues and we care about people's wellbeing, is responding to concerns that are raised. It is important we think about how we will feel and respond if these things come up within our own teams. It can be confronting and difficult to deal with, but we do need to think about how we will respond.
  - o Mana Manaaki
    - What is important for people who raise a concern about inappropriate behaviours, bullying or harassment?
    - What might you feel if one your team members or your colleagues raise a concern of feeling bullied or harassed by you?
    - How would this be the same or different if it was an issue of bullying or harassment by another team member?
    - How might you manage these feelings?
  - o Kotahitanga
    - What other supports are available for people experiencing these issues?
    - What support and advice would you seek from your manager and your HR Consultant?
    - How might you partner with people to address an issue / concern they raise?
  - o Kia takatū tātou
    - How will you help create an environment where people feel safe to talk and speak up about inappropriate behaviours, bullying and harassment?
    - How will you take care of your own wellbeing if these issues are raised in your team?
    - How will an increased awareness and speaking up about inappropriate behaviours affect our team(s) culture long term?

Training Programme: Positive Workplaces - Addressing Inappropriate Behaviour

This is a 30-minute online course for all staff (related programmes for all staff and also for people leaders) to help recognise and address inappropriate workplace behaviour. A series of video scenarios are provided where participants need to reflect on what they have seen, note their thoughts and respond on next steps. Several screen shots follow:

3.1 Positive 1

3.2 Positive 2

3.3 Positive 3

3.4 Positive 4

3.5 Positive 5

3.6 Positive 6
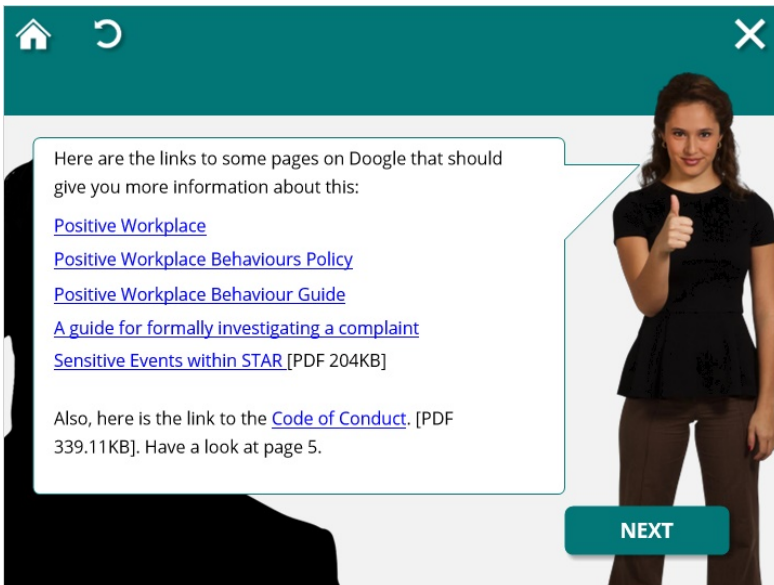
Bullying & Harassment Discovery

Ministry of Social Development

HUMANKIND

Bullying & Harassment Discovery

Thank you for inviting Humankind to complete a Bullying & Harassment Discovery with the Ministry of Social Development.

Workplace bullying and harassment is widely recognised as a serious workplace health and safety issue. The impacts and consequences for individuals involved, as well as employers, are significant.
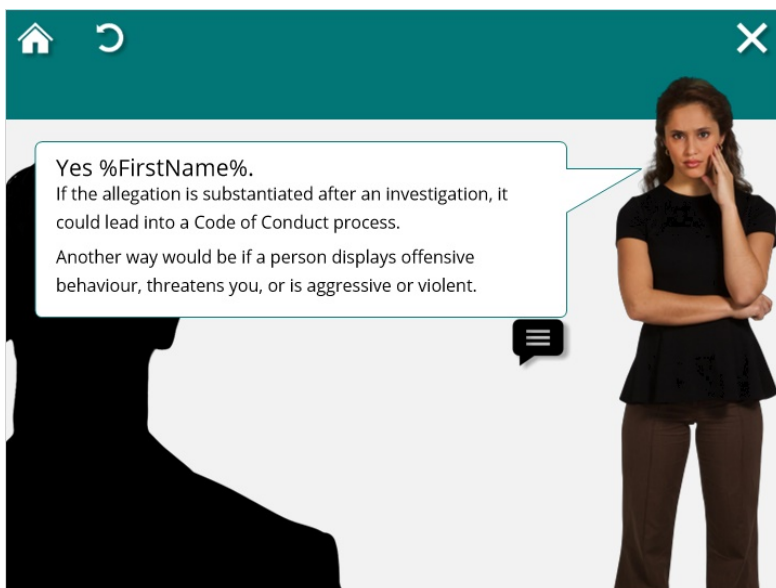
Individual consequences can include physical and psychological harm; heightened anger and anxiety; high stress levels; low self confidence; poor concentration; feelings of isolation and sadness; higher absenteeism and intentions to resign; and lower performance and job satisfaction.

