



10 September 2019

Secretary-General's bulletin

Addressing discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority

The Secretary-General, for the purpose of ensuring that all staff members and non-staff personnel of the Secretariat are treated with dignity and respect and are aware of their role and responsibilities in maintaining a workplace free of any form of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority, and being mindful of the need to prevent such conduct and, if it occurs, to take timely appropriate corrective action, while offering support to those targeted by such conduct, promulgates the following:

Section 1 Definitions

Prohibited conduct

1.1 For the purposes of the present bulletin, discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority shall collectively be referred to as “prohibited conduct”. Disagreement on work performance or on other work-related issues is normally not considered prohibited conduct and is not dealt with under the provisions of the present bulletin but in the context of performance management.

Discrimination

1.2 Discrimination is any unfair treatment or arbitrary distinction based on a person's race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, age, language, social origin or other similar shared characteristic or trait. Discrimination may be an isolated event affecting one person or a group of persons similarly situated, or may manifest itself through harassment or abuse of authority.

Harassment

1.3 Harassment is any unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another person, when such conduct interferes with work or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

1.4 Harassment may take the form of words, gestures or actions which tend to annoy, alarm, abuse, demean, intimidate, belittle, humiliate or embarrass another.



Harassment may be directed at one or more persons based on a shared characteristic or trait as set out in section 1.2 above. Harassment normally implies a series of incidents.

Sexual harassment

1.5 Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Sexual harassment may occur in the workplace or in connection with work.

1.6 While typically involving a pattern of conduct, sexual harassment may take the form of a single incident. In assessing the reasonableness of expectations or perceptions, the perspective of the person who is the target of the conduct shall be considered.

1.7 Sexual harassment is the manifestation of a culture of discrimination and privilege based on unequal gender relations and other power dynamics. Sexual harassment may involve any conduct of a verbal, non-verbal or physical nature, including written and electronic communications. Sexual harassment may occur between persons of the same or different genders, and individuals of any gender can be either the affected individuals or the alleged offenders. Sexual harassment may occur outside the workplace and outside working hours, including during official travel or social functions related to work. Sexual harassment may be perpetrated by any colleague, including a supervisor, a peer or a subordinate. An offender's status as a supervisor or a senior official may be treated as an aggravating circumstance. Sexual harassment is prohibited under staff rule 1.2 (f) and may also constitute sexual exploitation or abuse under staff rule 1.2 (e).

Abuse of authority

1.8 Abuse of authority is the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority against another person. This is particularly serious when a person uses their influence, power or authority to improperly influence the career or employment conditions of another, including, but not limited to, appointment, assignment, contract renewal, performance evaluation, working conditions or promotion. Abuse of authority may also include conduct that creates a hostile or offensive work environment which includes, but is not limited to, the use of intimidation, threats, blackmail or coercion. Discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, are particularly serious when accompanied by abuse of authority.

Affected individual

1.9 The affected individual is a person in the workplace or in connection with work towards whom possible prohibited conduct is directed.

Offender/alleged offender

1.10 The offender is a person who has engaged in prohibited conduct.

1.11 The alleged offender is a person who is alleged to have engaged in prohibited conduct.

Impacted individuals

1.12 Impacted individuals may include the affected individual, bystanders, including witnesses to the possible prohibited conduct or to the impact on the affected

individual, and any colleague who intervened in the situation involving possible prohibited conduct.

Non-staff personnel

1.13 Non-staff personnel are those individuals performing services in a direct or other agreed relationship with the Organization and other than through a letter of appointment under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, and include, without limitation, United Nations Volunteers, individual consultants and contractors, interns and persons providing services under arrangements with the United Nations Office for Project Services.

Responsible official

1.14 The responsible official shall have the meaning specified in administrative instruction [ST/AI/2017/1](#) on unsatisfactory conduct, investigations and the disciplinary process.

Head of entity

1.15 The head of entity is the head of a department or an office, including an office away from Headquarters, the head of a special political or peacekeeping mission, the head of a regional commission, a resident or regional coordinator or the head of any other unit tasked with programmed activities to whom the Secretary-General has delegated functions directly.

