

# Harassment and Conflict Resolution Policy

## ReGeneration 2030

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## About this policy

### Why do we have a harassment and conflict resolution policy?

ReGeneration 2030 is an organisation fighting climate and environmental collapse and building a better future for all youth. We aim to be a welcoming and friendly space, where we communicate openly and treat each other with care and respect. In order to build this space, we have a **zero-tolerance policy** on discrimination and harassment (such as sexual or gender-based harm, racism or ableism) at all our events, within all its structures and during all activities. This protocol is applicable for those participating in a ReGeneration 2030 (referred to as “this organisation” from now onwards) activity, online or offline. For further information on the equality standards of ReGeneration 2030, refer to the organisation’s [Equality Policy](#).

### Who can you contact if you experience harassment, or are in a personal conflict that you are finding hard to resolve?

Anyone in the **“safer space crew”**. At all our events, the organising team designates a person or group to act as a “safer space crew”, who monitor the social vibe of the gathering and are there to deal with issues like harassment or conflict. At bigger events, this is a working group. At smaller events or in online

spaces, this is a facilitator in the core paid team (usually the Secretary-General). You can approach any of them if you would like support, or to disclose information about something that you experienced/saw.

## Who deals with harassment and conflict resolution?

It depends on what the person with the complaint wants to do. If you want to follow an “informal procedure” where the safer space person acts as a mediator between people in conflict, then anyone in the safer space crew can support you to resolve the issue. This can be done anonymously if you prefer. If you want to follow a “formal procedure”, then a paid worker for the movement (someone in the “secretariat”) will lead the procedure. The Board of the organisation will be informed that the procedure is taking place. We do this to ensure accountability when sanctioning.

## Survivor-first policy

All of our procedures follow general principles such as the **privacy of the survivor**, **confidentiality** of the process, and **the survivor’s choice and preference**. We respect the presumption of innocence of any alleged harasser, which is why this procedure is in place. However, as a feminist organisation, we also believe in the principle of believing the survivor and putting the burden of proof on the alleged harasser.

This policy deals with internal cases of discriminatory harassment: we will not be able to extend sanctions or disciplinary measures beyond ReGeneration 2030.

## Policy for resolving conflict, including harassment and gender-based harm

**When the safer space crew receive a complaint of discriminatory harassment, they shall:**

1. Immediately **record** the dates, times, and facts of the incident(s);
2. Ascertain the views of the survivor as to **what outcome they want**, ensure the survivor feels safe and is **separated** from the alleged harasser unless the survivor wishes otherwise;
3. Ensure that the survivor and the alleged harasser understand ReGeneration 2030 **policy** (i.e. the document at hand) for dealing with the complaint;
4. Discuss and **agree on the next steps** with the (alleged) survivor, i.e. whether to initiate an informal, formal or outside complaints procedure (police, hospital, embassy, etc.), on the understanding that choosing to resolve the matter informally does not preclude the survivor from pursuing a formal complaint if they are not satisfied with the outcome;

5. **Keep a confidential record** of all discussions. Records will be destroyed if the survivor requests this. However, a record of sanctions and a brief description of the reason will be kept in a safe place;
6. Respect the choice of the survivor; and
7. Ensure that the survivor knows that **they can lodge the complaint outside of ReGeneration 2030** through the relevant country/legal framework.

## Informal Complaints Procedure

If the survivor wishes to deal with the matter informally, the facilitator who initially received the complaint will:

1. Approach the alleged harasser saying that **the behaviour** is offensive, unwelcome and **must be stopped** (providing only as much information as the survivor feels comfortable with sharing)
2. Inform the alleged harasser that ReGeneration 2030 has a **zero-tolerance policy** on discrimination and harassment and that disregarding this policy may result in the person's exclusion from the organisation
3. Give an opportunity to the alleged harasser to **respond** to the complaint;
4. Ensure that the alleged harasser **understands** the complaints mechanism;
5. Facilitate **discussion** between both parties to achieve an informal resolution that is acceptable to the survivor, and ensure that a confidential record is kept of what happened;
6. Follow up after the outcome of the complaints mechanism to ensure that **the behaviour has stopped** and that there is no risk of its repetition (or delegate this task to the official safeguarding officer); and
7. Ensure that the above is done **accurately** and at the latest **within 10 days of the complaint** being made. During events, the procedure shall take place within **48 hours**.

## Formal Complaints Procedure

If the survivor wants to make a formal complaint or if the informal complaint mechanism has not led to a satisfactory outcome for the survivor, the formal complaint mechanism should be used to resolve the matter. The person who initially received the complaint will **communicate\* to the rest of the safer space crew**, to a ReGeneration 2030 **employee who will facilitate** the formal procedure, and to **the board** the opening of a formal complaint procedure. Continue respecting the confidentiality of the survivor and the allegations.

