



## **Conduct Policy for Members**

### **IWGB Legal Department**

IWGB believes that no one should have to endure abusive or unpleasant treatment in the workplace. IWGB employees, officials and volunteers are no exception and we are committed to uphold best practice in how our staff, volunteers and lay officials (referred to in this policy as 'staff') are treated.

We understand that people can become angry in situations of stress or when they feel that matters about which they feel strongly are not being dealt with as they wish. Notwithstanding, members should treat staff with respect and behave appropriately in interactions with them. If anger escalates into aggression towards our staff, or if staff experience untoward and inappropriate behaviour of any other nature (such as unwanted sexual advances) we consider that unacceptable and reserve the right to withdraw casework or other practical support.

Aggressive or inappropriate behaviour includes language (whether verbal or written) that may cause staff to feel intimidated, afraid, threatened or abused and may include threats, verbal abuse, derogatory remarks and rudeness, as well as physical displays such as shouting and physically intimidating or insulting gestures. We also consider inflammatory statements, remarks of a discriminatory nature and unsubstantiated allegations to be abusive behaviour. Aggression or abuse directed towards our staff will not be tolerated.

The following policy outlines steps that will be taken if Legal Department staff believe they have experienced incidences of behaviour that contravenes IWGB's standards.

1. Any incident of inappropriate or rude behaviour towards IWGB staff will be reported by the staff to one of the Legal Officers (or, in their absence, to the General Secretary or their nominee).
2. The Legal Officer will try to resolve the matter informally. If they agree the behaviour was unacceptable they will make this clear and warn the member that any repeat of inappropriate behaviour will result in support/representation being withdrawn for the current case.
3. If the member behaves rudely or inappropriately again, the Legal Officer shall have the authority to withdraw casework representation and close the member's case. This applies to the current case only and does not preclude the member from requesting assistance in future.
4. They will then report the matter to the Legal Department Sub-Committee (LDSC), which may or may not decide to take further action. The member will be informed.
5. There is no right of appeal to this decision as members agree to abide by this policy in accessing IWGB's services. However, a member may make use of the Legal Department complaints procedure if they believe the policy has been misapplied.
6. If the behaviour in the first instance is so grievous as to warrant a special response, the Legal Officer may at their discretion withdraw casework/representation for the current case immediately. In these instances the matter must also be reported to the LDSC immediately and the LDSC will review it and make a decision regarding next

steps.

7. The Legal Officer may request the LDSC to review any particular case, if the behaviour is particularly grievous
8. For any cases in which the General Secretary or their nominee is acting as rep for a member, they shall fulfil the role of the Legal Officer.
9. For the avoidance of doubt, the power of the Legal Officer to act in these cases is restricted to withdrawing services for the particular case for which the member is currently being represented. Only the LDSC has the power to bar the member from making use of Legal Department services indefinitely. Only the IWGB Executive Committee has the power to expel a member from the union.

*In accessing the Legal Department services, it is assumed members have accepted this policy.*