Conduct and discipline focal points

1.16 A conduct and discipline focal point is a staff member designated by a head of entity to provide advice and support on matters relating to conduct and discipline, including those under the present bulletin. A conduct and discipline focal point serves, inter alia, as a contact point for both the affected individual and the alleged offender throughout the handling of formal reports of possible prohibited conduct to provide information on the process and relevant time frames.

ClearCheck

1.17 ClearCheck is a centralized job candidate screening application. It captures information on sexual harassment offenders and alleged offenders that is provided by the entities of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

Section 2

Scope of the policy

2.1 Reports of prohibited conduct in the workplace or in connection with work can be submitted by any person and against any person, irrespective of whether such persons have any contractual status with the Organization.

2.2 Staff members who are alleged to have committed prohibited conduct may be subject to disciplinary or other administrative action in accordance with [ST/AI/2017/1](#).

2.3 Non-staff personnel who are alleged to have committed prohibited conduct may be subject to action in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract governing their services and of other applicable policies regarding non-staff personnel, including possible referral to local authorities.

2.4 Action on the reports will depend on the status of the alleged offender.

2.5 Remedial measures for affected individuals depend on their contractual status with the Organization, in line with the provisions of the present bulletin.

Section 3 Prevention

3.1 The United Nations is committed to promoting a work environment free of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority, in which all people are treated with dignity and respect.

Obligations of the Organization

3.2 The Organization shall:

(a) Take appropriate measures to promote a harmonious work environment and protect personnel from prohibited conduct through preventive measures as set out in the present bulletin and under [ST/AI/2017/1](#) and [ST/SGB/2017/2/Rev.1](#);

(b) Undertake reference checks of external candidates during recruitment processes to ensure that individuals who have a documented history of sexual harassment and other prohibited conduct are not appointed or engaged;

(c) Request that contractors, suppliers and partners adhere to the zero-tolerance policy on prohibited conduct and commit to taking adequate action if faced with allegations of prohibited conduct, and inform them that failure to do so may lead to the termination of contractual arrangements;

(d) Develop standards, including a programme for targeted trainings, to be conducted preferably in person and aimed at building skills to effectively communicate with affected individuals and alleged offenders and to respond appropriately. The target audience for such programmes are managers, conduct and discipline focal points, staff representatives, human resources officers, medical personnel and all personnel providing support or likely to provide support to affected individuals, especially those who are targets of sexual harassment;

(e) Develop standards, including a programme for ongoing training, to be conducted preferably in person, to raise awareness of issues relating to diversity, respect and equality and to build skills on bystander techniques for intervening in situations of prohibited conduct, for all staff members;

(f) Ensure that information and mechanisms are accessible to all staff, as well as, to the extent possible and taking into account the terms and conditions of the contracts with non-staff personnel and other applicable policies, consultants and contractors, United Nations Volunteers, interns, experts on mission, other non-staff personnel and beneficiaries of the provisions of this bulletin in all locations.

Obligations of heads of entities

3.3 Heads of entities shall, in addition to their obligations as staff members:

(a) Demonstrate their commitment to the creation of a harmonious work environment and the prevention of prohibited conduct, educate themselves about the issue, act as role models by maintaining a high standard of personal conduct with consciousness of the power their position holds and treat all colleagues courteously and with dignity and respect;

(b) Address conduct coming to their attention that may be in violation of the present bulletin, take complaints seriously, respond promptly to complaints and ensure that the necessary actions for which they are responsible are diligently taken;

