



Australian All Breeds of Miniature Goat & Sheep Society Inc. (AABMGS)

Bullying and Harassment Policy

The Australian All Breeds of Miniature Goat & Sheep Society Inc. (AABMGS Inc) is committed to ensuring the environment we all enjoy is free from discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and bullying. Discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and bullying will not be tolerated under any circumstances and disciplinary action will be taken against any member that fails to comply with this policy.

What is Harassment?

Harassment involves a pattern of behaviour or course of conduct pursued by an individual with the intention of intimidating and distressing another person. Harassment is any unwanted behaviour verbal or physical (or even suggested) that makes a person feel uncomfortable, humiliated or emotionally distressed. There are three types of harassment, verbal, sexual or physical.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is repeated unreasonable behaviour that could reasonably be considered to be humiliating, intimidating, threatening or demeaning to a person, or group of persons, which creates a risk to health and safety.

1.1 The key elements of “bullying” are:

- (a) it is repeated unreasonable behaviour;
- (b) a reasonable person would consider the behaviour to be humiliating, intimidating, threatening or demeaning; and
- (c) it creates a risk to health and safety.

1.2 The motive of the perpetrator is irrelevant.

1.3 Below are some examples of behaviours which could be workplace bullying:

- (a) yelling, screaming abuse, using offensive language, making insults, making inappropriate comments about an individual’s appearance, personal life or lifestyle;
- (b) slandering an individual or their family;
- (c) making belittling comments or constant criticism;
- (d) isolating members from normal society interaction, training and development or career opportunities;
- (e) undermining work performance, deliberately withholding or denying access to society related information and resources or supplying incorrect information;

- (f) setting unreasonable timeframes or tasks or constantly changing timeframes;
- (g) tampering with an individual's personal effects or work equipment;
- (h) teasing or regularly making an individual or group of individuals the brunt of pranks/practical jokes; or
- (i) intimidatory behaviour.

1.4 Bullying can be carried out in a variety of ways including face to face, email, text message, internet chat rooms or through other social media channels.

1.5 Bullying does not include matters such as personality clashes, differences of opinion or occasional conflicts in working relationships.

Examples of Bullying:

Individual - Individual bullying tactics can be perpetrated by a single person against a target or targets and can be subjected by any of the following types of bullying.

Physical - This is any bullying that hurts someone's body or damages their possessions. Stealing, shoving, hitting, fighting, and destroying property all are types of physical bullying. Physical bullying is rarely the first form of bullying that a target will experience.

Verbal - This is any bullying that is conducted by speaking. Calling names, spreading rumours, threatening somebody, and making fun of others are all forms of verbal bullying. Verbal bullying is one of the most common types of bullying. In verbal bullying the main weapon the bully uses is their voice. Verbal bullying, as well as social exclusion techniques, dominate and control other individuals and show their superiority and power.

Relational - This is any bullying that is done with the intent to hurt somebody's reputation or social standing which can also link in with the techniques included in physical and verbal bullying. Relational bullying is a form of bullying common amongst youths. Relational bullying can be used as a tool by bullies to both improve their social standing and control others. Unlike physical bullying which is obvious, relational bullying is not overt and can continue for a long time without being noticed.

Cyber - Cyber bullying is the use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, or target another person. When an adult is involved, it may meet the definition of **cyber-harassment** or **cyberstalking**, a crime that can have legal consequences and involve jail time. This includes email, instant messaging, social networking sites (such as Facebook), text messages, and cell phones.

Collective - Collective bullying tactics are employed by more than one individual against a target or targets. This may include trolling behaviour on social media, although this is generally assumed to be individual in nature by the casual reader.

Steps to take if you suspect you are being harassed/bullied

1. Stay calm. If necessary, tell the intimidator that you will not continue the conversation until you have another member -present and walk away if you have to.
2. Make notes with the following details as soon as possible.
 - a. Name of the member/exhibitor
 - b. Time and date

- c. Witnesses
 - d. Screenshots if relevant
3. If it is not possible to confront the alleged harasser, or if this course of action fails to stop the behaviour, then the matter should be brought to the attention of AABMGS Inc. Secretary, in writing including the above details.

Responsibilities

Bullying complaints will be handled in a confidential and procedurally fair manner as set out below. Where confidentiality cannot be guaranteed this will be clearly communicated to the relevant parties.

Complaint procedure

If the person feels comfortable in doing so, it is preferable to raise the issue with the alleged harasser directly with a view to resolving the issue by discussion. The person should identify the offensive behaviour, explain that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive and ask that the behaviour stops.

If the behaviour continues, or if the person feels unable to speak to the person(s) directly, they should submit a formal complaint to the AABMGS secretary via email (aabmgs@gmail.com), who will direct the complaint to be investigated by the appropriate committee member.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Written harassment/bullying complaints will be investigated by the disciplinary sub-committee. This process will involve collecting information about the complaint and then making a finding based on the available information as to whether the alleged behaviour occurred.

The committee may need to interview the parties involved (which may include the complainant, the respondent, and any witnesses) and will ask to see any evidence collected (including screenshots) to obtain information regarding the complaint.

Decisions of findings and recommendations of disciplinary action are the responsibility of the committee. Possible outcomes of the investigation may include, but will not be limited to, any combination of the following:

- Official written warning requesting the bullying behaviour cease.
- Request to provide a formal apology.
- Mediation where the parties to the complaint agree to a mutually acceptable resolution.
- Disciplinary action (including termination of club membership including all registration/transfers in progress and banning from AABMGS events)
- Committee members will be immediately removed from the committee.

On completion of the investigation, all parties will be informed about the investigation findings and the outcome of the investigation in writing.

NB: If a committee member has a perceived or real conflict of interest in the formal complaint, they will not be a part of the investigation.

