

# Respectful Resolution

I'VE BEEN

**ACCUSED**

**OF INAPPROPRIATE  
BEHAVIOUR, WHAT DO I DO?**

Advice and support for those who have been  
accused of inappropriate behaviour

# You've had an **allegation** of inappropriate behaviour or bullying made against you

## **You've been told you have behaved poorly.**

It can be difficult to hear someone thinks you behaved inappropriately or bullied someone. You may be angry, confused or embarrassed. You may be worried about what people think, fearful of a disciplinary action, or even losing your job.

## **These things are often not clear cut.**

You may not recognise the behaviours they are describing, feel misunderstood or may feel threatened yourself. Or on reflection, perhaps you did do that, but you didn't mean for it to be taken that way.

Perhaps you didn't notice at the time but looking back, you can see how you came across. It may be a one-off, or you were stressed. In this case you may want to apologise and ask for them to forgive you.

**You may feel your actions were justified.** Perhaps they were going to make an error, or you were respectfully trying to help them do a good job.

**You may recognise a need to change.** Studies show incivility between colleagues makes mistakes, errors and safety issues more likely.

## **You will be supported to resolve things fairly.**

Everyone involved will be treated fairly and with compassion. Our focus is on resolving issues through reflection, feedback and discussion, only using a formal process when appropriate.

## **The role of your manager is:**

- To actively build a safe culture in the team
- To create an environment where people feel safe to talk to each other about issues
- If people raise concerns to respond in a neutral, impartial, fair, professional way, with discretion
- To think about the person before the process
- Provide clarity so everyone involved knows what is happening and what is going to happen

**If you need support** dealing with what's happened contact HR, Occupational Health or a union representative or someone else you trust for advice.

We have a series of guides to help you which you can find on the intranet. **Start with the 'Overview of the approach' guide** then work through the Respectful Resolution pathway to help you resolve things.

### **Step 1. Creating a safe culture**

Your team should have had a discussion about your team culture and what our values and behaviours mean to you. Talk to your manager about this.

### **Step 2. Reflect**

**The person may have told you themselves.** This can take real courage so hear them out. Or another colleague may have said something using BUILD. This is about informally resolving the issue. They want to let you know, because they want to hear your side of the story and resolve things together.

**Stay calm,** step into their shoes for a moment. Use the flowchart and behaviours guide to reflect on your behaviour and how they experienced it. On reflection, might there be room for you to do things differently? If so, you could apologise, let them know you'll change.

### **Step 3. Direct Feedback**

**You may still feel your actions were acceptable,** respectful, in their best interests, and the allegation is unjustified. In this case talk to whoever gave you feedback and explain you have a different view. Listen carefully to their responses, respectful of their view. You could use BUILD as a basis for this conversation.

### **Step 4. Supported Resolution**

**If you can't find a resolution together, then talk to someone you trust,** your manager, a senior person, Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, HR, your union representative or Occupational Health. Ask for their help in holding a facilitated discussion. At this point only your agreements will be written down.

### **Step 5. Formal process**

If you've been approached via a **formal process** your rights are noted in our policy, including the right to support from the union or work colleague.

## Your notes, as you work through your options.

Taking some time to reflect and note down what happened is an important step towards a resolution.

Your notes about what someone has told you they observed you saying or doing.

Your feelings about what you've been told.

Your perspective – how would you describe what you did, the behaviours you exhibited?

Taking a moment to step into their shoes, what might their perspective be?

Your reflections on your behaviour now. Could you have done things differently for a different outcome?

Your notes about your options and next steps. Is it possible for you to apologise and move on?

How do you feel at the end of the process? Do you need further support?

## Further support and guidance

If you feel you need more guidance on what to do next, you can visit the intranet where you can download the following tools and resources:

### For you

- Information about our approaches, policies and procedures
- Guidance on what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
- Who to speak to for support
- Step-by-step guides walking you through all of your options

### For your Team

- Guides and templates to help you discuss and improve team culture
- Roles and responsibilities
- Guide for managers

This is one in a series of guides to support anyone who is a target of inappropriate behaviour, has witnessed or had an allegation of such behaviour made against them, and for managers dealing with poor behaviours in their teams.



For more assistance accessing these materials or if you have any questions, you can get in touch with the people listed below who can advise you on informal/formal procedures and support you throughout the process.

- [Health & wellbeing pages on the intranet](#)
- HR team
- [Freedom to Speak Up Guardian](#)  
[elft.freedomtospeakup@nhs.net](mailto:elft.freedomtospeakup@nhs.net)  
Tel: 07436027388
- Occupational Health  
[elft@teamprevent.co.uk](mailto:elft@teamprevent.co.uk)  
Tel: 01327 810777
- [Carefirst](#)  
Tel: 0800 174 319
- Or contact your Union rep

### Our approach to giving feedback

We use the A Kind Life approach to giving and receiving feedback – including the ABC of Appreciation and the BUILD kinder feedback model. You can learn more about this in the guide to Step 3 of our Respectful Resolution pathway. And in a suite of e-learning tools which you can find on our Learning Management System.