- (c) Endeavour to create an atmosphere in which personnel in their entities may express concerns about possible prohibited conduct, including by maintaining open dialogues and an open-door policy with concerned personnel in their entities;
- (d) Encourage personnel to use the informal and formal processes in place to address possible prohibited conduct;
- (e) Exercise due diligence by screening job candidates using the ClearCheck database and other relevant internal databases during recruitment processes;
- (f) Periodically engage providers of training on prohibited conduct and its prevention developed as envisaged in sections 3.2 (d) and (e) above;
- (g) Monitor their entities for conduct that may be in violation of the present bulletin;
- (h) Communicate the terms of the present policy and applicable procedures to personnel in their entities on an annual basis through a dedicated in-person meeting;
- (i) Monitor the situation, when it is brought to their attention in writing, that one or more staff members of their entity:
 - (i) Have availed themselves or are availing themselves of a formal or informal process under the present bulletin;
 - (ii) Have otherwise exercised their rights as a staff member, including acting as a staff representative or challenging a decision through a request for management evaluation;
 - (iii) Have appeared or will appear as a witness before the United Nations Dispute Tribunal or the United Nations Appeals Tribunal;
- (j) Ensure that no misconduct, prohibited conduct or other adverse action is directed against such staff members as a direct result of the above-mentioned actions and address any such possible misconduct, prohibited conduct or other alleged adverse action brought, including through the process set out in [ST/AI/2017/1](#).

3.4 Conduct and discipline focal points in each entity will advise the respective heads of entities regarding their obligations under the present bulletin.

Obligations of staff members

3.5 Staff members shall:

- (a) Undertake the mandatory online training on the prevention of sexual harassment and other prohibited conduct and familiarize themselves with the present policy and related policies and procedures, including Secretary-General's bulletin [ST/SGB/2017/2/Rev.1](#) on protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations;
- (b) Attend other training opportunities related to prohibited conduct to the extent possible;
- (c) Demonstrate commitment to zero tolerance of any prohibited conduct and treat all people in the workplace courteously and with dignity and respect, as well as with an awareness of their own behaviour and how it may be perceived and/or received by others;
- (d) Refrain from encouraging other staff members and non-staff personnel to engage in prohibited conduct;
- (e) Raise their awareness, through available training, of the very specific harassment threats that transgender and gender non-conforming individuals can face;

(f) Take action if they witness prohibited conduct, provided they feel comfortable doing so and, where possible, after consulting the affected individual, as well as supporting those impacted, as appropriate and to the best of their ability;

(g) Report possible prohibited conduct and cooperate with investigations, audits and reviews.

3.6 Performance appraisals, including through 360-degree reviews, may record instances of non-adherence by staff members to the principles in the present bulletin, where appropriate. Additionally, the appraisals shall reflect the compliance of staff members with mandatory training requirements.

Section 4

Early intervention and receipt and handling of informal reports of possible prohibited conduct

Early direct action

4.1 Affected individuals may, on a voluntary basis, if they feel comfortable and safe doing so, approach alleged offenders about instances of possible prohibited conduct and ask for such conduct to stop, as the alleged offenders may not be aware of the negative impact of the conduct on others. However, disparity in power or status, fear of retaliation or the nature of the conduct may make direct confrontation difficult, and there is therefore no requirement for such action to be taken.

Managerial intervention

4.2 Affected individuals who believe that they may have been subject to instances of possible prohibited conduct may raise the matter with their supervisors or other senior officials if the situation allows and they feel comfortable doing so. Any supervisor approached by an affected individual shall inform that person that information about the options available to that person to address possible prohibited conduct may be obtained from the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services or from the Staff Counsellor on a confidential basis and that advice may be obtained from the conduct and discipline focal point. Anonymous and confidential advice about possible sexual harassment may also be obtained from the “Speak up” helpline.¹ The supervisor approached shall keep a record of such communication.

4.3 Supervisors shall provide assistance and/or information in a timely, sensitive and impartial manner to an affected individual, in accordance with the provisions of the present bulletin. To address the matter promptly at the managerial level, supervisors may:

(a) With the consent of the affected individual, bring the matter to the attention of the alleged offender, who may be required to undergo training and/or coaching, as available, to prevent reoccurrence of the possible prohibited conduct;

(b) Agree with all concerned on other approaches to address the issues raised, including, after consulting the head of entity, the actions referred to in sections 6.10 (a) to (g) below;

(c) With the consent of the affected individual, facilitate a discussion among the impacted individuals and the alleged offender about the conduct in question. The

¹ The helpline can be reached at 1 917 367 8910 or, from peacekeeping missions, at 1212 78910. When dialling internally from United Nations duty stations in Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Beirut, Geneva, Nairobi, New York, Santiago and Vienna, the extension is 78910. The helpline can also be reached at speakup@un.org.

Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services may be asked to facilitate such a discussion.

