

HOW YOU CAN PREVENT HARASSMENT AND BULLYING



Preventing and dealing with harassment and bullying on board is a shared responsibility in which everyone on board has a role. See what you can do to help deal with harassment and bullying.

INDIVIDUAL:

The individual seafarer



How you can help prevent and deal with harassment and bullying:

- Don't spread rumours about your colleagues and managers.
- Help instead of criticising when a colleague makes a mistake.
- Don't be sarcastic or condescending.
- Engage in activities that promote well-being.
- Apologise if you accidentally hurt someone - even if you have doubts.

If you witness harassment or bullying:

- Say stop! Contact the offender and talk about his/her unacceptable behaviour.
- Support colleagues who are victims of harassment or bullying.

If you feel harassed or bullied:

- If you are being bullied or harassed, you should immediately ask the offender to stop.
 - Tell your manager.
 - Contact your safety representative.
 - Talk to family, friends or a good colleague about what happened.
 - Contact relevant person in the company.
 - Contact SeafarerHelp, a free, confidential, multilingual helpline available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year.
 - Report concern on unacceptable behaviour through the NMA's portal



GROUP:

Colleagues or safety committee



Together, you can help prevent and tackle harassment and bullying:

- Put harassment and bullying on the agenda. Raise the issue at safety committee meetings.
- Talk to those involved in a constructive way - first the victim, then the offender.
- Be good role models - speak out against bullying and harassment.
- Know and use the company's policy against harassment and bullying.
- If bullying or harassment occurs, raise the issue with the vessel's management/company.

MANAGEMENT:

The ship management



How the ship management can prevent and deal with harassment and bullying:

- Be good role models - ensure respectful relations and good cooperation.
- Ensure that the company's policy against harassment and bullying is clear to everyone on board.
- Be aware of signs of deprivation and speak out clearly against unwanted and offensive behaviour.
- Take reports of bullying and harassment seriously, initiate investigations of cases.
- Learn to resolve conflicts in a constructive way - get external help if necessary.



ORGANIZATION:

The Shipping Company



How the company can actively contribute to the prevention and management of harassment and bullying:

- Develop a policy with clear definitions of harassment and bullying, and clear guidelines for preventing and dealing with them.
- Take responsibility for ensuring that the policy is known and followed on board the vessels.
- Appoint and train a designated person to deal with cases of harassment and bullying.
- Ensure good introduction of new staff - both professionally and socially.
- Ensure a respectful tone and good cooperation.





Harassment and bullying are both harmful and dangerous

- In a survey on maritime safety conducted in 2023, 27 per cent said that they had experienced bullying or harassment in the past twelve months.
- Gossip, rumours and personal criticism were the most common forms of offence.
- The survey further highlighted a direct correlation between various safety risks and incidents of harassment or bullying.
- Significantly more individuals who reported being harassed or bullied have been involved in near misses and actual accidents compared to those who have not experienced harassment or bullying.
- At the Norwegian Maritime Authority, we will now intensify our focus on harassment and bullying, as part of our commitment to improving working and living conditions on board vessels.

Relevant overarching regulation

Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act

Section 6. Prohibition against discrimination

Discrimination on the basis of gender, pregnancy, leave in connection with childbirth or adoption, care responsibilities, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age or combinations of these factors is prohibited. "Ethnicity" includes national origin, descent, skin colour and language

Ship Labour Act

Section 1-1. The purpose of the Act is:

- a. to ensure sound conditions of employment and equality of treatment in the workplace at sea;
- b. together with the Ship Safety and Security Act to secure a working environment that provides a basis for a healthy and meaningful work situation, that affords full safety from harmful physical and mental influences and that has a standard of welfare which at all times is consistent with the level of technological and social development of society;
- c. to facilitate adaptations of the individual employee's working situation in relation to his or her capabilities and circumstances of life;
- d. to provide a basis whereby the employer and the employees may themselves safeguard and develop their working environment in the undertaking in cooperation with the employers' and employees' organisations and with the requisite guidance and supervision of the public authorities;
- e. to foster inclusive working conditions

Ship Safety and Security Act

Section 1. Purpose of the Act

This Act shall safeguard life, health, property and the environment by facilitating a high level of ship safety and safety management, including preventing pollution from ships, ensuring a fully satisfactory working environment and safe working conditions on board the ship as well as appropriate public supervision of ships.



Mandatory certificate survey checklists

Protection against harassment and bullying

Have routines and procedures been established to prevent and address discrimination and harassment on board?

- These routines should include guidelines on prevention, reporting, handling and follow-up of inappropriate behaviour, and should be integrated into the vessel's systematic HSE practices.
- Employees, safety representatives and union representatives should be involved when developing these routines.
- You should always try to resolve disputes on board at the lowest level if possible. Safety or union representatives can be contacted if necessary. In the event of a dispute, the Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud can provide assistance to both employers and employees.



System for handling of complaints

A system must be in place for addressing complaints on board, incorporating the following:

- The shipping company must appoint a person on board who will be responsible for handling complaints from crew members, a complaint handling officer.
- All crew members must be informed of who this person is and the procedure for lodging complaints.
- The complaint handling officer should aim to resolve issues at the lowest level possible. Individuals do, however, have the right to escalate complaints to the shipping company or the Norwegian Maritime Authority.
- All complaints must be submitted in writing.
- Seafarers should receive a copy of the complaint procedures specific to the vessel, including any additional provisions.