

## POLICY - WORKPLACE BULLYING

(Version 4)

<b>Policy Title:</b>	<b>Workplace Bullying</b>
<b>Policy Type:</b>	<b>Constitutional Policy</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>04/09/17 (1) 18/01/2021 (2) 09/02/2022 (3) 24/03/2023 (4)</b>

### Goals

The Bribie Island Community Arts Society Incorporated (BICAS) Policies and Procedures have been developed to support everyone participating at the Bribie Island Community Arts Centre (BICAC), including Board Members, Society members, employees, volunteers, Working Together Group (WTG) participants, contractors, and the public (herein referred to as BICAS/BICAC participants). BICAS is committed to providing a safe, harassment and abuse free environment, providing equal opportunity and an enjoyable and safe Centre for all participants.

This Policy – Workplace Bullying (herein the Policy) provides guidance for the ethical conduct/behaviour that all BICAS/BICAC participants have an obligation to uphold.

### The Policy shows:

- our commitment to health and safety within the Centre, and to reducing the risks to the health and safety of all BICAS/BICAC participants;
- our commitment to complying with the requirements of the *(Qld) Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011*; and,
- how BICAS will deal with anyone found to have breached the Policy.

### The Policy applies to everyone participating in BICAS/BICAC activities

### Introduction

The purpose of the Policy is to provide a clear understanding of the standard of conduct or behaviour that is expected when participating in any BICAS/BICAC activities. The Policy places an obligation on all BICAS/BICAC participants to take responsibility for their own conduct. To facilitate this, copies of the Policy will be provided to all BICAS/BICAC participants. Participants are required to familiarise themselves with its contents and to provide signed acknowledgement of receipt and understanding of the Policy to BICAS.

### Application of the Policy

The Policy applies to all BICAS/BICAC participants. In applying the Policy you are to consider both its 'spirit' and 'content'. If you are in any doubt as to the meaning of the Policy or its application in any given situation, you should seek advice from the BICAS Board.

As a BICAS/BICAC participant, you have a responsibility to conduct yourself in a manner that will not undermine public and member confidence in the integrity of BICAS.

The BICAS Board is responsible for taking the appropriate action where a BICAS/BICAC participant breaches the Policy.

## **Our Commitment**

BICAS is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment free from bullying. Bullying will not be tolerated in the Centre or in any BICAS/BICAC participation.

All BICAS/BICAC participants are protected by this policy where they feel bullied by anyone associated with BICAS, including Board members, a society member, an employee or volunteer, a contractor or a member of the public.

BICAS will treat reports of workplace bullying seriously and will respond promptly, impartially and confidentially.

## **Expected Workplace Behaviours**

Under Work Health and Safety laws people participating in any BICAS/BICAC activities must take reasonable care that they do not adversely affect the health and safety of others.

BICAS expects people to:

- behave in a responsible and professional manner;
- treat others in the workplace with courtesy and respect;
- listen and respond appropriately to the views and concerns of others; and,
- be fair and honest in their dealings with others.

The policy applies to behaviours that occur:

- in connection with work and other BICAS/BICAC activities; even if it occurs outside normal working hours and outside of BICAS premises;
- during work and other BICAS/BICAC activities, for example; when working with other employees, volunteers or when dealing with the public;
- at work-related events, for example at meetings, openings, exhibitions and work-related social functions; and,
- on social media where BICAS/BICAC participants interact with colleagues or other members or the public and their actions may affect them either directly or indirectly.

## **What is Workplace Bullying?**

Workplace bullying is defined as repeated, unreasonable behaviour, directed towards a person or persons that creates a risk to health and safety. It includes both physical and psychological risks and abuse.

**Repeated behaviour** refers to the persistent nature of the behaviour and can refer to a range or pattern of behaviours over a period of time (for example, verbal abuse, unreasonable criticism, isolation and subsequently being denied opportunities – i.e., a pattern is being established from a series of events).

**Unreasonable behaviour** means behaviour that a reasonable person, having considered the circumstances, would see as unreasonable, including behaviour that is victimising, humiliating, intimidating, undermining or threatening.

Single incidents of unreasonable behaviour can also present a risk to health and safety and will not be tolerated.

A person's intention is irrelevant when determining if bullying has occurred. Bullying can occur unintentionally, where actions which are not intended to victimise, humiliate, undermine or threaten a person actually have that effect.

Bullying in the workplace is harmful not only to the target of the behaviour but also damages BICAS' culture and reputation. It is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

### **Examples of Workplace Bullying**

Bullying behaviours can take many different forms, from the obvious (direct) to the more subtle (indirect). The following are some examples of both direct and indirect bullying:

#### Direct bullying:

- abusive, insulting or offensive language
- spreading misinformation or malicious rumours
- behaviour or language that frightens, humiliates, belittles or degrades, including over criticising, or criticism that is delivered with yelling or screaming
- displaying offensive material
- inappropriate comments about a person's appearance, lifestyle, their family or sexual preferences
- teasing or regularly making someone the brunt of pranks or practical jokes
- interfering with a person's personal property or work equipment, or
- harmful or offensive initiation practices.

#### Indirect bullying:

- unreasonably overloading a person with work, or not providing enough work
- setting timeframes that are difficult to achieve, or constantly changing them
- setting tasks that are unreasonably below, or above, a person's skill level
- deliberately excluding or isolating a person from normal work activities
- withholding information that is necessary for effective work performance
- deliberately denying access to resources or workplace benefit and entitlements, for example; training and leave entitlements
- deliberately changing work arrangements, such as rosters and leave, to inconvenience a particular worker or workers

The above examples do not represent a complete list of bullying behaviours. They are indicative of the type of behaviours which may constitute bullying and are therefore unacceptable to BICAS.