As we've seen highlighted in the media, these factors can also result in increased costs and have damaging impacts on organisational culture and reputation.

The Ministry is looking to proactively refresh its approach to harassment, both in terms of the Workplace Harassment/Bullying policy, but also the systems and processes that surround the policy, to create a culture in which employees have the courage to speak up and the confidence that action will be taken when they do.

We undertook a Discovery which was an independent diagnostic to understand the current state of the Ministry's leadership, environment, tools and operations in relation to workplace bullying and harassment.

The **HUMANKIND**
Employee Experience Model

We know that things shouldn't be left to chance. Our model of employee experience highlights the four areas that need deliberate attention and effort.

- First and most important is leadership that encompasses having a clearly defined strategy which is communicated often and aligned to operational performance. Employees need to know that there is a purpose to what they do and that they can follow leaders who are authentic in their approach. When it comes to preventing bullying and harassment, leaders must have the skills and capabilities required to inspire and motivate through authentic human connections.

- The environment in which employees spend so much of their working days is critical to their daily experience. It is critical that your workplace is physically, emotionally and psychologically safe, that it creates a sense of belonging and allows employees to bring their best selves to work.

- The tools employees use day to day are becoming increasingly important to their experiences in the workplace. This includes mechanisms for raising issues such as bullying and harassment, ensuring that they are raised at the right level so they can be dealt with effectively. Employee data can also give great insight into issues that are otherwise below the surface.

- Lastly, every touchpoint, process, way of doing things, the operations within a business, has to act as an enabler for employees. An anti-bullying and harassment policy is just the start. Training, for example, will ensure employees and managers can identify harassment and know what to do if they see it, empowering them to act and change what is tolerated in your workplace.

Above all else, what an employer says it does, has to be what it actually does. It is crucial to ensure the expectations that are set, such as zero tolerance to bullying and harassment, are aligned to what is done in practice, the workplace reality.
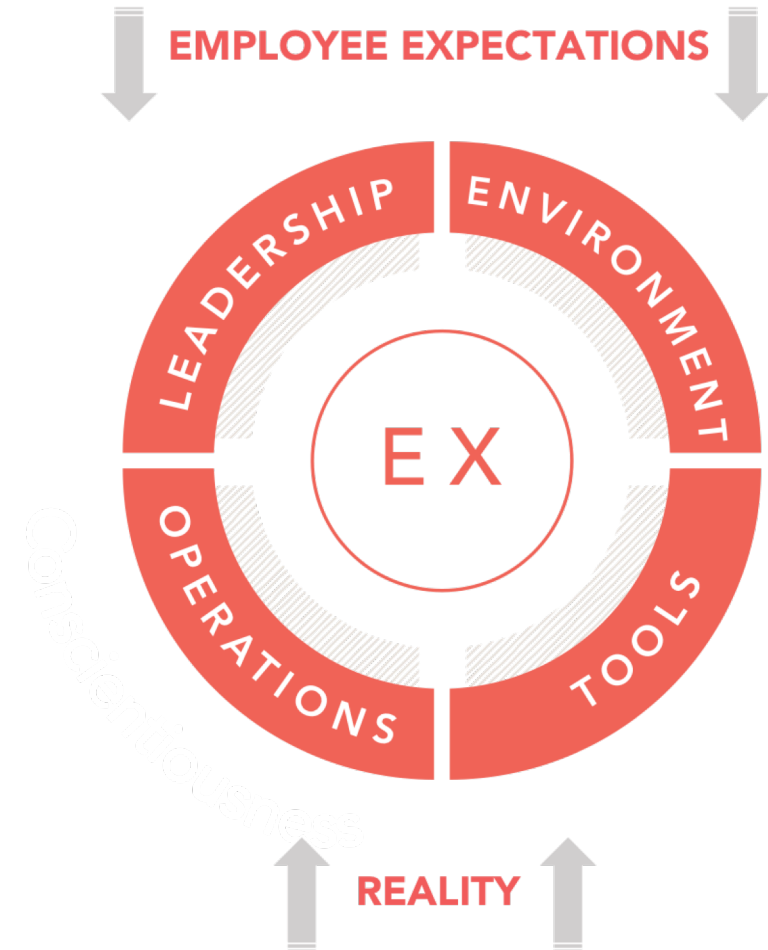
Overview

