



Farmstrong Scotland

Bullying & Harassment Policy

May 2025

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1. About this Policy

Farmstrong Scotland [Charity] is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment for all its trustees, employees, volunteers, and stakeholders. Bullying and harassment in any form will not be tolerated, and the Charity is committed to preventing, addressing, and resolving such issues promptly and effectively.

2. Definition

Bullying and harassment are defined as any unwanted behaviour, action, or language that causes distress, discomfort, or humiliation to an individual. This includes, but is not limited to, verbal, physical, written, and visual harassment based on race, colour, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, or any other protected status.

3. Responsibilities:

- a. Trustee Board and its Programme Director are responsible for ensuring that this policy is communicated, implemented, and enforced consistently across Farmstrong Scotland.
- b. Trustees, volunteers, contractors, office bearers and Farmstrong Scotland staff are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that upholds the values of Farmstrong Scotland and refrains from engaging in any form of bullying or harassment.

4. Reporting Procedure:

Any individual connected with Farmstrong Scotland who believes they have experienced or witnessed bullying or harassment in relation to Farmstrong Scotland should report the incident promptly. Reports can be made in any form to a line manager, to the Chair of Trustees or the Programme Director

5. Investigation Process:

It is the policy of the Charity to:

- Provide a reportable incidents procedure which is clear and easy to use.
- Ensure all reportable incidents are investigated, following agreed procedures and in a timely way.
- Gather information and act upon information and experiences which helps Farmstrong Scotland to improve.

An incident report can be received by email or in writing. In the event of a verbal incident report, a request will be then made to record & send the said report by e mail or in writing, to correctly establish the nature & timing of the reported incident.

Written incident reports may be sent to the Chair of the Trustee Board by emailing directly at chair@farmstrongscotland.org.uk.

All reportable incident information will be dealt with sensitively and shared only as deemed appropriate by the Programme Director and if appropriate the Chair of the Trustee Board of Farmstrong Scotland.

Resolving incidents:

STAGE 1

Farmstrong Scotland will nominate an appropriate person or persons to handle the reportable incident – to investigate and take appropriate action.

Reportable incidents shall be acknowledged within one week. The acknowledgement will detail the process for handling the reportable incident and when the reporting party can expect further communication.

If the reportable incident relates to a specific person, this person shall be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

STAGE 2

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, he/she/they can request that the reportable incident is reviewed by the Trustee Board, who will in turn appoint a panel of up to three parties to consider the Stage 2 appeal. Chairperson to be appointed by Trustee Board. The trustee Board may decide it appropriate or deem it necessary to seek external assistance with resolution.

Reportable incidents at Stage 2 shall be acknowledged by the Chair of the panel within one week of the appointment of the said panel. The acknowledgement will say who is considering the reportable incident and when the complainant can expect further communication.

Ideally complainants will receive a determination within four weeks. If this is not possible, a progress report will be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

The full and final determination will describe the action taken to investigate the reportable incident, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken because of the reportable incident.

Whether the reportable incident is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the Stage 2 reportable incident, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken because of the reportable incident.

The complainant in requesting a Stage 2 review will have been deemed to have accepted that the decision taken at Stage 2 is full and final. In addition, the complainant in submitting a Stage 2 appeal shall agree to bear his/her /their costs incurred or likely to arise from the Stage 2 appeal process or resultant costs arising from a determination in the Stage 2 appeal.

Variation of the Reportable Incidents Procedure

The Trustee Board reserves the right to from time to time vary the procedures set out above.

Monitoring and Learning from Reportable incidents.

Reportable incidents will be reviewed collectively and annually.

6. Disciplinary Action:

If the investigation reveals that bullying or harassment has occurred, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. This may include counselling, training, written warnings, suspension, or termination, depending on the nature and severity of the incident.

7. Prevention and Training:

The Charity is committed to preventing bullying and harassment through training and awareness programs. All volunteers and staff will be educated as deemed appropriate on the Charity's policies and procedures.

8. Non-Retaliation:

The organization prohibits any form of retaliation against individuals who report bullying or harassment.

Retaliation will be treated as a separate violation and may result in disciplinary action following a review.

9. Breach of this policy

- a. Breach of this policy by Farmstrong Scotland staff may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Any member of staff suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to co-operate fully with any subsequent investigation.
- b. Any potential breaches of this policy by volunteers will be dealt with by the Charity's Trustee Board or the Programme Director, in line with the Charity's Articles of Association and By Laws.
- c. Any potential breaches of this policy by a third party working on behalf of the Charity will result in a review of that working agreement and could result in cessation of any such agreement.

10. Review & Monitoring

- a. Review: This policy will be reviewed at least annually or as required, to consider changes in legislation, guidance, and good practice.
- b. Monitoring: The Charity will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy, seeking feedback and suggestions for improvement from volunteers, office bearers, staff, volunteers, and other stakeholders

11. Approval and Revision History

Approved by: Farmstrong Trustees

Date of Approval: 21st May 2025

Revision Date: by 21st May 2026

12. Policy Dissemination

This Bullying & Harassment Policy will be made available to all Trustees, staff, volunteers, and stakeholders upon request or via Farmstrong Scotland website and will be communicated to relevant stakeholders as appropriate. By adhering to this Policy, Trustees, staff, volunteers and stakeholders contribute to the overall well-being and positive culture of Farmstrong Scotland.