

WEST LIMERICK INDEPENDENT LIVING CLG

Dignity at Work Policy

Policy Reference	WLILP54
Category	Operational Policies — HR & Employee Relations
Version	1.1 (policy number confirmed as WLILP54)
Status	APPROVED — by the Board of Directors on 9 October 2026
Supersedes	Part 4: Dignity at Work Policy, within Workplace Procedures Framework and Core Employment Policies 2026
Policy Owner	Board of Directors, West Limerick Independent Living CLG
Applies To	All employees of West Limerick Independent Living CLG ("WLIL")
Related Policies	WLILP7D - Data Retention, Rectification and Erasure Policy; WLILP8 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse Policy; WLILP36 - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy; Grievance Policy; Disciplinary Policy; Investigation Toolkit (shared across all four employee relations policies)
Review Cycle	At least every two years, or sooner where legislation, regulation, HSE requirements, HIQA standards, safeguarding requirements, WRC guidance, or organisational learning require revision

1. Purpose

West Limerick Independent Living ("WLIL") is committed to providing a workplace where all employees are treated with dignity, respect and fairness. The purpose of this policy is to prevent and address bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, victimisation and inappropriate workplace behaviour. This policy applies in the context of office work, client homes, community settings, transport services, online communications, training, meetings, social events connected with work, and any setting connected with employment.

2. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

- Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2015 — see WLILP36 - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- Industrial Relations Act 1990, and the Code of Practice on Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures (S.I. No. 146/2000)

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees and covers behaviour involving employees; managers and coordinators; clients, where relevant to the working environment; families, representatives or members of the public, where relevant to the working environment; and contractors, volunteers, students or others connected with WLIL.

Where a concern involves a client or family member, WLIL will balance employee dignity and safety with service-user rights, safeguarding obligations, and person-centred practice.

4. Policy Statement

WLIL will not tolerate bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, victimisation, or retaliation. All employees are required to treat others with respect; maintain professional boundaries; avoid behaviour that undermines dignity or creates a hostile working environment; report serious concerns promptly; and cooperate with informal or formal resolution processes.

5. Bullying

Bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others at the place of work or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work. An isolated incident may not normally amount to bullying, but may still be inappropriate and may be addressed under this or another policy.

Examples may include repeated verbal abuse or ridicule; intimidation or threatening behaviour; deliberate exclusion or isolation; undermining a person's work or reputation; repeated unfair criticism; misuse of authority; and unreasonable pressure or humiliation.

Reasonable management action, carried out appropriately, is not bullying. This includes supervision, instruction, correction, performance management, disciplinary action, reassignment, roster changes, or operational decision-making.

6. Harassment and Sexual Harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected equality ground that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Examples may include offensive jokes, comments or gestures; unwanted personal remarks; sexual comments or advances; displaying or sharing offensive images or messages; inappropriate touching; intrusive questions about private life; and harassment through text, messaging apps, email or social media.

7. Discrimination and Victimisation

Discrimination occurs where a person is treated less favourably on a protected equality ground — see WLILP36 - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy for WLIL's full framework. Victimisation occurs where a person is penalised or treated adversely because they made a complaint, supported a complaint, gave evidence, or asserted rights under equality or employment law. Victimisation is prohibited and may lead to disciplinary action.

8. Dignity at Work in Client Homes and Community Settings

Employees working in client homes and community settings must understand that the workplace may also be a person's private home. Employees must respect the client's home, privacy, choices and routines; maintain professional boundaries; avoid imposing personal views, values or expectations; report inappropriate behaviour,

risk or boundary concerns promptly; and seek guidance where client preferences, family expectations or working conditions create concern.

Where an employee experiences inappropriate behaviour from a client, family member or third party, WLIL will assess the matter and may take action such as reviewing the care plan or risk assessment; speaking with the client or representative, where appropriate; adjusting service arrangements; providing support or supervision; reassigning staff where necessary; and escalating safeguarding, health and safety or contractual concerns under WLILP8 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse Policy.

9. Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, dignity at work concerns may be addressed informally, including asking the person to stop the behaviour; raising the matter with a manager or coordinator; mediation or a facilitated discussion; clarification of standards and expectations; or supervision or training. Informal resolution will not be appropriate in all cases, particularly where allegations are serious or there is a risk to safety, dignity or service users.

10. Formal Complaint Procedure

A formal complaint should be submitted in writing and should include the behaviour complained of; dates, times and locations; names of relevant persons; any witnesses; any supporting documents or messages; the impact of the behaviour; and any steps already taken. WLIL will acknowledge the complaint and assess whether it should be managed under this policy, the Grievance Policy, the Disciplinary Policy, WLILP8, or another procedure.

11. Investigation

Where required, WLIL will appoint an appropriate person to investigate, using the shared Investigation Toolkit (Investigation Plan, Investigation Interview Notes, and Investigation Report). The investigation may include meeting the complainant; informing the respondent of the allegations; meeting the respondent; interviewing witnesses; reviewing documents, electronic communications, rosters, records or other evidence; and considering safeguarding, health and safety or service-user issues. Both complainant and respondent will be treated fairly. Findings will be made on the balance of probabilities.

12. Outcome

WLIL will issue an outcome in writing, as appropriate, using the Decision/Outcome Record in the Investigation Toolkit. The outcome may include: complaint upheld, partially upheld or not upheld; informal resolution; mediation; training or supervision; operational adjustments; disciplinary action; safeguarding or health and safety action; or no further action. Confidentiality and data protection will be respected. The complainant may not be entitled to full details of disciplinary sanctions imposed on another employee.

13. Malicious or Vexatious Complaints

A complaint will not be considered malicious simply because it is not upheld. However, knowingly false, malicious or vexatious complaints may be addressed under the Disciplinary Policy.

14. Protection from Retaliation

No person may victimise or retaliate against an employee for raising a dignity at work concern in good faith or participating in a dignity at work process.

15. Records

Records will be kept securely and retained in accordance with WLILP7D - Data Retention, Rectification and Erasure Policy, which is the single authoritative source for WLIL's retention periods.

16. Review

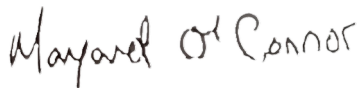
This policy will be reviewed at least every two years, or sooner where legislation, regulation, HSE requirements, HIQA standards, safeguarding requirements, WRC guidance, or organisational learning require revision.

This policy reflects the Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2015 and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, checked as accurate as of drafting. It is not a substitute for legal or HR advice.

Approval

Approved by the Board of West Limerick Independent Living CLG on 9 October 2026.

Signed on behalf of the Board, on its instruction, by the General Manager:



Margaret O'Brien O'Connor, General Manager

Date signed:



Appendix A — Dignity at Work Meeting Notes

Case Reference: _____ Date of Meeting: _____

Time: _____ Location/Format: _____

Complainant/Respondent: _____ Role/Position: _____

Manager/Chair: _____ Note Taker: _____

1. Attendees

Name / Role / Organisation / Attended as (e.g. Rep): _____

Apologies: _____

2. Purpose of Meeting

☐ Initial discussion/clarification ☐ Informal resolution ☐ Investigation update ☐ Feedback on findings ☐
Outcome and next steps ☐ Other: _____

3. Summary of Complaint / Issue

4. Account Provided

Complainant's Account: _____

Respondent's Account: _____

5. Key Points / Impact Described

6. Clarifications Sought

7. Informal Resolution / Options Discussed

☐ Mediation facilitated ☐ Agreement reached ☐ Behavioural change discussion ☐ Support/adjustments considered ☐ Other: _____

Outcome of discussion: _____

8. Agreed Next Steps

☐ Informal resolution to proceed ☐ Investigation to be conducted ☐ Further information required ☐
Training/support to be provided ☐ Referred to Disciplinary process ☐ Other: _____

Details/actions agreed: _____

9. Any Additional Comments

10. Confirmation

We confirm that the above notes are an accurate record of the meeting.

Complainant/Respondent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Manager/Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____

Note Taker Signature: _____ Date: _____