

# All you need to know about preventing and reporting abusive conduct

There is zero-tolerance for abusive conduct at UNAIDS. We all have a role to play in creating an environment that is welcoming to all, where everyone feels safe and where each colleague can perform at their best. It is our right to be safe at work. And it is our duty as UNAIDS staff to know how to recognize abusive conduct, where to go, and what to do if we believe that we have experienced or witnessed any abusive behaviour within the organization.

## What you should know

**Abusive conduct** is a generic term to collectively refer to discrimination, abuse of authority, and harassment, including sexual harassment. It may be comprised of a one-time incident or a series of incidents, and may occur either in the workplace or in connection with work.

**Discrimination** is any unfair treatment or arbitrary distinction in the workplace, on the basis of gender, gender expression, gender identity, race, religion or belief, nationality, ethnic or social origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, language, or other aspects of personal status.

**Harassment** is any behaviour that (i) is directed at another person and has the effect of offending, humiliating, or intimidating that person; (ii) the person engaging in the behaviour knows or reasonably ought to know would offend, humiliate, or intimidate that other person; and (iii) interferes with that other person's ability to carry out her or his functions at work and/or creates an intimidating or hostile work environment.

Examples of abusive conduct:

- **Abuse of authority:** Requesting that a person undertake personal favours that are not a part of her or his official duties (e.g., running errands of a personal nature for the supervisor);
- **Discrimination:** Derogatory or offensive nicknames or jokes based on a person's gender, race, religion or belief, etc.;

- **Harassment:** Making humiliating or offensive remarks to another person, orally or in writing

UNAIDS has an updated policy on Addressing and Preventing Abusive Conduct that specifies the responsibilities of staff, managers and the organization; identifies informal and formal resolution procedures; and highlights resources available to staff.

All UNAIDS staff are required to complete mandatory training: the United Nations Course on Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority (click [here](#) to access the course or find it in your PALM profile).

## What you can do

If you believe that you have experienced or witnessed abusive conduct, it is important to take action as soon as possible. Resolution through informal means can enable the situation to be resolved promptly. However, when informal means are not appropriate or successful, a formal complaint can be filed with the Office of Internal Oversight Services (IOS) of the World Health Organization.

If you believe that you have experienced or observed possible misconduct or breach of UNAIDS' values, you can contact the Integrity Hotline – an independent and confidential service available to everyone, inside or outside UNAIDS.

Anonymous complaints are also accepted and should include as many details as possible.

### Informal resolution process

If you feel comfortable and safe in doing so, clarify with the alleged offender in person that their behavior is unacceptable.

If you do not feel comfortable or safe speaking to the alleged offender, approach your 1st or 2nd level supervisor for support to address alleged incidents or to request information on additional support and services available to you.

You may also speak to:

- **Integrity Hotline** – An independent and confidential service available to everyone (turn the page for contact information)
- **UNAIDS Staff Association** – For information and advice. [UNAIDSStaffAssociation@unids.org](mailto:UNAIDSStaffAssociation@unids.org) Tel: +41 22 791 5569
- **UNAIDS HRM** – For policy guidance, support and/or to explore options for resolution. Find your focal point

on the intranet.  
Tel: +41 22 791 4078.

- **UNAIDS Ethics Office** – For advice on resolution mechanisms, advice and referrals. [ethicsoffice@unids.org](mailto:ethicsoffice@unids.org) Tel: +41 22 791 5049
- **UNAIDS Staff counsellor** – For psycho-social support/referrals. [staffcounselling@unids.org](mailto:staffcounselling@unids.org) Tel: +41 22 791 2315
- **Office of the Ombudsman** – For advice on resolution/mediation/referral. [ombudsman@who.int](mailto:ombudsman@who.int) Tel: +41 22 791 1494
- **Staff Health and Wellbeing Services** – For medical support. [shws@who.int](mailto:shws@who.int) Tel: +41 22 791 3040
- **Security Officer** – Immediate assistance for safety and physical security. [security@unids.org](mailto:security@unids.org) Tel: +41 795006505

If the informal resolution is not sufficient, a formal process can be implemented too

### Formal resolution process

Formal complaint filed with WHO's Office of Internal Oversight Services (IOS). [investigation@who.int](mailto:investigation@who.int) Tel: +41 22 791 2919

IOS acknowledges receipt (*normally within 10 working days*) and conducts initial review (*normally within 30 calendar days*)

IOS investigation

No IOS investigation

IOS investigation report shared with EXD

Decision to be communicated to complainant by IOS

Decision to be communicated to complainant by IOS

EXD requests Global Advisory Committee (GAC) to review report and provide recommendations

EXD decision and IOS report shared with parties

Implementation of disciplinary or managerial action



# #RESPECT

**It's our right to have a harassment-free workplace**

## **It's never too late to report a problem Report now to the Integrity Hotline**

The Integrity Hotline is an independent and confidential service available to everyone, inside or outside UNAIDS.

If you believe that you have experienced or observed possible misconduct or breach of UNAIDS' values, contact the Integrity Hotline by phone or online.

Reports can be made confidentially or anonymously to the Integrity Hotline. Reports can also be raised confidentially directly to [ethicsoffice@unaids.org](mailto:ethicsoffice@unaids.org).

Visit the page [unaids.org/en/howweare/ethics](https://unaids.org/en/howweare/ethics) to find the free national phone numbers and an online form to contact the Integrity Hotline.

The Integrity Hotline is administered in all six UN languages.



Scan to go to  
Integrity Hotline site