It was initially agreed with the Ministry that the key components of the Discovery would be: reviewing of associated policies and processes; interviewing key stakeholders at National Office; and surveying a sample of Ministry employees. It was later agreed that due to the sensitivity of the topic and the large number of staff that needed to be surveyed to get a representative sample, we would instead hold five face-to-face focus groups. Focus groups included employees across six regions: Auckland, Bay of Plenty, Taranaki, Central, Wellington, and Canterbury. In total, we met with 12 stakeholders at National Office (including two members of the Union) as well as 40 frontline employees of the following positions:

- Customer Services Officer Processing Services
- Centralised Processing Officer
- Case Manager
- Customer Services Representative
- Work Broker
- Administration Officer
- Service Manager
- Support Officer
- Collections Officer

While there were some limitations of not being able to survey a larger sample size, speaking with employees in person allowed greater depth of understanding. It also allowed us the opportunity to acquire an understanding of potential solutions and recommendations that would truly resonate with employees. With the consistent themes that emerged, we are confident that this methodology provided an accurate diagnostic.

Themes

First, anecdotally, members of the stakeholder group appeared to feel that there is not an overarching culture of bullying or harassment at the Ministry, though a number of stakeholders suggested that bullying may exist in specific pockets.

Frontline employees did, however, describe behaviours that have occurred that do constitute bullying; this appears to mostly consist of managers bullying employees. They did not appear to have a strong understanding of what is or is not bullying, and did not label the behaviour as such.

By and large, employees and stakeholders were not aware of instances of sexual harassment, other than one member of the stakeholder group who stated that they were aware of an incident whereby employees sent sexual text messages to other employees and that they had reported this to HR.

Second, the overall organisational culture is not conducive to people feeling confident to speak up or raise concerns. There were multiple examples shared that depicted a punitive culture where employees do not trust managers, feeling that raising concerns of any type, would result in negative repercussions. There does not appear to be an environment where the giving and receiving of constructive feedback is encouraged or valued.

Stakeholders and employees described a strong imbalance of power and a hierarchical culture. Employees consistently described three distinct layers:

- Leadership/National Head Office
- Managers
- Frontline Employees

Leadership was described as setting the vision, but disconnected from the reality of the stress and pressure this puts on frontline employees (for example, increased targets for getting people into paid employment).

Overview - continued

It was consistently stated by employees that *managers* are not viewed positively; not acting as the conduit between Leadership and frontline employees, not advocating for employees or representing their needs, and not supporting employees in day-to-day work.

The stakeholder group and employees described the Leadership as being "focussed on numbers and not employees", resulting in people prioritising the need to appear favourably to National Office over doing the right thing.

Employees described themselves as motivated by the Ministry's purpose, and very good at supporting each other within their immediate teams. All five regions described environments where employees insulate themselves from managers and other teams. This appears to have led to an "us and them" culture where employees are loyal to colleagues, but not their managers.

Third, the stakeholder group and employees appeared to be unclear on the Ministry's organisational values, with most questioning if there were any. Values did not appear to be actively lived by Ministry employees or incorporated into regular processes or work routines. While the Ministry's Code of Conduct clearly includes respecting others and specifically refers to bullying, the feeling amongst employees is that the Code is not lived by. Employees described the six month review of the Code of Conduct as "merely another box that needs to be ticked."

Fourth, there was inconsistent feedback on managers' general abilities as people leaders. While many employees confirmed feeling that their managers do model appropriate behaviours and hold others accountable to do the same, multiple examples were shared of managers ignoring employees, isolating them, "picking favourites" and not dealing with interpersonal conflicts.

The view across the stakeholder group and employees appeared to be that

people are promoted into leadership positions based on their technical skills, not their leadership abilities. Feedback from various managers and members of the HR team suggested that there is room to review how management skills, values and behaviours are incorporated into the recruitment, promotion, training and review programmes, as well as daily routines.

Fifth, we have recommended strengthening the Ministry's overall position on bullying and harassment, explicitly including this as a part of the Ministry's Wellbeing Approach, supported by robust processes. There is a strong opportunity to ensure all people of influence are clear on the Ministry's stance, have a unified voice and are clear on the roles they place in upholding this.