### **What is not Workplace Bullying?**

Reasonable management action taken by a direct Supervisor, the Function and Activity Coordinator (FAC), or the Board, to direct and control the way work or BICAS/BICAC activities are carried out is not considered to be workplace bullying if the action is taken in a reasonable and lawful way. Examples of reasonable management practices include:

- setting reasonable performance goals, standards and deadlines in consultation with employees and after considering their respective skills and experience, allocating work and BICAS/BICAC activities fairly;
- fairly rostering and allocating employee hours;

- transferring an employee or changing volunteer activities for legitimate and explained operational reasons;
- deciding not to select an employee for promotion, following a fair and documented process;
- informing an employee about unsatisfactory work performance in a constructive way and in accordance with any BICAS Policies and Procedures;
- informing an employee or volunteer about inappropriate behaviour in an objective and confidential way;
- implementing organisational changes or restructuring; and,
- performance management processes.

#### **What can you do?**

**If you feel you are being bullied** and are not comfortable dealing with the problem yourself, or your attempts to do so have not been successful, you should raise the issue with your direct supervisor, the FAC or a BICAS Board member. If you are an employee and you are a member of a union, you may also raise any issues with your delegate.

**If you witness unreasonable bullying behaviour** that breaches this Policy you should bring the matter to the attention of a Board member as a matter of urgency.

#### **How will BICAS Respond?**

If workplace bullying or unreasonable behaviour is reported or observed we will take the following steps:

1. The responsible employee or Board member will speak to the parties involved as soon as possible, gather information and seek a resolution to satisfactorily address the issue for all parties.
2. If issues cannot be resolved or the unreasonable behaviour is considered to be of a serious nature, an impartial person will be appointed to investigate. Both sides will be able to state their case and relevant information will be collected and considered before a decision is made.
3. All complaints and reports will be treated in the strictest of confidence. Only those people directly involved in the complaint or in resolving it will have access to the information.
4. There will be no victimisation of the person making the report or helping to resolve it. Complaints made maliciously or in bad faith will result in disciplinary action.

#### **Consequences of Breaching the Policy**

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against a person who is found to have breached the Policy. These measures will depend on the nature and circumstance of each breach and could include:

- a verbal or written apology
- one or more parties agreeing to participate in counselling or training

- a verbal or written reprimand
- termination of BICAS membership, or dismissal of the person engaging in the bullying behaviour

#### **If bullying has not been substantiated**

If the investigation finds bullying has not occurred or cannot be substantiated, BICAS may still take appropriate action to address any workplace issues leading to the report.

#### **More Information**

If a workplace participant is unsure about any matter covered by this policy, or requires more information about workplace bullying they should seek the assistance of a BICAS employee or Board member. They may also wish to seek external advice from a relevant regulatory authority, such as Workplace Health and Safety Qld.

#### **Where to from here?**

If, after reading the Policy you are unsure about your obligation in general or in relation to a specific situation, you should discuss this initially with your immediate supervisor or the FAC.

If you have concerns about approaching your immediate supervisor or the FAC you should make direct contact with a BICAS Board member or by writing to the BICAS Secretary who will pass this information onto the Board. The Board will be able to provide you with guidance and advice on the appropriate steps to follow to resolve your concerns.

#### **COMMUNICATING THE POLICY**

The Policy shall be available in BICAS premises.

All BICAS/BICAC participants and others affected by our business or undertakings will be provided with a copy on commencement and have an opportunity to discuss the Policy at an Induction Training.

#### **REVIEW**

The Policy will be reviewed annually during the BICAS Work Health and Safety Audit Program, through consultation with Board Members, employees, members and volunteers, or when legislative requirements change, or in the event of a serious occurrence involving bullying.

#### **VARIATIONS**

The Bribie Island Community Arts Society Inc. reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this policy.

**POLICY VERSION AND REVISION INFORMATION**

Policy Authorised by: Robert Hamilton

Original issue: 04/09/2017

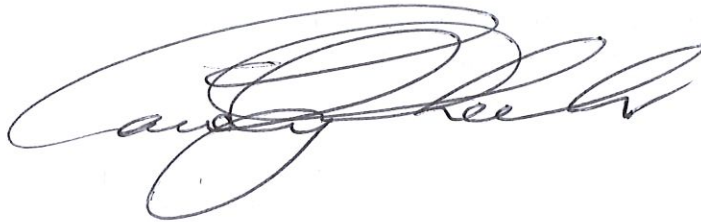
Title: BICAS CHAIRPERSON

Current version: Version 4

Policy Maintained by: Julie Thomson

Title: Venue Manager

Date: 24/03/2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carolyn Wheeler', with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

Policy Authorized by: Carolyn Wheeler

Title: BICAS Chairperson

Approved by Board: 24/03/2023

Next Review: 24/03/2024

**BICAS POLICY – WORKPLACE BULLYING**

I, (Employee, Volunteer, etc., – please print)

....., have read, understand and agree to abide by the Bribie Island Community Arts Society Inc.'s (BICAS) Policy – Workplace Bullying and I understand that such adherence is a condition of my employment, volunteer work, contract work, and/or any other participation in BICAS/BICAC activities. I understand that a violation of the BICAS Policy – Workplace Bullying may be grounds for termination from BICAS/BICAC participation; as a volunteer; or in the case of an employee, immediate dismissal for just cause without notice or pay in lieu of notice.

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_.

**BICAS/BICAC PARTICIPANT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

*I acknowledge:*

- *that I have received a copy of the BICAS Policy – Workplace Bullying;*
- *that I should comply with the Policy; and*
- *that there may be disciplinary consequences if I fail to comply*

Your name:            Please Print  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