The facilitator will carry out the formal procedure **with the assistance of the safer space crew** and, if applicable, an independent contact person who was present at the moment when allegations were presented. They will help the facilitator with the analysis and decision-making process.

### The facilitator will:

1. **Survey** the survivor and the alleged harasser separately; when speaking to the survivor, attention will be paid to avoid questioning the survivor's credibility;\*
2. **Survey** other relevant third parties separately;\*
3. Based on the depictions of the survivor and third parties and the response of the alleged harasser, **decide what actions** by the organisation are appropriate to remedy the harassment, with a focus on meeting the needs of the survivor (i.e. an apology, a change of structure, suspension,...);
4. Produce a **confidential report** detailing the procedure, its outcomes, recommendations, and decided actions;
5. **Follow up** to ensure that the recommendations and actions are implemented, that the behaviour has stopped and that the survivor is satisfied with the outcome;
6. **Keep a record** of all actions taken;
7. Ensure that all records concerning the matter are kept **confidential**;
8. Ensure that the process is done as quickly as possible and in any event **within 10 days** of the complaint being made.

The general rule is to avoid the presence of the alleged harasser in those places/structures in which the survivor moves, although this is not essential if neither party desires it. It is vital that the wishes and needs of the survivor are incorporated into the outcome of the complaints mechanism.

\*Note: It is **up to the survivor what details are shared** with who. However, this can affect the ability of the facilitator to take action to remedy the situation. For example, if the facilitator cannot share details of what happened with the alleged harasser, they **may** be unable to respond to the accusation, and this **could** in some cases make it hard for the facilitator to take remedial action (like asking the alleged harasser to leave a working group or event). All the facilitator and safer space crew can do is their best and trust their judgement. The facilitator may use this knowledge to **help the survivor decide how much information they want to share**, without questioning the survivor's credibility.

## Guidelines for Safer Space Persons

Read the policy and understand every aspect.

## What is discriminatory harassment?

Harm does not have to be defined in order to be healed or dealt with – but some forms of harm or discriminatory harassment are particularly normalised and likely to be replicated. Therefore, the following list of harmful behaviours is not meant to be comprehensive but rather intends to help people recognise the harm and encourage them to come forward.

As a feminist organisation, we want to be particularly sensitive to structurally embedded harm that can but does not have to, follow discrimination patterns such as ableism, antisemitism, classism, queerphobia (including transphobia), racism, sexism, the discrimination of Sinti and Romani people, and the discrimination of people with neurodivergence, mental illnesses, or mental health issues. By being sensitive to power structures and recognizing structurally embedded forms of harm and discrimination, we want to encourage critical self-reflection and active responsibility for our behaviour – aiming for enhanced collective practices of respectful interaction and increased societal awareness. We do not regard situations of discrimination as individual instances but as expressions of societal power structures, which we want to take collective responsibility for.

## Defining Harm

In our procedure, the power to define what counts as harm lies with the affected person, who defines the situation and where boundaries have been crossed. The experience and perception of the affected person are affirmed and validated and do not get questioned.

This includes the power to decide which procedure to follow, and whether to initiate any procedure at all.

Harmful behaviour often is unwanted behaviour that:

- Violates your dignity
- Makes you feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated
- Creates a hostile or offensive environment

We have put together a list of patterns of discriminatory behaviour and some examples. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, but is aimed at helping you to spot and speak up in cases of discrimination:

## Sexual harassment and queerphobic discrimination

Sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to, these examples:

- Touching, pinching, stroking, squeezing, or brushing against someone
- Leering or ogling

- Making LGBTIAQ+-phobic or GSRM (Gender, Sexual and Romantic Minorities)--phobic comments and sexually suggestive signals, such as winking
- Sending unwanted e-mails, text messages, posting sexually explicit jokes or content on ReGeneration 2030 communication channels
- Sexual comments or jokes
- Making insults based on a person's sex or rating their sexuality
- Turning work discussions into sexual topics
- Physical behaviour, including unwanted sexual advances, touching and various forms of sexual assault
- Displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature

### Racism

Racist behaviour is often unintended behaviour that marginalises, devalues, exoticises, questions, or excludes people of colour; it is rooted in colonial history and persists until today. Because white people have the privilege of not experiencing racism, it may be invisible to them. Yet, every person has the responsibility to reflect on their own internalised discriminatory thought patterns and meet people who point out racist behaviours or situations with respect and support.

Examples of racist behaviour might include:

- Comments on a person's skin colour or hair
- Comments on a person's origin/place of birth or accent
- Stereotyping, i.e. assuming that all people of a group have a certain characteristic
- Prejudice, unfounded hostility, bias against a person

### Ableism

Ableist behaviour is behaviour that normalises, presumes and favours that people are able-bodied. It defines people by their disability and directly or indirectly makes them appear inferior. Ableist behaviour can also discriminate against people with neurodivergence or mental health issues.

