Sexual Harassment Policy

Statement
Aidenvironment is committed to providing a safe environment for all its employees, clients, subcontractors, partner organisations, interns or associates, free from discrimination on any ground and from harassment at work including sexual harassment. Aidenvironment will operate a zero-tolerance policy for any form of sexual harassment in the workplace, treat all incidents seriously with respect and in confidence and promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment. Any person found to have sexually harassed another will face disciplinary action. No one will be victimised for making a complaint or reporting an incident.

Definition
Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated. It includes situations where a person is asked to engage in sexual activity as a condition of that person’s employment or other work-related rewards / benefits, as well as situations which create an environment which is hostile, intimidating or humiliating for the recipient. Sexual harassment can involve one or more /repeated incidents and actions. Harassment may be physical, verbal and non-verbal. Examples of conduct or behaviour which constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

Physical conduct
- Unwelcome physical contact including patting, pinching, stroking, kissing, hugging, fondling, inappropriate touching;
- Physical violence, including sexual assault;
- The use of job-related threats or rewards to solicit sexual favours.

Verbal conduct
- Sexual comments, stories and jokes;
- Sexual advances;
- Unwanted invitations for dates or physical intimacy;
- Insults based on the sex or appearance of the worker;
- Condescending or paternalistic remarks;
- Sending sexually explicit messages (by phone, email or social media).

Non-verbal conduct
- Display of sexually explicit or suggestive material;
- Sexually-suggestive gestures;
- Whistling;
- Leering.

It is important to note that these examples are not exhaustive, sexual harassment can include any conduct of sexual nature which is unwanted and unwelcome by the recipient.
Anyone can be a victim of sexual harassment, regardless of their sex and of the sex of the harasser. What matters is that the sexual conduct is unwanted and unwelcome by the person against whom the conduct is directed.

Aidenvironment recognises that sexual harassment is a manifestation of power relationships and often occurs within unequal relationships in the workplace, for example between manager or supervisor and employee. Anyone, including employees of Aidenvironment, clients, subcontractors, partner organisations, interns or associates who sexually harasses another will be reprimanded in accordance with the Aidenvironment staff policies.

All sexual harassment is prohibited whether it takes place within Aidenvironment premises or outside, including at social events, visits to other organizations, business trips, training sessions or conferences organized or sponsored by Aidenvironment.

**Complaints procedure**

Anyone who is subject to sexual harassment should, if possible, inform the alleged harasser that the conduct is unwanted and unwelcome. Aidenvironment recognises that sexual harassment may occur in unequal relationships and that it therefore may be difficult or impossible for the victim to inform the alleged harasser. If a victim cannot or does not want to directly approach the alleged harasser, he/she can approach the trusted person.

When the trusted person receives a complaint of sexual harassment, he/she will:

- ensure that the required **confidentiality** - as indicated by the victim - is ensured in all next steps and that the victim is convinced that his/her complaint is **taken seriously**;
- ensure that the **procedure**:  
  - is started as soon as possible, while observing a thoughtful process;  
  - includes recording the dates, times and facts of the incident(s) as well as the communication about it.
- in consultation with the **victim**:  
  - discuss and agree upon the next steps to be taken;  
  - ascertain the views as to what outcome he/she wants;  
  - ensure that the victim understands this procedure for dealing with the complaint;  
  - refer him/her to the external trusted person, or to an external investigative professional in the case he/she regards the case as too complicated to his/her abilities or if the victim prefers so for whatever reason;  
  - make clear that choosing to resolve the matter informally does not preclude him/her from pursuing a formal complaint if he/she is not satisfied with the outcome;  
  - decide if the incident is serious enough to suggest lodging a formal complaint to the relevant authorities, and as such to drop confidentiality and to whom;
- give an **opportunity** to the alleged harasser to respond to the complaint;  
  - ensure that the alleged harasser understands the procedure;
• **facilitate discussion** between the victim and the alleged harasser to achieve an informal resolution which is acceptable to the victim;
• **interview** relevant third parties if deemed relevant by the victim and the alleged harasser.
• **judge** whether or not the incident(s) of sexual harassment took place;
  o if it can’t be judged whether the sexual harassment took place, refer the matter to the external trusted person or the relevant authorities;
  o if it is judged that the sexual harassment took place, advise to the director on what the appropriate remedial actions, sanctions and/or disciplinary measures, in consultation with the victim and in line with the Aidenvironment staff policies;
  o if it is judged that the sexual harassment didn’t take place, advise to the director on what the appropriate remedial actions, sanctions and/or disciplinary measures, in consultation with the alleged harasser and in line with the Aidenvironment staff policies.
• **follow up** to ensure that the recommendations are implemented, that the behaviour has stopped, and that the victim is satisfied with the outcome;
• **report** to the director detailing the investigations (made anonymous), findings and any recommendations.

Aidenvironment has nominated this trusted person and has provided her/him with special training to enable them to assist victims of sexual harassment. Aidenvironment recognises that because sexual harassment often occurs in unequal relationships within the workplace, victims often feel that they cannot come forward. Aidenvironment understands the need to support victims in making complaints.

**Remedial actions, sanctions and disciplinary measures**

The victim may receive:
• apology from the harasser;
• change of working arrangements;
• promotion (if the victim was demoted as a result of the harassment).

The harasser is liable to any of the following sanctions, following the Aidenvironment staff policies:
• verbal or written warning;
• training for the harasser;
• adverse performance evaluation;
• reduction in wages;
• transfer;
• demotion;
• suspension;
• dismissal.
The nature of the sanctions will depend on the gravity and extent of the harassment. Suitable deterrent sanctions will be applied to ensure that incidents of sexual harassment are not treated as trivial.

**Implementation of this policy**
Aidenvironment will ensure that this policy is widely disseminated to all relevant persons. It will be included in the staff regulations and posted online on the Aidenvironment website. All new employees must be informed on the content of this policy as part of their introduction into the organisation. It is the responsibility of every manager to ensure that all employees are aware of this policy.

**Monitoring and evaluation**
Aidenvironment recognises the importance of monitoring this sexual harassment policy and will ensure that it anonymously monitors incidents through the yearly trusted person report (as detailed in the Aidenvironment staff regulations, 2019). As a result of this report, the organization will evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and make any changes if needed.