ics Accounting

Sexual Harassment Policy



Sexual Harassment Policy
CIS Subcontractors

Independent Contractor Services Ltd (the Company) is committed to providing a professional, respectful and safe working environment for everyone involved in its activities.

The Company does not tolerate sexual harassment or other inappropriate sexual behaviour and expects all individuals working for or with the Company to behave appropriately and respectfully.

This policy explains what behaviour is unacceptable and how concerns can be raised.

This policy applies to individuals engaged by Independent Contractor Services Ltd under a subcontractor agreement, including CIS subcontractors and self-employed subcontractors.

Nothing in this policy changes or determines the self-employed status of any individual.
This policy forms part of the Company's standards and expectations for individuals carrying out work under a subcontractor agreement.

What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. It also covers treating someone less favourably because they have submitted to, or refused to submit to, unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or in relation to gender reassignment or sex.

Sexual harassment may be committed by a fellow subcontractor, an agent of an organisation, or a third party. It does not need to occur in person. It can occur via digital means, including social media sites or channels (eg WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Facebook).

Someone may be sexually harassed even if they were not the target of the behaviour. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- sexual comments or jokes, which may be referred to as “banter”
- displaying sexually graphic pictures, posters or photos
- suggestive looks, staring or leering
- propositions and sexual advances
- making promises in return for sexual favours
- sexual gestures
- intrusive questions about a person’s private or sex life or a person discussing their own sex life
- sexual posts or contact in online communications, including on social media
- spreading sexual rumours about a person

- sending sexually explicit emails, text messages or messages via other social media
- unwelcome touching, hugging, massaging or kissing

Victimisation is subjecting someone to detriment because they have done, are suspected of doing, or intend to do, an act which is protected under discrimination and harassment laws. These are outlined below. It is not necessary for the person to have done the protected act in order for detrimental treatment to be considered as victimisation.

The protected acts are:

- making a claim or complaint under the Equality Act (EqA) (eg for discrimination or harassment)
- helping someone else to make a claim by giving evidence or information in connection with proceedings under the EqA
- making an allegation that someone has breached the EqA
- doing anything else in connection with the EqA Examples of victimisation may include:
- failing to consider someone for promotion because they have previously made a sexual harassment complaint
- dismissing someone because they accompanied a colleague to a meeting about a sexual harassment complaint
- excluding someone from work meetings because they gave evidence as a witness for another employee as part of an employment tribunal claim about harassment.

Circumstances which are covered

This policy covers behaviour which occurs in the following situations:

- a work situation, whether working on assignment or remotely
- a situation occurring outside of the normal workplace or normal working hours which is related to work, eg a working lunch, a business trip or social functions
- outside of a work situation but involving a colleague or other person connected to the Company or agency/end client including on social media
- against anyone outside of an assignment where the incident is relevant to your suitability to carry out the role.

What to do if you are subject to sexual harassment or victimisation

We are committed to ensuring that there is no sexual harassment or victimisation from anyone in our or on behalf of our Company. Allegations of sexual harassment and victimisation will be treated seriously. Every situation will be considered on an individual basis.

How to raise a concern

Anyone who experiences, witnesses or becomes aware of sexual harassment is encouraged to raise the concern as soon as reasonably practicable.
Concerns can be raised with:

Designated Contact: HR and Compliance
Telephone: 01524 580720
Email: people@icsuk.com

A concern can be raised verbally or in writing.

An individual does not need to confront the person involved before reporting a concern. Where there is an immediate threat to someone's safety, the individual should contact the appropriate emergency, site or security arrangements first.

Responding to a concern

Where a concern is raised, the Company will consider the circumstances and determine the appropriate response.

This may include:

- speaking privately with the person raising the concern;
- gathering relevant information;
- speaking to other individuals/agency contacts;
- reviewing relevant messages, records or other evidence;
- taking steps to protect individuals while the matter is considered;
- involving the relevant client or principal contractor where appropriate;
- referring the matter to another organisation where required; or
- taking appropriate contractual or other action.

The Company will seek to deal with concerns fairly, sensitively and proportionately.

No Retaliation

The Company will not tolerate retaliation, intimidation, harassment or victimisation against an individual who raises a genuine concern in good faith.
This protection applies whether the concern relates to the individual's own experience or behaviour they have witnessed involving another person.
Individuals should not be disadvantaged simply because they have raised a genuine concern.

False or Malicious Allegations

The Company recognises that concerns may sometimes arise from misunderstandings or differences of perception.
A concern raised genuinely and in good faith will not result in action simply because it cannot be substantiated.
However, deliberately false, malicious or knowingly misleading allegations may be dealt with appropriately.

Serious Incidents and Criminal Conduct

Some behaviour may constitute a criminal offence.
Where appropriate, individuals may report criminal conduct directly to the police.
Nothing in this policy prevents Independent Contractor Services Ltd from reporting suspected criminal activity to the relevant authorities.

Consequences of Unacceptable Behaviour

Sexual harassment and other serious inappropriate behaviour will be treated seriously.
Where the person responsible is a subcontractor or self-employed contractor, action may include:

- requiring the individual to leave a site or project;
- removing the individual from particular work;
- reporting the matter to a client or principal contractor;
- reviewing or terminating the relevant subcontract (and/or assignment) in accordance with its terms; or
- reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities where necessary.

Rail and site environments

Independent Contractor Services Ltd recognises that some rail and construction work can involve:

- predominantly male or mixed workforces;
- remote or isolated working;
- night work and shifts;
- working away from home;
- welfare and changing facilities;
- site transport;
- accommodation;
- social events; and

- close working relationships between contractors and other personnel.

These circumstances do not reduce the standards of behaviour expected.

Sexual harassment, inappropriate sexual behaviour or unwanted sexual conduct is not acceptable on railway infrastructure, construction sites, Company premises, accommodation provided for work, Company-related travel or at work-related social events.

Prevention

Independent Contractor Services Ltd will take appropriate steps to reduce the risk of sexual harassment occurring.

These may include:

- communicating this policy to subcontractors and agencies;
- including expectations of behaviour at onboarding;
- providing appropriate information or training;
- considering sexual harassment risks within relevant workplace risk assessments;
- monitoring concerns and incidents;
- reviewing whether existing controls are effective; and
- taking further reasonable action where risks are identified.

The Company will review this policy periodically and following any significant incident or change in relevant legal requirements.

Document Control

This policy will be reviewed periodically and following significant changes to legislation, company activities or contractual arrangements.

Date & Comments	Reviewed by	Next Review Due
21/09/2026 Document Created	JM	01/09/2027

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2026

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