



Ensuring a Safe Workplace:

What Employers Need to Know About the new Prevention of Violence and Harassment Law

The “Prevention and Combating of Violence and Harassment in the Workplace Law of 2025 (Law 42(I)/2025)” (“Law”) marks an important milestone in Cyprus legislation as it redefines the employer’s role in safeguarding work environments in Cyprus.

The Law applies to both private and public sectors, ensuring comprehensive coverage across various employment contexts. To reflect this broad scope, the Law applies an expansive definition to the word “**workplace**,” which is defined to include not only the physical location where work is performed but also any area related to or arising from the work itself. Specifically, this includes both public and private areas surrounding the workplace, areas and/or locations where employees take a break, business trips, training, events, or where social activities take place, work-related electronic communication, employer-provided accommodation and travel to and from work.

The newly enacted Law further expands the definition of “**violence and harassment**” from the existing legislative frameworks in Cyprus in relation to discrimination and harassment in respect of gender, race, religion, age and sexual orientation. The Law defines “**violence**” as “any act, omission, practice, or behavior, including threats, that has the purpose or effect of causing physical, sexual, psychological, or economic harm or damage to the victim, occurring within the workplace either as an isolated incident or repeatedly”. Additionally, “**harassment**” refers to “any behavior unwanted by the recipient in the workplace, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.”

Additionally, the Law applies protections to **all employees** regardless of position and status and it expands to trainees and job applicants.

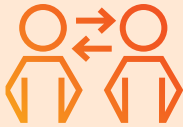
Understanding Employer Obligations

Employers are required to protect their employees from acts of violence or harassment committed by ‘**any person**’ in the workplace. The Law has a broad application of what would constitute ‘any person’ in the workplace and it includes the employees themselves, the employers, third parties who have a contractual or service relationship with the workplace or the employer and it also extends to members of the public who visit the workplace.

Under the Law, employers are required to manage every complaint by demonstrating and adopting zero tolerance for violence and harassment in the workplace. Some key obligations include the following:

- 01 Preventive Measures and Policy Development:** Employers are required to implement preventative measures against workplace violence and harassment. This includes, among others, developing and enforcing a comprehensive Code of Conduct to ensure a safe working environment.
- 02 Culture Promotion:** They must foster an organisational culture against harassment and violence by actively engaging with employees, providing training, and promoting awareness of workplace rights and responsibilities ensuring a safe workplace environment.
- 03 Immediate Action and Complaint Handling:** Upon awareness of an incident, employers must promptly take appropriate measures to address and halt occurrences of violence or harassment. They must manage reports and complaints with impartiality, confidentiality, and respect for the dignity of all involved, utilising secure and effective mechanisms.
- 04 Designated Responsibility:** Employers must assign trained employees to uphold and implement the Code of Conduct and handle complaints promptly.
- 05 Protection Against Retaliation:** Any retaliation or negative change in employment conditions for employees who report or resist violence and harassment is strictly prohibited, unless the employer can prove it is unrelated to the complaint. These protections broadly apply across all workplace settings, ensuring comprehensive support for those involved in any complaint process.
- 06 Domestic Violence:** Employers should also recognise the impact of domestic violence on employees and, where reasonably practicable, mitigate its effects through arrangements such as leave of absence, flexible work, or temporary protection from dismissal related to domestic violence.





Code of Conduct

Employers are expected to develop a Code of Conduct detailing the prevention of harassment and violence within the workplace. This should be comprehensible, accessible and up to date, and should be prepared in consolidation with employee representatives (where applicable).

By establishing and implementing a Code of Conduct, an employer is considered to have taken measures to fulfil their obligation and duty to prevent workplace harassment and violence, and any other prohibited acts listed under the law. It is worth noting that failure to implement a Code of Conduct may also increase the exposure of the employer to be found jointly liable with the individual who committed any of the prohibited acts listed under the Law.

The Code of Conduct should include, as a minimum, the following:

- a) the scope of its application and definition of the prohibited acts and related misconduct;
- b) the description of the behaviors that constitute the objective and subjective elements of the prohibited acts;
- c) the process of submitting complaints and reports, and the competent authorities or organisational bodies to which complaints may be submitted in accordance with the provisions of the Law;
- d) the relevant obligations of employers and employees;
- e) the measures and the procedure for addressing behaviors that constitute prohibited acts pursuant to the provisions of the Law; and
- f) anything else which may be deemed necessary in order for the code to be effective and to fulfill the purpose for which it was drafted.



Penalties and Enforcement

The Law imposes **criminal and civil liabilities** on both legal entities and individuals involved in workplace violence and harassment.

Individuals may face up to three years imprisonment and/or fines up to €10,000 “if a person who knowingly or who ought to have known, engages in conduct that constitutes or incites violence or harassment against another person in the workplace”. It is noted that a person is deemed to “know or ought to know” if a “**reasonable person**” in the same circumstances would consider such conduct as constituting or inciting violence or harassment.

Additionally, an individual may face up to two years imprisonment and/or €5,000 fines for obstructing complaint processes.

Legal entities may also be held criminally liable for offences committed by individuals in positions of authority, with penalties up to €20,000.

Next Steps for Employers

- Update your workplace policies to address violence and harassment effectively and ensure clear communication across all levels of the organisation.
- Develop and implement a Code of Conduct that incorporates mandatory legislative requirements, ensuring transparency and fostering a respectful, safe and compliant workplace environment.
- Conduct training sessions for managers, directors, and employees to reinforce policy understanding and cultivate a culture of respect, ensuring a safe work environment.
- Develop robust processes for reporting and addressing complaints, emphasising your commitment to maintaining a safe and respectful environment.

We stand ready to provide our assistance and guidance in aligning your workplace practices with the Law and to assist you in developing customised effective strategies to ensure compliance and foster a safe, respectful work environment. Let us partner with you to navigate these requirements with confidence and ease.



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