4.4 Supervisors shall submit a record regarding any managerial intervention carried out to the responsible official. Such intervention does not preclude the matter from being formally reported.

4.5 Any supervisor who has been informed about instances of possible prohibited conduct shall provide timely and sensitive support to an affected individual. Supervisors can seek advice on how to provide such support from the Staff Counsellor. If a supervisor cannot perform this role for any reason, the affected individual shall be referred to the Staff Counsellor for psychosocial and/or emotional support from a mental health professional.

4.6 Supervisors shall provide an affected individual with a copy of the present bulletin and are encouraged to refer to guidance material on addressing possible prohibited conduct available on iSeek in the Human Resources Handbook, and the United Nations regulatory framework policy portal, when operational.

Confidential support

4.7 Affected individuals may prefer and are encouraged to discuss their situation with the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services and/or the Staff Counsellor, as follows:

(a) The services of the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services include discussing options and referrals according to the wishes of the affected individuals. Nothing is triggered automatically by contacting the Office. The contact itself is “off the record”. Affected individuals visiting the Office therefore remain in control of any decisions they may wish to make following such a visit to discuss options;

(b) Staff Counsellors are mental health professionals who may provide psychosocial support and discuss tools to address the emotional impact that the situation has on the affected individual, as well as guidance on potential referral to external mental health resources, if needed.

4.8 Consultations with officials from the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services or with the Staff Counsellor may be held in person or through electronic means, depending on available resources and the location of the affected individual.

4.9 Both the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services and the Staff Counsellor are bound by strict rules of confidentiality under their respective terms of reference. Any discussion with them is strictly confidential. Documentation and other information may not be shared with any other office without the consent of the affected individual or other person seeking support.

Informal resolution

4.10 Affected individuals may, on a voluntary basis, attempt to address a situation of possible prohibited conduct in an informal manner, including with the assistance of the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services, whose services may include one-on-one conflict coaching to be able to give voice to concerns effectively, shuttle diplomacy to communicate with others through an intermediary without having to be in the same physical space, and facilitated discussions or mediation. All services of the Office are tailored to the specific circumstances of the case, and nothing is done without agreement.

4.11 An unsuccessful attempt to resolve the matter informally does not preclude it from being formally reported.

Section 5

Receipt and handling of formal reports of possible prohibited conduct

5.1 Formal reports of possible prohibited conduct may be made by persons who consider that they are the affected individuals or by persons who have knowledge of possible prohibited conduct.

5.2 A formal report of possible prohibited conduct should contain sufficient detail for it to be assessed, such as:

- (a) A detailed description of the prohibited conduct;
- (b) The name of the alleged offender;
- (c) The name of the alleged affected individual, if the report is made by a third party;
- (d) Where and when the prohibited conduct occurred;
- (e) The names of potential witnesses to the prohibited conduct;
- (f) All available supporting documentation.

5.3 Formal reports may be made anonymously and are not subject to time limits. However, the anonymity of reports of possible prohibited conduct and the passage of time may render the initiation or completion of an investigation or disciplinary process more difficult.

5.4 Possible prohibited conduct shall be reported in accordance with section 4 of [ST/AI/2017/1](#) either to the responsible official, with a copy to the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), or to OIOS. If a report of possible prohibited conduct is made to the responsible official, the responsible official shall forward the report of possible prohibited conduct to OIOS and acknowledge receipt of the report.

5.5 The preliminary assessment of a report of possible prohibited conduct, investigations of possible prohibited conduct and action taken subsequent to an investigation shall accord with the procedures set out in sections 5 to 12 of [ST/AI/2017/1](#) and with the following additional requirements:

