

ANTI HARASSMENT POLICY

1. Preamble:

Balakrishnan V & Co, a distinguished Chartered Accountancy firm based in Bangalore, India, is resolutely committed to fostering a work environment that is not only professional but also free from all forms of harassment. Our dedication extends beyond the professional realm to maintaining a workplace where every individual, regardless of their role, is treated with unwavering dignity and respect.

In alignment with our firm's size and ethos, we emphasize a personalized approach to ensure the well-being and satisfaction of our compact team, reinforcing our commitment to creating a harmonious and inclusive work culture.

2. Scope:

This policy is not just a formality but a reflection of our values that extends to all members of our firm, including partners, associates, staff, interns, and anyone associated with Balakrishnan V & Co. Despite our small team, the scope of this policy is comprehensive, addressing all forms of harassment, to create a work environment that reflects our commitment to equality and respect.

3. Definition of Harassment:

In our context, harassment takes on a broader definition, encompassing any unwelcome behaviour that could potentially compromise the well-being of our small but vital team. This includes verbal, physical, or written actions that denigrate or show hostility based on protected characteristics such as race, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, or national origin. Our commitment to inclusivity means addressing all forms of harassment, ensuring a workplace where everyone feels valued and respected.

4. Prohibited Conduct:

Within our close-knit firm, the prohibition of harassment holds particular significance. We explicitly state that any form of harassment, including sexual harassment, is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This commitment extends to prohibiting retaliation against individuals who report harassment or assist in an investigation, fostering an environment where our team feels secure and supported.

5. Reporting Procedure:

Our reporting procedure is tailored to our firm's size and structure. Any employee who experiences or witnesses harassment is encouraged to report the incident directly to the proprietor. We emphasize confidentiality in these reports, ensuring that individuals feel comfortable coming forward and that investigations are conducted with the utmost sensitivity.

6. Investigation and Corrective Action:

The firm, despite its size, is dedicated to conducting thorough investigations promptly. If a violation of this policy is confirmed, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, reinforcing our commitment to maintaining a safe and respectful workplace. The corrective actions may range from counselling and training to, if necessary, termination of employment, ensuring accountability within our small yet cohesive team. All investigations shall be conducted by a council to be set up for the purpose.

7. Non-Retaliation:

Our policy firmly prohibits retaliation against any individual involved in reporting harassment incidents or aiding in an investigation. This stance reinforces our commitment to openness, trust, and fair treatment within our small but vital work community. As a best practice the firm follows the principles laid down in international whistle blower policies.

8. Training and Awareness:

Recognizing the importance of continuous improvement, the firm will conduct regular training and awareness programs specifically designed for our small team. This ensures that all employees are not only familiar with their rights and responsibilities under this policy but also actively contribute to fostering a workplace culture that values respect and inclusion. The firm engages experts to conduct such training on a regular basis. This is also covered as step in the induction process of the new employees.

9. Compliance:

Every member of our close-knit team is expected to comply with this policy. Our commitment to maintaining a safe and respectful work environment necessitates the active participation of each team member. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary action, reinforcing the importance of individual responsibility within our tight-knit professional community.