

Toowoomba Art Society

Workplace Bullying policy

The board of Directors have a duty of care to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of their workers at work under the Queensland *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act).

Our commitment

Toowoomba Art Society is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment and a workplace free from bullying.

Workers, contractors and volunteers are protected by this policy whether they feel bullied by another worker, volunteer, director, manager, contractor, member of the Society or a member of the public.

Toowoomba Art Society will treat reports of bullying seriously. We will respond promptly, impartially and confidentially.

This policy will be made available to all staff, contractors and volunteers. New staff will be given a copy of this policy and will be reminded of the policy from time to time.

Expected workplace behaviours

Under work health and safety laws, workers and other people at Toowoomba Art Society must take reasonable care that they do not adversely affect the health and safety of others.

Toowoomba Art Society expects people to:

- behave in a responsible and professional manner
- treat others 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.

For any Toowoomba Art Society workers, this policy applies to behaviours that occur:

- in connection with work, even if it occurs outside normal working hours
- during work activities, for example when dealing with TAS members and clients
- at work-related events, for example at workshops, exhibitions, classes, meetings and social functions and
- social media where workers interact with TAS members or clients and their actions may affect them either directly or indirectly.

What is workplace bullying?

Bullying is repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker/person or a group of workers/people that creates a risk to health and safety.

Repeated behaviour refers to the persistent nature of the behaviour and can refer to a range of behaviours over time.

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Unreasonable behaviour means behaviour that a reasonable person, having considered the circumstances, would see as unreasonable, including behaviour that is victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening. Single incidents of unreasonable behaviour can also present a risk to health and safety and will not be tolerated.

What is **not** workplace bullying?

Reasonable management action taken by managers or supervisors to direct and control the way work is carried out is not workplace bullying if the action is carried out in a lawful and reasonable way, taking the particular circumstances into account.

What can you do?

If you feel you are experiencing or witnessing bullying it is always best to raise your concerns about the behaviour directly with the complainant in the first instance. If you are not comfortable dealing with the problem yourself, or your attempts to do so have not been successful, you should raise the issue promptly your manager (if you are a worker), your Group Leader (if you are a member of a TAS group), or email: twbal@godsall@gmail.com directly, briefly outlining the issue. The matter will be referred to the Governance committee and/or directly to the Board.

How we will respond

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

1. A Board nominated TAS representative, or your manager (if you are a worker) will speak to the person(s) involved as soon as possible, gather information and seek a resolution to satisfactorily address the issue for all parties. Mediation may be offered to both parties to assist in resolving the issue. Both parties must agree to mediation for this to proceed.
 - a. Where the bullying complaint is made against the Board, the person would need to be a mediator from an external, third-party organisation, paid for by TAS and agreed to by both parties.
2. If issues cannot be resolved or the unreasonable behaviour is considered to be of a serious nature, a Board nominated TAS representative who is 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.
 - a. If you have not been able to resolve the situation, Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (Phone: 1300 362 128) may be able to offer you further advice and assistance.
3. All complaints and reports will be treated in the strictest 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 may result in disciplinary action.

Consequences of breaching this policy

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

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- a verbal or written apology
- a verbal or written reprimand, or
- dismissal and/or membership revocation of the person engaging in the bullying behaviour.

If bullying has not been substantiated

If an investigation finds bullying has not occurred or cannot be substantiated, the Toowoomba Art Society Board of Directors may still take appropriate action to address any issues leading to the bullying report.