



clydebank housing association

*"Offering our community more than a home"*

## Sexual Harassment Policy

Management Committee submission:	29 October 2024
Reviewed	October 2025
Approved:	29 October 2024
Review date:	October 2028

### **CHA Objectives:**

- To ensure that our resources are adequate to deliver our objectives by investing in our people, demonstrating value for money and through robust procurement practices.
- To promote social inclusion by applying principles of equality and diversity to everything we do.

### **Regulatory Standards:**

- The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these objectives.
- The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being, while maintaining rents at a level that tenants can afford to pay
- The governing body and senior officers have the skills and knowledge they need to be effective
- The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.

***If you have difficulty with reading this policy, including any difficulties with sight or hearing, or if you require this document translated into another language, please contact us and we will be happy to provide this information in a format that suits your needs.***

## **Introduction**

Clydebank (CHA) is committed to creating a work environment where all employees are treated with dignity and respect.

Sexual harassment and victimisation are prohibited under the Equality Act 2010, and this policy outlines CHA's zero-tolerance stance toward such behaviour. The purpose of this policy is to ensure all employees feel safe and supported, with clear pathways to redress should any inappropriate behaviour arise.

### **1. Policy Scope, Explanations or Requirements**

This policy applies to all employees, workers, agency workers, volunteers and contractors of Clydebank Housing Association, including those employed or engaged in any capacity for CHA. It serves as a clear guideline for recognising, preventing, and addressing incidents of sexual harassment.

All employees are expected to contribute to a respectful and harassment-free work environment.

### **2. Definition**

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. It also covers treating someone less favourably because they have submitted to, or refused to submit to, unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or in relation to gender reassignment or sex.

Sexual harassment may be committed by a fellow worker, an agent of an organisation, or a third party. It does not need to occur in person. It can occur via digital means, including social media sites or channels (e.g. WhatsApp). Someone may be sexually harassed even if they were not the target of the behaviour. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Sexual comments or jokes, which may be referred to as “banter”
- Displaying sexually graphic pictures, posters or photos
- Suggestive looks, staring or leering
- Propositions and sexual advances
- Making promises in return for sexual favours
- Sexual gestures
- Intrusive questions about a person's private or sex life or a person discussing their own sex life
- Sexual posts or contact in online communications, including on social media
- Spreading sexual rumours about a person

- Sending sexually explicit emails, text messages or messages via other social media
- Wolf-whistling
- Unwelcome touching, hugging, massaging or kissing
- Making sexual remarks about someone's body, clothing or appearance
- Making sexual comments or jokes about someone's sexual orientation or gender reassignment

Victimisation is subjecting someone to detriment because they have done, are suspected of doing, or intend to do, an act which is protected under discrimination and harassment laws. These are outlined below. It is not necessary for the person to have done the protected act in order for detrimental treatment to be considered as victimisation.

The protected acts are:

- Making a claim or complaint under the Equality Act (e.g. for discrimination or harassment)
- Helping someone else to make a claim by giving evidence or information in connection with proceedings under the Equality Act
- Making an allegation that someone has breached the Equality Act
- Doing anything else in connection with the Equality Act

Examples of victimisation may include:

- Failing to consider someone for promotion because they have previously made a sexual harassment complaint
- Dismissing someone because they accompanied a colleague to a meeting about a sexual harassment complaint
- Excluding someone from work meetings because they gave evidence as a witness for another employee as part of an employment tribunal claim about harassment.

### **3. Circumstances**

This policy covers behaviour which occurs in the following situations:

- A work situation
- A situation occurring outside of the normal workplace or normal working hours which is related to work, e.g. a working lunch, a business trip or social functions
- Outside of a work situation but involving a colleague or other person connected to the Organisation, including on social media
- Outside of a work situation where the incident is relevant to your suitability to carry out the role

#### 4. Responsibilities

In line with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) guidance, CHA has developed a comprehensive Sexual Harassment Action Plan to ensure a safe, respectful workplace where all employees feel supported.

The Senior Management Team at CHA will work within these guidelines to uphold the highest standards of behaviour and create an environment where employees feel safe to raise concerns. This plan focuses on fostering openness, addressing complaints quickly, and taking proactive action to prevent sexual harassment. This policy supports the Dignity at Work policy, the Codes of Conduct, the Customer Engagement Policy and the Sexual Harassment Procedure.

**Employees** - Employees are vital in creating an open, transparent culture at CHA. They are responsible for treating colleagues with respect and must report any behaviour that may constitute sexual harassment, either when they experience it or witness it. Employees are also encouraged to attend mandatory training sessions and read relevant materials to fully understand their responsibilities. By doing so, they help maintain a workplace where all individuals are treated with dignity.

**Line Managers** - Managers play a pivotal role in preventing and addressing sexual harassment. They have a responsibility to:

- Promptly and confidentially address complaints of sexual harassment or any unacceptable behaviour.
- Create a safe space where employees feel comfortable discussing issues and raising concerns without fear of retaliation.
- Investigate complaints thoroughly and impartially, ensuring that any unacceptable conduct is dealt with in accordance with CHA's disciplinary procedures.
- Actively intervene and stop inappropriate behaviour, even if no formal complaint has been made, in line with their duty to maintain a harassment-free workplace.

Both employees and managers must act swiftly when sexual harassment occurs. Any instance of harassment, whether directly experienced or witnessed, should be reported, ensuring that CHA's procedures are followed to protect all parties involved.

#### 5. Monitoring & Evaluation

This policy does not constitute contractual terms and conditions. The Association reserves the right to amend any provision of this policy subsequent to appropriate consultation.

## 6. Equality and Human Rights

We will not discriminate on the grounds of Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, and Sexual Orientation. An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and none of these protected groups will be unduly affected by this Policy. The Policy applies to all.

The Association will provide equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all, ensuring that no individual or group is treated less favourably than anyone else. We work closely with community stakeholders, to provide assurance that we are achieving these aims.

The Association will meet, and where appropriate exceed our obligations under the Equality Act 2010, including the general equality duty in the Act, to ensure we do not discriminate against, harass or victimise a person because they have one or more of the nine protected characteristics described in the Act.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out as part of the review of this policy, in order to assess where the aims of this policy may have a positive, negative or neutral impact upon any of the nine Protected Characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

## 7. Review

CHA undertakes to review this policy regularly, at least every three years after the initial first year review, with regard to:

- Applicable legislation, rules, regulations and guidance
- Changes in the organisation
- Continued best practice

### For Office Use Only – Required Actions

Customer or 3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Consultation and Update Required/Arranged	Yes
Intranet Update	Yes
F Drive Update	Yes
Website Update	Yes
Leaflet change required	No
Newsletter Promotion?	Yes
Other information updated, e.g. posters, automatic email responses, post cards, answering machine messages, etc.	No
Equality Impact Assessment completed and attached	Yes