- (a) The receipt of a formal report of possible prohibited conduct, if not submitted anonymously, shall be acknowledged by OIOS;
- (b) The person formally reporting possible prohibited conduct shall be informed of the Organization's policy on protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations (see [ST/SGB/2017/2/Rev.1](#));
- (c) Where a formal report of possible sexual harassment is submitted by a person other than the affected individual, OIOS shall normally seek the views of the affected individual before deciding whether to proceed with an investigation;
- (d) If OIOS decides to investigate a formal report of possible prohibited conduct, notice of the initiation of the investigation shall normally be provided to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources and to the head of entity concerned, unless the head of entity is an alleged offender or is otherwise implicated in the matter;
- (e) If OIOS refers a report of possible prohibited conduct to a responsible official for action pursuant to section 5.3 of [ST/AI/2017/1](#), OIOS shall also copy the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources on such referral and inform the

affected individual if the report of possible prohibited conduct was not submitted anonymously. The responsible official shall normally make the determination pursuant to section 5.6 of [ST/AI/2017/1](#) within three months of receipt of the report from OIOS and shall inform OIOS and the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources of the decision, including, if an investigative panel is constituted, the identity of the panel members;

(f) If the responsible official decides to initiate an investigation pursuant to section 5.6 (a) of [ST/AI/2017/1](#), the responsible official must constitute an investigative panel to undertake the investigation within one month of the decision. Any such investigative panel shall be made up of individuals who have attended one of the periodic trainings concerning prohibited conduct investigations provided by OIOS and the Office of Human Resources and who have been placed on the roster of investigators maintained by the Office of Human Resources. Any cost associated with an investigation undertaken by a panel shall be borne by the entity of the responsible official. The Office of Human Resources shall maintain a roster of persons trained to conduct an investigation into possible prohibited conduct;

(g) In respect of a report of possible prohibited conduct investigated by OIOS, OIOS would normally inform the affected individual and the alleged offender, as appropriate, at least every three months of the status of the investigation. If a matter is referred to the Office of Human Resources pursuant to section 7.2 of [ST/AI/2017/1](#), OIOS shall also inform the responsible official;

(h) In respect of a report of possible prohibited conduct referred by OIOS to a responsible official for action pursuant to section 5.3 of [ST/AI/2017/1](#), conduct and discipline focal points would normally inform the affected individual and the alleged offender, as appropriate, of the referral and at least every two months thereafter of the status of the matter, including the preliminary assessment of the report by the responsible official and any investigation and subsequent action. This obligation also applies when a matter has been referred by OIOS to the Office of Human Resources and the responsible official has been informed in accordance with section 5.5 (e) above. Conduct and discipline focal points, at the request of an affected individual or alleged offender, shall respond, without undue delay, but normally within two weeks, to queries relating to the handling of the formal report of possible prohibited conduct;

(i) The affected individual and the alleged offender shall be informed on a strictly confidential basis of the outcome of the matter, as follows:

(i) By OIOS, if the matter is closed by OIOS pursuant to section 7.1 of [ST/AI/2017/1](#), with a copy to the head of entity of the affected individual and alleged offender and the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources;

(ii) By the responsible official, if the matter is closed with no action by the responsible official pursuant to sections 7.4 or 7.5 (a) of [ST/AI/2017/1](#) or following a referral from the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources pursuant to section 8.2 (b) of [ST/AI/2017/1](#), or if the responsible official has taken managerial or administrative measures pursuant to section 7.5 (b) of [ST/AI/2017/1](#) or following a referral from the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources pursuant to section 8.2 (b) of [ST/AI/2017/1](#), with a copy to the head of entity of the affected individual and alleged offender and to OIOS and the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources;

(iii) By the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources, if the matter has been referred to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources pursuant to sections 7.2 or 7.6 of [ST/AI/2017/1](#), with a copy to the head of entity of the affected individual and alleged offender and to OIOS;

(j) At the request of the affected individual or the offender or alleged offender, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources may provide a statement on the outcome of the matter, which the affected individual or the offender or alleged offender may disclose to third parties, subject to staff regulation 1.2 (i). The statement shall respect the confidentiality of the process and preserve the privacy of those involved;

(k) If it is indicated in an investigation report that the report of prohibited conduct was knowingly false, the responsible official or, if appropriate, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources shall refer the matter to OIOS as possible unsatisfactory conduct in accordance with [ST/AI/2017/1](#).

5.6 Where an affected individual or alleged offender has grounds to believe that the procedure followed in respect of the handling of a formal report of prohibited conduct was improper upon being informed of the outcome of the matter in accordance with section 5.5 (i) above, the affected individual or alleged offender may contest the matter pursuant to chapter XI of the Staff Rules.