The remainder of this report sets out:

- An overview of the methodology used;
- Insights; and
- Recommendations

Methodology

Discovery Process

The purpose of the Ministry of Social Development's Discovery was to understand the current state of leadership, environment, tools and operations in order to identify any areas for improvement. From here, you will be able to decide what changes will make the most effective impact from a strategic perspective. The Discovery process involved three distinct streams:

Process, System and Framework Review

Reviewing current processes, policies, systems and frameworks across associated aspects of Bullying & Harassment:

- Workplace Harassment/Bullying Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Organisational Structure
- MSD Wellbeing Approach
- Disciplinary procedures policy
- Conflicts of interest, values and politics policy
- Protected Disclosures policy

Stakeholder Interviews

Ethnographic interviews with 12 key stakeholders across the Ministry:

- 2 mid-level Managers across two regions
- 1 General Manager
- 1 Deputy Chief Executive
- 3 Members of the HR team
- 1 Member of the Health, Safety and Security team
- 1 Member of the Learning & Development team
- 1 Senior Solicitor
- 2 Union Representatives

Employee Focus Groups

Focus group workshops designed to capture insights on the current state of bullying and harassment as well as potential solutions:

- 40 employees
- Six regions: Auckland, Bay of Plenty, Taranaki, Central, Wellington and Canterbury

While three Managers were interviewed in the stakeholder group, this group was not represented in the focus groups.

Methodology

Employee Focus Group Design

Defining the Focus Groups

To get a valid sample of employees, we held five focus groups across six regions:

- Auckland
- Bay of Plenty
- Central
- Wellington
- Canterbury
- Taranaki

Frontline employees of the following positions participated:

- Customer Services Officer Processing Services
- Centralised Processing Officer
- Case Manager
- Customer Services Representative
- Work Broker
- Administration Officer
- Service Manager
- Support Officer
- Collections Officer

We requested that 10 employees attend each focus group to enable rich discussion. Actual attendees ranged from 5-12 participants. Employees in each group came from a variety of teams, as opposed to being all from the same team, to reduce inhibition. The length of each focus group was 2.5 hours, allowing enough time to have detailed discussions.

Participants were deliberately not provided with any questions in advance, but were provided with the objectives of the sessions and information on what to expect. Managers whose employees attended the sessions were also provided with additional information to support with any questions that could arise as the result of an employee's participation.

Design

The objective of the focus groups was to gather insights from employees on their experience working at the Ministry, specifically in relation to bullying and harassment. The focus groups were structured as workshops of deliberately defined questions and activities, designed to gather insights across the four areas of employee experience (leadership, environment, operations and tools) as well as best practice in the areas of bullying and harassment (awareness, prevention, response and support). Questions and activities were designed to test themes that surfaced from the stakeholder interviews, and also allow for new information to surface.

Focus groups included a combination of group discussions and individual exercises. Some group discussion began with individual reflection followed by sharing with the wider group. Employees were also asked to fill out individual workbooks that were anonymous and collected at the end of each session. Group discussions were designed to allow for rich dialogue and detailed information, and individual activities and workbook questions were designed to encourage honest responses to more sensitive questions.

Methodology

Employee Focus Group Design continued

Facilitation

Each focus group was facilitated by two experienced facilitators from Humankind. This allowed for rich discussion as well as accurate recording of insights.

Employees were informed of ground rules at the beginning of session and were told that insights would remain anonymous but would be reported back in key themes to National Office in September.

All feedback and information was compiled by facilitators immediately after each focus group. Insights were further analysed following the completion of the final focus group.

Insights Leadership & Environment

Leadership is arguably the most important aspect of employee experience, providing direction for all employees. The purpose, vision and strategy are just the beginning; also important here is leadership style, level of authenticity and trust in the organisation, and how effectively leadership communicates progress and performance to motivate and inspire.

Research shows that work-related enabling factors of bullying and harassment include high levels of emotionally taxing work; high levels of conflict; limited job autonomy; organisational culture where bullying behaviours are normalised and where there is little support for prevention and awareness initiatives; where there are perceived low costs to bullying; and where there is perceived strong imbalance of power. Higher rates of change and high levels of media scrutiny have also been shown to result in higher levels of workplace bullying and/or harassment.

Key themes – improvement areas

The following findings relate to areas of improvement, and as such, recommendations have been made based on these findings at the end of this report.

Feedback from all five focus groups and four of the 12 stakeholders suggests that bullying is taking place at the Ministry, mostly managers to employees. Overall what we heard about the culture at the Ministry suggests that people are more focused on "looking good" rather than calling out or addressing poor behavior. This creates an environment where employees are not comfortable speaking up or providing feedback, whether it be about bullying or other concerns, as they don't trust their managers and fear repercussions.

Leadership & Environment

Key themes – improvement areas continued

Imbalance of Power

Employees and members of National Office described the three distinct levels within the Ministry:

• Leadership/National Office
• Managers
• Frontline Employees

There was a clear view that **Leadership,** including the Minister, have a clear vision but are disconnected from the frontline and often prioritise the needs of clients over employees. The view was that they set initiatives but do not understand or attempt to help manage the pressure this puts on employees. Examples included increasing placement targets without providing additional resourcing or support for employees; gathering feedback from clients on their experiences with the Ministry but not from employees on theirs; and the Minister's recent criticism of frontline employees in the media.