Examples of ableist behaviour might include:

- Using language that stigmatises or ridicules people with disabilities, neurodivergence, or mental health issues, especially after someone asks you to stop.
- Assuming that people with disabilities want to be 'cured', 'healed', or 'overcome their disability'.
- Using words like "normal" or "healthy" to describe non-disabled people.
- Failing to make information and spaces accessible to people with different needs, e.g. information in different formats or simple language and spaces that avoid distracting elements.

### Discrimination falling into patterns of classism

Classist behaviour is behaviour that discriminates against people who are not from middle or upper-class backgrounds and may have or have had less access to financial and cultural resources and education.

Examples of classist behaviour might include:

- Prejudice and stereotype against people based on the particular socioeconomic class they are part of or based on their income
- Feeling superior due to or normalising one's own level of education or financial security
- Judging people based on their accent, clothes, possessions or appearance

### Bullying

Bullying is repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a specific person or group of people that creates a risk to safety and well-being. Not all behaviour that makes someone feel upset is bullying. Repeated means that it happens over and over again over a prolonged period of time (such as several times over the course of two months). Unreasonable behaviour means behaviour that a caring person, having considered the circumstances, would see as unreasonable, including behaviour that is victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening.

Examples of bullying might include:

- Offensive comments
- Aggressive conduct
- Belittling language
- Practical jokes
- Repeatedly excluding someone from activities within the organisation
- Withholding information that is otherwise commonly held without a practical reason
- Spreading misinformation about a person on purpose

**Remember:** Whether harassing intentionally or unintentionally, we all have a responsibility to monitor our behaviour and respect each other.

Anyone who reports an incident has the right to remain anonymous. They also have the right to feel safe and respected.

## Tips for talking to people

### Tips for talking with the survivor:

**Listen and Support:** It's tough to be prepared when someone tells you that they have been a survivor of harassment or experiencing harm in a community we value. Remember, you can only provide support. Support and understanding are essential. It takes a lot of courage for a survivor to come forward and share their experience.

Try to provide a **safe/non-judgmental environment**, emotional comfort and support for the survivor to express feelings. Let them know that they can talk with you.

**Listen:** Don't rush to provide solutions.

**Believe:** The most common reason people choose not to tell anyone about discriminatory harassment is the fear that the listener won't believe them. People rarely lie or exaggerate about abuse; if someone tells you, it's because they trust you and need someone to talk to. People rarely make up stories of abuse. It is not necessary for you to decide if they were "really hurt." If the survivor says they were hurt, that should be enough. Believe what the person tells you. It may have been difficult for them to talk to you and trust you. Unless proven wrong, harassment has happened.

**Reassure:** Discriminatory violence or sexual assault is NEVER the survivor's fault. No one asks to be discriminated against or sexually assaulted by what they wear, say, or do. Let the survivor know that only the perpetrator is to blame.

The survivor needs to hear that fears, anxieties, guilt, and anger are **normal**, understandable, and acceptable emotions.

Remember, no one ever deserves to be abused or harassed.

**Be Patient:** Don't press for details – let the person decide how much to tell you. Ask them how you can help; survivors have to struggle with complex decisions and feelings of powerlessness, and trying to make decisions for them may only increase that sense of powerlessness.

You can be supportive by helping them to identify all the available options and then help them by supporting their decision-making process (here refer to the protocol). The survivor can't just "forget it" or just move on. Recovery is a long-term process and each individual moves at their own pace.



**Encourage** the survivor to seek medical attention, report the assault, and or contact a professional if needed.

**Don't push:** Remember, the survivor must ultimately make the decision as to what to do. They are the experts in their own lives. Support their choices no matter what they decide.

**Respect Privacy:** Don't tell others what the survivor tells you. Let the individual decide who they will tell. It is important not to share information with others who are not involved. If you do need to share information for their safety, get permission by letting them know what you will share and with whom it will be shared; i.e. the rest of the contact points in case of a formal complaint

**Establish Safety:** An important part of helping the survivor is to identify ways in which the survivor can re-establish their sense of physical and emotional safety. You are a step in the process. Ask them what would make them feel safe and how you can help them accomplish this. If the harassment is ongoing, help them to develop a plan of what to do if they are in immediate danger. Having a specific plan and preparing in advance can be important if the harassment escalates.

**Things you can say:** It is hard to know what to say to a person when they confide in you. Refrain from asking a lot of questions; instead, support them with these phrases. Let the person know that you believe that they have the strength and capacity to heal:

- It's not your fault, you did nothing wrong.
- I'm sorry this happened.
- I believe you. Your perception is accurate.
- Nothing is wrong with you. It is normal that you are feeling this response to the situation.
- How can I help you?

