

16 November 2015

Mr Peter Markovits
Store Manager Coles Westfield
BONDI JUNCTION NSW
Email: Coles.0853.manager@coles.com.au

Dear Peter,

RE: WORKPLACE BULLYING, HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, VICTIMISATION AND
VILIFICATION

I refer to your verbal request to detail an incident in an email that recently took place at the Bondi Junction (0853) Westfield store.

My name is Luke Vlahopoulos, I have been a loyal employee of Coles for nine years in the capacity of a grocery filler and have performed all my duties diligently and conscientiously. During the course of my employ I have never had occasion to lodge any formal complaints against anyone. However, a recent deplorable event demands that I bring a certain matter to your attention and to the attention of executive management at head office Melbourne.

The following is an accurate account of events that transpired at the loading docks on 7 November, which were witnessed by several other staff members not directly involved in the incident:

On Saturday 7 November, I was returning to work after my lunch break. As I, and three other team members, Nisham, Pratap and Shabir, approached the receiving dock I noticed that a delivery truck was stationed at the dock open and ready to be unloaded. In the middle of the dock a meat team member 'James' was breaking down a pallet of meat, I noticed that the pallet was at an angle and was obstructing free passage so I politely asked 'James' if I could move the pallet slightly to make room for other pallets to be unloaded and pass through from the docked truck, James, realising the problem, replied in the affirmative.

After repositioning the pallet, I was preparing to unload the waiting truck, however, as I proceeded I heard a loud and aggressive, *"let him do his fucking job you blind cunt!"* This clearly unwarranted abuse was hurled at me by the meat manager 'Oli,' who was out of uniform (dressed in casual clothing) and breaking down a pallet in the cardboard lane. I was shocked at this unwarranted abuse and wondered whether something had happened.

As I assessed the situation, the meat manager, apparently not content with his singular offensive effort, screamed, *"can't you see out of your right eye, are you fucking blind!"* After this second outburst I dropped the pallet-jack and approached the meat manager to ask for an explanation for the abuse, he then aggressively repeated to my face, *"are you fucking blind, can't you see him doing his job."* Needless to say, I was deeply offended and extremely upset over this unjustified, unwarranted and outrageous abuse/vilification not least because, as all staff are aware, I only have the sight of one eye.

I decided to report the matter to Jason Kim, the Dry Goods manager, so I approached the meat manager to ask for his full name, his aggressive response was, *"my name is Habib [?] bro, go and call HR"*. After this smug response I went downstairs and informed Jason Kim of everything that had transpired and requested that he refer the matter to HR for appropriate intervention as it was clearly pointless to pursue the matter directly with the meat manager himself, who is clearly in need of professional specialist assistance, nevertheless, I left the matter with Jason Kim.

The next day, Sunday 8 October, I was rostered to work from 2-11pm. Midway through my shift, at around 5:20pm, I was using the restroom when I was confronted by the abusive meat manager at

the wash basin, he approached very close and began flexing his upper body and making aggressive gestures, clearly these moronic antics were designed to intimidate, however, I ignored him and returned to work.

It hardly requires stating that no-one in any Australian corporate workplace should be the target of or subject to overt vilification, as I am sighted in only one eye, and extreme unjustified/unwarranted abuse.

This incident reflects very badly on management and the reputation of Coles. I trust the matter will be dealt with appropriately and the offender severely reprimanded or indeed dismissed, as other staff have been dismissed for comparatively minor infractions. Please refer to Coles and Wesfarmers codes of conduct, Australian anti-vilification laws and Australian ethical workplace standards in this regard.

As the matter continues to cause me considerable distress I sincerely hope that management would act in accordance with Australian law and in accordance with its published Codes of Conduct and deal swiftly, justly and effectively to resolve this matter and to avert the possibility of external legal intervention – I would advise that I have been legally advised of my rights and options.

In conclusion, it would also seem necessary that all staff nationwide are made aware of Australian vilification laws, company codes of conduct and Australian workplace standards/practices on a regular basis.

Yours faithfully,
Luke Vlahopoulos

Email: Luke.vlahopoulos@outlook.com

CC

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