There were also a number of examples cited that described National Office rolling out internal programmes that do not meet the needs of employees, such as the stars programme.

Managers were described as the layer in between that is "stuck in their box" and does not act as the conduit between employees and Leadership. Managers were described as "being focused on numbers" or "looking good" instead of focusing on the needs of employees. One of many examples shared included managers who continually walked past long lines of clients without providing additional resourcing "because they were so focused on their administrative work". Employees in one focus group provided an example of National Office rolling out a new system for the Contact Centre without speaking to the frontline to assess the needs. While managers knew this system was not fit for

purpose, they did not raise the feedback and the system was implemented. To further complicate things, two separate departments rolled out different systems for the same purpose. Employees felt this highlighted that there was a disconnect between the office and the frontline, and managers were not speaking up, even when they knew it was the right thing for the organisation. Another example included an employee raising a piece of feedback about air conditioning in the "Goss with the Boss" forum. When the manager saw that this had been raised, they immediately approached the employee, reprimanding them for raising the issue publicly and asked the employee to remove it. We have included further examples of this in following sections.

Frontline Employees appeared to be passionate about the purpose of the Ministry and saw the connection that their roles had to the bigger picture. Employees largely described their teams and colleagues as supportive of one another.

Overall, there was clear feedback from the stakeholder group and employees that the culture at the Ministry is hierarchical, leading to an "us and them" mentality.

Through the focus groups, we were left with the clear impression that this imbalance of power has resulted in a deep rooted sense of mistrust between employees and managers. Employees do not feel comfortable or confident to raise issues with their managers as they feel they won't be dealt with properly and they fear repercussions. As a result, employees are left with the impression that serious issues are brushed under the carpet rather than being escalated.

Leadership & Environment

Key themes – improvement areas continued

Culture

People described the bureaucratic nature of the Ministry, where there are systems and processes for checking everything. The outcome of this was described as a punitive or blame culture, where employees are scared of getting things wrong and therefore avoid taking responsibility as that then risks them being held accountable. They do not feel their managers have their back, and therefore fear making mistakes or putting their head above the parapet in any way. Managers and frontline employees described the culture as one where people want to "look good but not do good". An example was shared where at a PSA meeting, the Regional Director reported that 100% of PDA discussions had been reported by managers as having been completed. There were six people in the meeting that confirmed that they had not had their PDA completed.

A very clear theme came through from the stakeholder group and frontline employees that the Ministry does not have an environment that supports the giving and receiving of feedback and people do not speak up about concerns in general. Employees in one focus group explained that they feel that feedback is often misconstrued as complaining. This point was highlighted by members in all five focus groups that confirmed that in general, they do no not speak up due to fear of repercussions. Employees described reporting or suggesting anything that could shed an unfavourable light on their manager as "a career limiting move". There was a general feeling that if employees raise concerns, they will be labelled as "problem children" with "black marks" on their files.

Numerous employees cited feeling that they, or colleagues, had been treated differently or passed up for promotions because they had raised concerns with managers. One focus group described a particular manager that appeared to be well known in the region. Two people had raised complaints about this manager's behaviour. The manager remained in the same position with the

same team, but following the complaint, the manager scrutinised the work of the employees, providing negative performance reviews and overlooking those employees for opportunities such as moving to new teams or trying new roles.

Other repercussions cited included being physically isolated from the team; being given less favourable work; being pulled out of a course; or being humiliated in front of other employees.

Two focus groups raised the specific concern that raising a complaint about bullying or harassment would result in a note on their files and could affect the career opportunities they had at the Ministry. One group raised the concern that a bullying complaint would result in someone being removed from the team, which meant an increased workload for those left behind.

Values and Code of Conduct

There does not appear to be a consistent set of values that drives behaviours and decision making at the Ministry. Multiple stakeholders and employees were uncertain if a set of Ministry values exists. Managers spoke of creating their own values in their region to address this gap, potentially resulting in different regions operating by different value sets.

The Ministry's Code of Conduct includes the expectations for Ministry employees to respect each other and explicitly sets out that bullying is unacceptable. Whilst this is a good start, the Code does not appear to be embedded in the organisation.

Whilst employees advised us that they are required to read it every six months for online training, they described this as another "box ticking exercise" meaning the Code is not a meaningful document to them and they do not identify ways in which they can apply to it their daily working lives.

