

CYBERBULLYING POLICY

Torian Pro has a responsibility to provide a supportive, positive and healthy environment that promotes the dignity and respect of everyone within the community and therefore must aim to eliminate bullying in all of its forms.

Cyberbullying, like all other forms of bullying, must therefore not be tolerated in our places of business as it has a negative impact on all who are touched by it. It erodes the rights and the physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual and social well-being of individuals. It lowers morale for it can interfere with the effectiveness of work and community environments by making them hostile, unpleasant and offensive places.

The purpose of this policy is to articulate the rights and responsibilities of all in the Torian Pro community with regards to cyberbullying.

DEFINITION

Cyberbullying: cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others.*

While cyberbullying is similar to real life bullying, it also differs in the following ways:

- It can be difficult to escape and is invasive for it can occur 24/7 and a person can be targeted at home or, indeed, almost anywhere.
- It can involve harmful material being widely and rapidly disseminated to a large audience, for example, rumours and images can be posted on public forums or sent to many people at the 'press of a button'.
- It can provide the bully with a sense of relative anonymity and distance from the victim so there is a lack of immediate feedback or consequences.
- Cyberbullying might occur over the Internet, in instant messaging (IM), chat rooms / bash boards, social networking sites, blogs, gaming sites, over the phone by SMS or MMS, by email or via other technologies.

Examples of cyberbullying:

- Sending harassing, threatening and / or menacing messages to targets either directly, anonymously or using another person's address or alias.
- Harassing someone or having heated arguments (called 'flaming') in private chat rooms with the use of inappropriate / obscene language.
- Masquerading as someone else and using that person's mobile phone or computer to send harassing or threatening messages.
- Mocking, teasing and harassing online, or voting online for the 'ugliest' / 'fattest' / 'dumbest' (etc.) person, or posting visuals that can be altered (including sexually explicit material).

POLICY

When addressing issues of cyberbullying, Torian Pro will consistently apply the principles and procedures contained within this policy document.

General Principles:

This policy has been formulated on the basis of the following general principles:

1. Torian Pro owe a duty of care to their employees, volunteers and to all others who attend work in or visit their workplace or venue. .
2. Cyberbullying is to be handled in a straightforward, effective, sympathetic, timely and fair manner.
3. Compliance with all relevant legislation covering issues of cyberbullying must be ensured.
4. Avenues for improved interpersonal relationship and conflict resolution are to be provided where practicable.
5. Ethical and professional conduct and standards of behaviour is promoted.
6. All individuals affected by the experience of cyberbullying are to be provided with an avenue to discuss a grievance and explore a choice of actions where practicable.
8. A deliberate and ongoing focus must be placed on promoting positive online behaviour. This will incorporate the development of positive, appropriate and constructive online relationships within the community

Specific Principles:

In addition, this policy has been formulated on the basis of the specific principles that apply to cases of cyberbullying, which demand more formalised responses.

1. Due process: This is based on the concept of procedural fairness. It includes an individual's right to be adequately notified of complaints, charges or proceedings involving him / her, and the opportunity to be heard at these proceedings. Due process incorporates principles of natural justice.
2. Natural justice: People should have an opportunity to respond to any adverse material that may influence a decision affecting them.
3. Confidentiality: Confidentiality is to be maintained as far as practicable during resolution procedures but there may be times when disclosure of information contained in a complaint or a response to a complaint is appropriate.
4. Resolution: Where possible, complaints should be resolved at the lowest possible level by open dialogue and cooperation. An individual may choose to resolve the problem by discussing it with the other party or parties concerned. This may involve the assistance of the Torian Pro management team.:

Recommended strategies for individuals to respond to instances of cyberbullying:

The following general strategies are recommended to assist those who are victims of cyberbullying activity:

1. Report any incidence of cyberbullying or upsetting hostile cyberspace behaviour, including deliberate exclusion, to a relevant person within the Torian Pro team.
2. Do not respond to further messages / postings from the bully and, if possible, block their mobile phone number or email address.
3. Keep evidence of any cyberbullying (including screen captures, the bully's screen name, text and images) to assist in tracking down the bully and as necessary reporting the matter to Police.

4. Report any concerns to the administrator of the service used for bullying whether this be the mobile phone provider if SMS is involved, the website administrator or internet service provider if social networking or chat services are the vehicles for the cyberbullying occurring.
5. Seek support from an appropriate and supportive contact such as a friend, family member, counsel or colleague.
6. Contact Police immediately in cases of possible serious threats to life or physical well-being has occurred.

Related Documents

Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)

Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)

Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

Anti- Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)