

# PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION

ICMS

13 December 2012

## GENERAL INFORMATION BULLETIN No. HQ-FO-12-92

**DISTRIBUTION:** ALL STAFF

**SUBJECT:** Revised Harassment Policy

All people who work in PAHO are entitled to respectful treatment in the workplace. Being respected means being treated fairly, honestly and professionally and being valued for your skills, contributions and opinions. A respectful workplace is also more than just simple compliance with norms and rules; it is a working environment that is free of inappropriate behavior where people can work harmoniously together to attain their work objectives and the mission of the Organization.

PAHO has had a formal policy on the prevention and resolution of harassment in the workplace since 2004 and remains committed to providing a work environment where all people are treated with dignity and respect. As part of its ongoing efforts in this regard, a revised [Policy on the Prevention and Resolution of Harassment in the Workplace](#) was recently issued to more clearly delineate the types of behavior that might constitute harassment; streamline the process for handling formal reports of harassment; and provide other options in situations where it is determined that harassment did not take place, but where the person's behavior was not entirely appropriate.

The principal highlights of this revised policy are as follows:

- The types of behavior that might constitute harassment have been expanded beyond personal and sexual harassment to include bullying, abuse of authority and a hostile work environment. Specific examples have been given for each type of harassment.
- As in other types of allegations of misconduct, the Ethics Office (ETH) will be the intake point for all formal allegations of harassment, which can be submitted directly to ETH at [Ethics@paho.org](mailto:Ethics@paho.org) or through the *Ethics Help Line* at [www.globalcompliance.com](http://www.globalcompliance.com) or at [www.pahoethics.org](http://www.pahoethics.org).
- A new form, called a *Workplace Harassment Reporting Form*, has been developed to facilitate the reporting of formal allegations of harassment.
- Investigations into allegations of harassment will be carried out by ETH in accordance with *PAHO's Protocol for Conducting Workplace Investigations*.
- Investigation reports into allegations of harassment will be sent directly from ETH to the Area of Human Resources Management (HRM) or, in the event of a conflict of interest, to the Deputy Director for a decision on the merits of the allegation.

- Since not all inappropriate behavior necessarily amounts to misconduct, the measures to address such behavior have been expanded to include counseling, coaching and/or training, a verbal or written warning and a written apology.

Inquiries or comments relating to this revised policy should be referred to ETH, as the Coordinator of PAHO's Integrity and Conflict Management System (ICMS).