

4.037 Anti-Bullying (New 02/23/22)

Bullying is not considered acceptable behavior at Highland Community College. This policy applies to all employees as they interact with students, visitors or each other. Highland supports a culture of respectful academic freedom and freedom of expression and follows the Core Values of Integrity, Compassion, and Respect. Our culture and values do not tolerate bullying and its harmful impact to individuals and the workplace. This policy is not meant to apply to differences of opinion, interpersonal conflicts, and occasional problems in working relations, which are an inevitable part of working life and do not typically constitute workplace bullying.

Definition of bullying: Intentional behavior targeted at an individual or group that is repeated, hostile or offensive, and creates an intimidating and/or threatening environment which produces a risk of psychological and/or physical harm.

Examples of bullying:

Highland considers the following types of behavior examples of bullying:

- Verbal bullying. Slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or his or her family; persistent name-calling that is hurtful, insulting or humiliating; using a person as the butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.
- Physical bullying. Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault or threat of physical assault, damage to a person's work area or property.
- Nonverbal bullying. Nonverbal gestures that can convey threatening messages.
- Exclusion. Socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work-related activities.
- Cyber bullying. Use of any electronic form, including, but not limited to, the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, or mobile phone, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature.

In addition, the following examples may constitute or contribute to evidence of bullying in the workplace:

- Persistent singling out of one person.
- Shouting or raising one's voice at an individual in public or in private.
- Using obscene or intimidating gestures.
- Not allowing the person to speak or express himself or herself (i.e., ignoring or interrupting).
- Personal insults and use of offensive nicknames.
- Public humiliation in any form.
- Constant criticism on matters unrelated or minimally related to the person's job performance or description.
- Public reprimands.
- Repeatedly accusing someone of errors that cannot be documented.
- Deliberately interfering with mail and other communications.

- Spreading rumors and gossip regarding individuals.
- Encouraging others to disregard a supervisor's instructions.
- Manipulating the ability of someone to do his or her work (e.g., overloading, underloading, withholding information, setting deadlines that cannot be met, giving deliberately ambiguous instructions).
- Often assigning menial tasks not in keeping with the normal responsibilities of the job.
- Taking credit for another person's ideas.
- Refusing reasonable requests for leave in the absence of work-related reasons not to grant leave.
- Deliberately excluding an individual or isolating him or her from work-related activities, such as meetings.
- Unwanted physical contact, physical abuse or threats of abuse to an individual or an individual's property (defacing or marking up property).

Dealing with bullying:

If bullying is occurring, employees should address concerns as soon as possible. Highland provides training and tools on how to positively communicate concerns and other supportive resources, such as an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to employees.

Generally, the first step is to give notice to individuals of their perceived bullying behaviors with a goal of self-awareness and correction. The employee may either address the individual directly or ask for support from a member of the Behavior Intervention Team (List of BIT Members may be found at G:\General\Student Issues and Concerns\Behavioral Intervention Members and Contacts), a supervisor or Human Resources. If the behavior continues or is severe, employees should discuss these situations with a supervisor and/or Human Resources. If you witness someone being bullied, show support for the individual being bullied and ask if they would like your assistance. If comfortable, talk with the bully in a constructive manner about the behavior and its effect on the workplace. Let a supervisor or HR know if it persists.

Related policies: Depending on the circumstances, these other policies may be considered.
 4.034 Sexual and Other Harassment
 4.39 Non-Violence