Monitoring during an investigation

5.7 Where an investigation is initiated following receipt of a formal report of prohibited conduct, and notice of such investigation has been provided to the head of entity concerned and/or the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources, as appropriate, the head of entity shall take appropriate measures to monitor the status of the affected individual, the alleged offender and the work unit(s) concerned until such time as the investigation report has been submitted and any subsequent action has been completed. In doing so, the head of entity and/or the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources shall ensure that all parties comply with their duty to cooperate with the investigation and that no party is subject to retaliation or any other prohibited conduct as a result of the complaint or the investigation. When the head of entity and/or the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources consider that retaliation has occurred, the head of entity and/or the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources shall promptly notify the Ethics Office to have the matter handled in accordance with the provisions of [ST/SGB/2017/2/Rev.1](#). The Office of Human Resources may request information from the head of entity, as necessary.

Referral to national authorities

5.8 If an investigation undertaken in accordance with [ST/AI/2017/1](#) establishes credible allegations of criminal conduct, such a matter may, upon consultation with the Office of Legal Affairs, be referred to national authorities for possible criminal accountability. Possible criminal conduct may also be reported directly to national authorities by an affected individual.

Section 6 Support

Confidential guidance and support

6.1 The Organization has set up the “Speak up” helpline¹ to provide information on options for addressing possible prohibited conduct and the support available to affected individuals. Any person seeking such information may remain anonymous.

6.2 OIOS provides a hotline for reporting possible misconduct, including possible prohibited conduct, by a staff member.² Any person reporting such possible prohibited conduct may remain anonymous.

² The relevant contact details can be found at <https://oios.un.org/report-wrongdoing>.

6.3 Individuals with a concern regarding possible prohibited conduct may contact the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services or the Staff Counsellor. Both offices can provide information and discuss options on a confidential basis, as set out in section 4.7 above. The provision of information and options may include reference to information on internal avenues for assistance, such as that available from staff members who are medical professionals or otherwise trained to deal with psychosocial matters, external local services providing support in the context of possible prohibited conduct, how to report to local authorities if the possible prohibited conduct may constitute a crime, and possible compensation for workplace-related injuries, in accordance with appendix D to the Staff Rules, and services available after separation, such as after-service health care in accordance with administrative instruction [ST/AI/2007/3](#) on after-service health insurance.

Support person for an affected individual

6.4 During the formal or informal processes, an affected individual may nominate for the purpose of providing support:

(a) One or two staff members who confirm in writing their willingness and availability to undertake such a role, are not or are not likely to be a witness to the alleged behaviour if the matter is investigated and are not otherwise potentially subject to a conflict of interest;

(b) An individual with non-staff personnel status, provided that that individual is willing and available to undertake such a role, has signed a confidentiality agreement with the Organization, is not or will not be a witness to the alleged behaviour if the matter is investigated, is not otherwise potentially subject to a conflict of interest and is otherwise reasonably acceptable to the head of entity where the conduct is alleged to have occurred.

6.5 Support may include emotional support but may not extend to legal representation or legal advocacy. One nominated support person, who is a staff member, may accompany an affected individual to investigative interviews undertaken during the handling of a formal report of prohibited conduct.

Psychosocial support for United Nations personnel

6.6 Psychosocial support for affected individuals and alleged offenders will be available from the Staff Counsellor in person, by telephone or through other electronic means. The Staff Counsellor is also a resource to assist any staff member throughout any informal or formal process. All consultations with the Staff Counsellor are confidential.

Work performance

6.7 When a head of entity receives notice in writing that a person may be a target of prohibited conduct, the head of entity shall enquire whether the individual's work performance or conduct has been impacted. If performance or conduct issues have emerged, support will be offered to the affected individual with a view to appropriately addressing the issues, without prejudice to the Organization's performance review system.

6.8 Accommodations which may be considered to respond to related work performance issues include:

- (a) A new workplan for the affected individual;
- (b) Authorization of special leave and/or other flexible working arrangements.

6.9 Due regard to confidentiality must be given when communicating accommodations to supervisors or colleagues, as appropriate.

