

## **Code of Conduct for BFAWU Representatives**

The BFAWU is committed to building an inclusive environment where opportunities are open to all, diversity is valued, and where everybody can contribute without fear of harassment, prejudice or discrimination.

BFAWU represents members right across the food industry and allied trades. Our members are passionate about their professional roles, and they bring an incredible depth of knowledge and expertise to any debate.

This is a very real strength of BFAWU, but on occasion it brings challenges. As individuals we will not agree with everyone, but we do respect those different perspectives. As individuals we will not like everyone, but we do engage respectfully with all people.

The purpose of this code of conduct is to set out the standards of behaviour that the BFAWU expects to protect this approach. The standards of behaviour that representatives expect and campaign for in their workplaces apply equally to engagement in BFAWU activities.

A separate code of conduct sets out behavioural expectations of BFAWU employees. Although routes to resolving issues are different for employed staff, the same standards apply in relation to treating people with dignity and respect, free from harassment or discrimination.

It is the responsibility of all representatives and staff to ensure, to the extent they are able, that this code of conduct is implemented effectively.

This code of conduct therefore aims to:

- Provide you with clarity about your responsibilities to ensure the respect of others.
- Inform you about your rights if you feel you are not being treated with respect.

## **Responsibilities**

Representatives must:

- Act honestly, responsibly and with integrity.
- Communicate respectfully and honestly.
- Treat others with fairness, dignity, and respect.
- Encourage the open expression of views at meetings but accept collective responsibility for all decisions and policies once finalised.
- Not behave in ways that may cause physical or mental harm or distress to another person, such as verbal abuse, physical abuse, assault, bullying, or discrimination or harassment.

In representing BFAWU, representatives must:

- Only speak or act on behalf of the BFAWU when authorised to do so and clarify the capacity in which you are speaking.
- Always be mindful of their responsibility to maintain and develop BFAWU's ethos and reputation.
- Declare any interests that may conflict with their role in BFAWU, for example in a professional or political capacity.
- Respect confidentiality and ensure GDPR compliance in dealing with any documents, material, or devices containing confidential information.
- Not bring the BFAWU into disrepute, including through the use of email, social and mainstream media and other internet sites.

This code of conduct is underpinned by the union's rules. All branches should ensure that their representatives have read and comply with this code of conduct.

### **Complaints**

This code of conduct should be used to recognise unacceptable behaviour and ideally to informally address any alleged incidents of unacceptable behaviour, including bullying, harassment, or intimidation.

If the behaviour concerned continues or if it is of a more serious nature, this may be considered in any investigation under rule 11.2 members conduct which states:

'Disciplinary action may be taken against a Member who is in breach of these Rules or by their conduct has brought the union into disrepute or dishonestly receives or applies union funds or monies of any Member entrusted to them for the payment to the Union. The right to take or confirm disciplinary action including suspension and dismissal is vested in the Branch, RC and the EC subject to the right of appeal referred to below. The Member(s) shall be given not less than seven days' notice of any meeting convened to consider any complaint under this Rule or an appeal and shall be given full details of the allegation(s) against them. Any penalty imposed by the meeting shall be stayed pending an appeal to the EC A suspended Member shall remain liable to pay their contributions but shall have none of the rights and privileges of a Member.'

You can also contact [report@bfawu.org](mailto:report@bfawu.org)

All representatives will be made aware of this code of conduct and the standards of behaviour expected. All representatives are encouraged to attend BFAWU training courses to address any skills gaps and support their development.

I ..... of branch ..... agree to the above code of conduct

Signature.....