Leadership & Environment

Key themes – improvement areas continued

Management

Overall, managers were described by employees and the stakeholder group as ineffective people leaders. While many employees did suggest that managers demonstrate appropriate behaviours themselves, there were multiple examples shared where managers were in fact demonstrating bullying behaviour. In majority of the examples, the employees did not realise that the behaviour they described could amount to bullying. Examples were included from the stakeholder group and employees across all regions where managers clearly "picked favourites"; would say "good morning" to some employees every day and ignore others; would yell at employees in front of others; would repeatedly make humiliating and sarcastic comments in front of others; or would send rude remarks in a group email. Two senior employees from the stakeholder group provided examples of managers completely ignoring employees on their teams. This indicates that significant education is required to upskill managers in the standards of behavior expected of them, and their role in representing the Ministry as the employer during these interactions. Overall, the interviews and focus groups indicated that there was widespread misunderstanding of what constitutes bullying and harassment.

There was mixed feedback when asked if managers consistently upheld appropriate behaviours within their teams. Both employees and members of the stakeholder group appear to have the view that managers are appointed based on their technical skills, not leadership attributes or abilities. Four of the five focus groups and eight of the twelve stakeholders, raised this concern without prompt.

From our interviews, it appeared that learning and development for managers is focused on new managers, with little to no ongoing development for existing managers, many of whom have been in their roles for a number of years. New management training appears to involve building high performing teams; direction and delegation; coaching and change. Managing difficult conversations; providing constructive feedback; managing wellbeing or responding to bullying or harassment do not appear to be covered. One frontline employee shared that they had been working on a secondment in a management role for six years and had never received training because it was not a permanent position.

Managers do not appear to be evaluated on their efficacy as managers, with evaluations focused on technical skills and KPIs, as opposed to leadership competencies or values. It also appears that employees are not provided feedback on values or behaviours in the PDA process. Managers and the Learning & Development department described a lack of resources for managers, stating that "the Ministry does not make it easy for managers to lead".

Insights Operations & Tools

Operations is a foundation of employee experience, and encompasses many of the moments that matter for employees; it's about empowering, engaging and enabling employees to succeed.

The Operations component of employee experience includes the key stages of the employee lifecycle (onboarding, performance, development, remuneration, for example), as well as the enabling policies of the organisation to deliver on the strategy.

Robust interventions are critical aspects of preventing and addressing workplace bullying and harassment. Focus should be on prevention and early resolutions to reduce the risk of bullying or harassment escalating in the workplace.

Key themes – improvement areas

The following findings relate to areas of improvement, and as such, recommendations have been made based on these findings at the end of this report.

The Ministry's Workplace Harassment/Bullying policy needs to be refreshed, with clarified reporting processes, channels, roles and responsibilities. The experience of being part of a formal complaint should be carefully considered – each interaction has 'weight' and is important to the people most affected. These policies and processes need to be promoted and people's roles and responsibilities around bullying and harassment clarified. Reporting should be set up and monitored to test the efficacy of the policy and initiatives in place, and changes made if it is clear that any parts of the process are not working as expected.

Operations & Tools

Key themes – improvement areas continued

Policy

The Ministry's policy sets out a zero tolerance policy on bullying and harassment along with definitions of what constitutes bullying and harassment. The process cites the following avenues for raising complaints:

- Raise with your managers; or
- manager's manager; or
- Ask HR

The Ministry's guide to investigating a formal complaint also includes the General Manager Human Resources as an escalation point.

Employees, managers and members of the stakeholder group had varying levels of understanding around the definitions of bullying and harassment and most were unaware of the Ministry's stance on bullying and harassment. While most people stated that this policy could likely be found on Doogle, many cited having never seen the policy.

The policy includes a detailed explanation of procedures for investigating a complaint but does not include a clear timeline for complaint investigation and includes little practical information on informal processes for resolving issues early.

Awareness and Prevention

There appeared to be little in place by way of awareness and prevention of bullying and harassment at the Ministry. The Wellbeing Approach does not explicitly include bullying or harassment as a part of the health, safety and security strategy. There appears to be no training in place for HR, managers or

employees regarding bullying or harassment and the Workplace Harassment/Bullying policy does not appear to be socialised (with majority of people interviewed stating that they had never seen it).

Pink Shirt day was the only awareness initiative cited.

Complaints Process

People were mostly unaware of the process for raising a complaint, including managers and members of the HR team. When the process was shared with them, the vast majority of employees stated that they would feel comfortable raising an issue informally with the person affected, but would not raise a complaint formally due to the fear of repercussions. Only two stakeholders were aware that Ask HR was an escalation point. All five focus groups stated that they were unaware of how to contact Ask HR and see this as a resource for managers, but not employees.

The majority of people felt that the process for raising a complaint was to log the issue in SOSHI. There were varying levels of awareness that these incidents get flagged to employees' managers and there appeared to be no way of making anonymous complaints.

