Conduct and Behaviour

Introduction

National Statistical Organisations are value-based organisations that are committed to ensuring that all employees work in an environment that is fair, safe and results-oriented. Decisions are based on merit and the highest standards of behaviour and conduct are modelled.

This chapter provides an overview of how you, as a manager, ensure appropriate behaviours and conduct are upheld and managed in the workplace.

Your Role

As a manager your own behaviour must be flawless and you must ensure that employees in your section are familiar with and meet the required standard of conduct. If you have reason to believe that standards may have been violated, managers should take early corrective action to remedy the situation. Any activity in relation to employee behaviour and conduct is best undertaken with evidence or information about the matter. Managers should clearly document any information or conversations that may be relevant and include this information when you seek early advice or assistance.

Early action may include resolving issues at the workplace level. You may be able to resolve the issues informally in the workplace, and obtain a mutually agreeable outcome that improves relationships, behaviours and activities within your work environment.

Managers should undertake the following action for informal workplace resolution:

- if you believe an employee may have violated the required standard of conduct, you should seek an explanation from the employee(s) involved
- if you accept the explanation the matter will go no further, if the behaviour is not repeated (to be considered on a case by case basis)
- if you are not satisfied, you will need to refer the matter to the relevant corporate area for assistance. Together you will decide on a further appropriate course of action
- any work related matter that may amount to a criminal offense must be immediately referred to the relevant corporate area

Key Processes and Issues

Resolving Workplace Issues

The aim of these procedures is to sort out problems quickly, informally and as close to the workplace as possible. Employees are encouraged to use these procedures whenever possible, but they are not intended to replace more formal mechanisms. Experience shows that workplace issues that are dealt with quickly and informally have the best chance of being satisfactorily resolved, often improving working relationships.

Where possible, disputes should be dealt with within the workplace and resolved between the employee concerned and their manager. Employees may speak with a higher level manager, or the relevant corporate area if the matter relates to their direct supervisor.

Seeking early advice is always encouraged.

Managing Breaches of the Required Standard of Conduct

As a manager, you may undertake the following course(s) of action when you have not been satisfied with the explanation provided by employee(s) who have been involved in a possible breach of the required standard of conduct. Once you have sought advice, the next course of action may involve the following:

Where the supposed breach is minor:

- informal discussion and counselling including constructive feedback and methods for improvement

Where there is a pattern of this type of conduct it will need to be treated more seriously (unless rectified):
• more formal counselling, including a written record of the discussion that will be provided to the employee and noted on the employee’s file.

**Escalation**
Where options of this kind have been unsuccessful, or where the seriousness of the possible breach clearly requires immediate consideration of a formal process, you must ensure that all information is provided.

**Investigating breaches**
Procedural fairness will apply to all parties involved in the investigation and a determination will be made with as little formality and as much expedition as appropriate. As a manager, your involvement in an investigation may be limited. The outcome of the investigation and any sanction is highly confidential. Any information communicated about the matter will be under the specific authorisation of the delegate.

**Maintaining Confidentiality**
All employee records and information must be managed in accordance with the relevant privacy principles which govern the use and disclosure of personal information. This includes information relating to reviews of action, employee conduct and behaviour, performance management or injury and rehabilitation case management.

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