Interim measures

6.10 After the head of entity receives notice in writing that a person may be a target of prohibited conduct, the head of entity shall consider whether interim measures should be taken to protect the integrity of any investigation, prevent the occurrence or repetition of possible prohibited conduct and/or address risks of possible retaliation under [ST/SGB/2017/2/Rev.1](#) or whether such measures would otherwise be in the interests of the Organization or work unit. Such measures may include:

- (a) Physical separation of the alleged offender and the affected individual;
- (b) Reassignment of either the alleged offender or the affected individual with the consent of the alleged offender or the affected individual;
- (c) Instituting flexible working arrangements for either the alleged offender or the affected individual;
- (d) Granting unplanned annual leave or suggesting to either the alleged offender or the affected individual to take annual leave;
- (e) Consideration of special leave for either the alleged offender or the affected individual;
- (f) Temporary changes in reporting lines;
- (g) Placement of the alleged offender on administrative leave in accordance with [ST/AI/2017/1](#).

6.11 If the head of entity becomes aware of an allegation of prohibited conduct involving attempted or actual assault, including sexual assault, appropriate precautionary measures shall be taken, without delay, to address the safety and security concerns of the affected individual, including instituting flexible working arrangements or other means to achieve the physical separation of the affected individual and the alleged offender.

Post-investigation review

6.12 Once any investigation has been completed and a decision taken on the outcome, appropriate measures shall be taken by the head of entity through the conduct and discipline focal point(s) to keep the situation under review. Those measures may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) Monitoring for at least one year the status of the affected individual, the offender and the work unit(s) concerned at regular intervals, at least every three months, in order to ensure that no party is subjected to retaliation or any other prohibited conduct as a consequence of the investigation, its findings or the outcome. When the head of entity suspects that retaliation has occurred, the head of entity shall promptly notify the Ethics Office to have the matter handled in accordance with the provisions of [ST/SGB/2017/2/Rev.1](#);
- (b) Ensuring that due consideration is given to any special requirements for the affected individual as a result of the prohibited conduct;
- (c) Ensuring that any administrative or disciplinary measures taken at the conclusion of any investigation or disciplinary process have been duly implemented.

Workplace restoration and aftercare

6.13 The Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services and the Staff Counsellor, within their respective terms of reference and on a confidential basis, may assist in workplace restoration efforts through informal resolution methods. Examples of support offered are:

- (a) Post-investigation or post-disciplinary process interventions;
- (b) Rebuilding trust between individuals;
- (c) Team interventions and coaching towards change.

Provision of information to the Office of Human Resources

6.14 The Office of Human Resources may request information from the head of entity regarding support provided.

Section 7**Data collection**

7.1 The Office of Human Resources will collect data and information for monitoring and analysis of formal reports of possible prohibited conduct. Anonymized information on and analysis of such reports may be published on an annual basis, provided to external parties and otherwise reported upon. Such information includes, if available, the number and type of formal reports, relevant demographics of affected individuals and alleged offenders, including information about sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, the work context and duty station and the length of time required to complete the process of handling the formal reports.

7.2 Disciplinary measures with respect to prohibited conduct will be included in the compendium of disciplinary measures published annually on the website of the Office of Human Resources.

7.3 Survey data will be collected periodically by the Organization and will be analysed and shared through reports available to staff, management, the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services and others to inform them of outreach activities, interventions and updates to relevant policies, including the present bulletin, as needed.

Section 8**Implementation and final provisions**

8.1 The present policy will be reviewed periodically with any revisions identified on an as-needed basis, but every two years at a minimum, through a standing working group of the Staff-Management Committee, taking into account lessons learned from monitoring of compliance with the present bulletin, including survey data, and any changes in the structures, complementary policies and the context of the Organization that may impact the implementation of the present policy.

8.2 The present bulletin shall enter into force on the date of its issuance.

8.3 Investigations initiated prior to the entry into force of the present bulletin shall continue to be handled in accordance with the provisions of Secretary-General's bulletin [ST/SGB/2008/5](#). In all other respects, the present bulletin hereby supersedes [ST/SGB/2008/5](#).

(Signed) António Guterres
Secretary-General