The current process is not aligned to the reality of the culture at the Ministry. With a clear fear of speaking up or providing feedback, employees are unlikely to raise concerns with their manager or manager's manager. Equally, with a culture where people are more aligned with peers than managers, though many said they would be comfortable addressing issues informally, people may struggle to raise difficult issues with their colleagues.

Operations & Tools

Key themes – improvement areas continued

Response

The Workplace Harassment/Bullying policy sets out that if managers are notified of a complaint, they are to work with an HR Consultant to discuss how the investigation should proceed. Stakeholders explained that sometimes investigations are led by managers and sometimes by HR Consultants. Of the four managers and three members of the HR team interviewed, only one person was able to explain investigation procedures that included keeping the complainants informed and providing them with adequate support.

Two employees jointly described one situation where they were aware of a manager who had two separate complaints laid against them. The perception of these employees was that after each complaint, the manager was simply moved to another team but the behaviours continued.

Support

When asked what support is available to employees, the majority of people provided EAP and the Union as responses. Employees in one focus group commented that there is sometimes a two week wait time to get an appointment with EAP.

Some frontline employees mentioned each region having 1-2 peer support people in place. Many people confirmed not knowing who the peer support people were or how they could contact them. One region described their peer support person as being untrustworthy, often reporting issues back to managers.

Managers are seen to have the support of HR through processes surrounding bullying or harassment, but frontline employees (complainants or respondents) do not appear to be assigned a dedicated support person.

The role of Human Resources

The three members of the HR team that we interviewed (not including the member of the Learning & Development team) had varying attitudes toward bullying and harassment. Only one of the HR people interviewed was clear on the process for raising complaints, as well as support available. One member of the HR team raised concerns about the Ministry doing initiatives like Pink Shirt day for fear of "the influx of complaints that we are not resourced for".

The HR team should be the source of expertise on matters such as bullying and harassment and the processes to be followed. Their role is to support and enable managers to understand what bullying and harassment is and prevent it or respond to instances of it when they arise. It is also critical that HR is able to influence managers to support initiatives like Pink Shirt Day.

Employees in focus groups did not see HR as relevant in any way in their day-to-day life. One employee described HR as "a myth" that does not have a role in supporting employees.

Reporting

From the stakeholders we spoke with, it appeared that bullying and harassment complaints that are logged in SOSHI get reported on but complaints that go to managers do not. Effective monitoring should include measuring and reporting on complaints made as well as staff perceptions.

Recommendations

The Ministry has the opportunity to promote a clear organisational position and unified voice on bullying and harassment. The focus should be on prevention and early resolution, equipping people to identify and address issues early before they escalate. The formal complaints process should be accessible and free from repercussions.

These recommendations are based on the insights gathered as well as best practice.

Prevention

Purpose – The Ministry is a purpose driven organisation with employees who have a strong and positive alignment with its purpose. This creates the opportunity to work with managers and employees to develop a common understanding of what culture and behaviours will enable all employees to deliver on that purpose. By clearly articulating what that culture looks and feels like in a meaningful way to Ministry employees, they will have a clear vision of the standard that can be expected.

Values – Consideration should be given to developing and embedding strong organisational values as a foundation of culture and behaviours. Employees commented that online compliance training does not resonate with them. Ideally Values, the Code of Conduct and Bullying & Harassment awareness should be incorporated into employees' regular operating rhythm to bring these important focuses to life. Induction; PDA reviews; Wednesday meetings; and in the moment opportunities via managers were all cited by employees as effective methods.

Policy – It is recommended the Workplace Harassment/Bullying policy is refreshed to be concise, easy for all users to understand and it should provide a clear stance on bullying and harassment. The policy should clearly set out people's roles and responsibilities and should be developed in consultation with managers, employees and the Union. The policy should also include:

- A clear definition of bullying and harassment
- Informal and formal processes for making a complaint
- A detailed description of the formal complaint making and investigation process, including a timeframe for complaint investigation
- An explanation of how findings will be reported
- An explanation of the appeals process
- Reference to other related polices
- Clear manager's guidelines
- A description of where more detailed information can be located

The feedback indicates that more could be done to promote the policy and a broader awareness of bullying and harassment on an ongoing basis. This could be on Doogle, Wednesday team meetings, inductions and training sessions. Employees and stakeholders suggested that messages best resonate when they are led regionally by Regional Directors and Senior Leadership. The Wednesday meetings were also consistently raised as a good opportunity to translate messages to the team. The Ministry's stance on bullying and harassment and it's associated policy should be led from the top and built into a regular operating rhythm for senior leaders and managers.

Recruitment and Selection – The opportunity exists to implement staff selection processes to screen out applicants with undesirable behaviours and use organisational values as a consistent benchmark to recruit people who possess them. This could include confirming the attributes and selection criteria for management positions that incorporate values and people leadership skills to ensure the right people are being appointed into these critical roles.