### **Tips for talking with the alleged harasser:**

The well-being and the perspective of the alleged harasser may not always seem relevant to the survivor, but it is relevant to the person who is dealing with the situation. **The alleged harasser may be worried** that what they say will not be taken seriously, that you will make them confront the person who made the complaint, or that other people will find out personal information about them. Assure them that this is not going to happen.

**Offer them the same kind of support** you offer to the person who's made the complaint. For example, talk to them privately and do not rush them.

It can be difficult to approach someone with critical information. **Before speaking with them, consider practising** beforehand, perhaps on the phone with a friend

who is not involved in ReGeneration 2030 at all and will not be able to guess who is involved.

**When approaching them,** choose a place that is private, such as a walk in the woods or in an empty office. Choose a time when you will know that you have long enough to talk to them - usually at least fifteen minutes. Ask for permission - for example, you can say "I would like to talk about something private that has come up", or "I would like to discuss something uncomfortable but important, and I would very much appreciate your time." This will set the scene and focus their attention.

**Acknowledge some positive sides of your relationship** if possible – everybody has some good qualities that we can value. Starting with something pleasant could make it easier for the offender to hear you out. Examples: "I greatly appreciate your contribution to the workshop on...." "You should know that I truly appreciate your commitment to...." It is important here to be truthful in order to build trust.

**Make the complaint as direct and precise** as you are able to (whilst protecting the level of confidentiality the survivor is comfortable with). **Focus on the effects** of their behaviour and as many detailed facts as you are able to share. For example, "NAME felt uncomfortable when you did this at this time." (Rather than: "You make people feel very disturbed when you..."). Avoid focussing on their personality or who they are as a person. Avoid absolute terms such as "you always" or "you never".

**Assure them** you are not there to find out who is "wrong" and who is "right", but to help everyone feel respected and safe, and get on with each other. **You are not there to pass judgment on their worth;** focus not on whether what they did was "OK", but on the effects that it had, for example, how it made the survivor feel, and on potential remedial action.

**Listen to them;** the alleged harasser may be able to **share their perspective** and why it is they did not realise their behaviour could make someone uncomfortable. Listen caringly, and, if it feels right, you can affirm that you understand they did not realise their behaviour was causing a problem. But avoid diminishing the effects that it had, and instead try to bridge from there to agreeing upon the remedial actions that the survivor has requested.

The alleged harasser may also simply deny everything you say and perhaps accuse you of lying. Remember: **listening does not mean accepting.** You do not have to enter into a defensive argument; if you are able to remain calm, and you feel you could continue the conversation, you could propose something like: "I feel strongly that this issue needs clarification. I would prefer to keep this between you and me, so let's try to understand why we see this so differently, and maybe we

can resolve the problem without involving anybody else.” **If you are upset by the denial**, you may wish to stop the discussion there and propose that you both involve a third party. For example: “Let’s not debate this here. I suggest we (CITE NEXT STEPS FROM PROCEDURE).”

Denial might be about saving face. If the unacceptable behaviour stops after this encounter, and the survivor is satisfied with the outcome, then the situation may have been resolved, and no further action may be needed.

### What do I do if people won’t comply with this procedure?

This policy exists to help resolve conflicts and minimise harm between people in ReGeneration 2030 spaces: at the end of the day, **we can’t force people to do or say things**.

For example, someone may experience harm and then not want to talk to the person. Put their wishes first: don’t be tempted to go behind their back and seek justice on their behalf without their permission. **If they want to drop it, drop it**.

Alternatively, the person who allegedly caused harm may not agree that they have done so. The important thing isn’t getting them to “admit” to causing harm, but **taking reconciliatory actions** as outlined by the survivor and the conflict resolution mediator.

That being said, **by taking part in ReGeneration 2030 spaces, you are agreeing to comply with the procedure**. This policy stipulates that if a resolution cannot be found through the informal procedure, the survivor can escalate to a formal procedure. **Through a formal procedure, the conflict resolution team can choose as a final resort to ask people to leave the space**.

### How do we decide when to exclude someone from a space?

The **responsibility to sanction** falls on the **safer space crew** (not the survivor). And we only have the ability to sanction when we use the formal complaints procedure (to make sure that the alleged harasser can be heard before decisions are made).


Our policy is **survivor-led**. That means that **we only take action to sanction someone** by (for example) excluding them from ReGeneration 2030 spaces **if the survivor of the harm wants to initiate a formal complaints procedure**.

However, you can always *suggest* that people steer clear of each other if helpful!

And remember, it's not possible to be perfect, and make all interpersonal conflict and unwanted behaviour vanish. We can only do our best. Don't be too hard on yourself as a mediator.

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 *ReGeneration 2030 Harassment and Conflict Resolution Policy )*