Recommendations - continued

Training – Consideration should be given to providing managers further training on effective management and people leadership, including regular refresher training and development. Management development programmes should include: managing behaviours; managing conflict and difficult conversations; managing their own wellness and that of their employees; and specific training on bullying and harassment awareness, response and support.

It is recommended all employees receive information or training on bullying and harassment. This should focus on developing people's confidence within identification, complaints process, and support. Training should include bystander training, designed to raise awareness of bystander apathy and equip and empower employees with the skills to challenge inappropriate behaviour, raise complaints and speak up.

With employees emphasising that their preferred method of raising a complaint was through informal or self-help approaches, versus raising a formal complaint, everyone at the Ministry should be equipped with the skills to identify poor behaviours early and address them quickly, before they escalate into more serious concerns.

HR – Once there is a clear and unified position, it is critical to ensure all members of the HR team are clear and on board with the position and the application of the policy. Members of the HR team need to be aware of initiatives and have a strong understanding of why they are in place to increase their engagement. HR should be trained so they have absolute clarity on roles and responsibilities within prevention, complaints, response and support. They need to understand their role and also the role they play in influencing and supporting managers. Further consideration should be given to the role that HR plays in supporting Ministry employees.

Reporting and Monitoring – Consideration should be given to the bullying and harassment reporting and monitoring mechanisms that should be in place. This will enable HR and the Ministry Leadership to identify and address areas of concern within the organisation and evaluate the policy's efficacy. Exit interview data should also include insights on bullying and harassment and should be reported on to HR and senior leadership. Excessive turnover, absenteeism and staff perceptions should be reviewed and reported on regularly.

Employee Files – It is recommended to further investigate the strong concern that frontline employees have regarding the repercussions associated with raising concerns. We suggest specifically clarifying concerns employees have regarding which information is noted on their employee files and what the implications of file notes are.

Response

Complaints Process – It is recommended that the complaints process and the avenues for raising complaints are reviewed and steps taken to alleviate the confusion regarding which avenues are open to employees. With the apparent fear of repercussions for raising concerns, and the close relationships employees appear to have with their teams, avenues for raising complaints should include options that do not involve managers or team members. Similar systems are currently in place in other government departments and can be administered through Crime Stoppers or Deloitte. Anonymous reporting may be considered and tested as a part of the development of the policy. This could be tested with employees to determine if this is something that would be seen as a suitable option.

Recommendations - continued

To compliment anonymous reporting, having a mechanism to communicate with complainants in an anonymous way will significantly increase the likelihood of reaching a resolution to a matter that has been reported anonymously. For example, being able to exchange messages through a third party provider or online seeking more information from the complainant whilst maintaining their anonymity. However, building trust and confidence in all reporting mechanisms will be crucial for encouraging employees to raise matters. To achieve this it is important that there is transparency regarding who will receive complaint information and who will be responsible for acting on it.

Response Process – As previously stated, the policy should set out clear roles and expectations for responding to formal complaints. This should include a timeframe for response; timeframe for complaint investigations; an explanation of how findings will be reported; what information will be available to the parties and the support available to those involved.

Investigators – Consideration should be given to who undertakes investigations of allegations of bullying and harassment and the skillset required to do this. Members of the HR team and managers should be selected for this task based on their skills, experience and expertise.

Adherence to process – At present employees have low trust in management, and this will be exacerbated if managers or HR don't adhere to the processes set out in the policy. Steps must be taken to:

1. Reassure employees that their complaints will be acted on in an appropriate way without fear of repercussion
2. Ensure the policy is followed in every case
3. Deal with any negative repercussions swiftly and effectively.

To achieve this, one option is to centralise the complaint and response process to enable it to be rolled out effectively, ensuring each case is managed in accordance with the policy.

Support

Peer Support – It is recommended the peer support networks are reviewed to ensure that stakeholders and each region have access to a network of people who can support employees and provide guidance if people have concerns regarding bullying or harassment. The aim should be to provide employees access to skilled individuals who are not a manager or peer within their direct team.

These people should be trained and understand what to do and say. Their roles are not to advise employees on what to do, but rather to provide clear definitions and avenues for more specific advice and support. It is crucial that the right people are selected for this role, by identifying the attributes you want in these people. In terms of selection, considerations should be given to having them nominated by their peers (with the ability to opt out if they do not wish to undertake the role). The Ministry should provide training for these people with periodic refresher training, for example, every two years.

Support during complaints or investigations – Most stakeholders and employees appear to be aware of EAP and this should continue to be promoted. If a complaint is made, managers should assign a suitable dedicated support person to both the respondent and complainant. These people should be individuals that are seen as neutral to both parties and confident in the policy, the process and support mechanism available.

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