



## Stalking

### What the Union can do to assist members who are being stalked

**This document has been produced following a motion to Equity's 2018 Annual Representative Conference from the East of Scotland General Branch**

Stalking is a set of behaviours that cause significant alarm or distress or fear of violence. It is a criminal matter, covered by criminal legislation (including the Protection from Harassment Act 1997; The Protection from Harassment (Northern Ireland) Order; the Sexual Offences Act 2003; and the Malicious Communications Act 1988, The Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010), and is not a matter covered by the framework of legislation that applies to workers and employees.

However, the Union can actively help Members as follows:

If a Member is being stalked in the workplace they should contact the relevant Industrial Organiser. Contact details available on Equity's website.

#### **The workplace in Theatre, Dance and Opera**

If an Equity Member is being stalked by a member of the **same** work force, the Member, on contacting Equity, will be advised to immediately report the matter to the police. Additionally, the Union will advise the engager (employer, hirer, booker, producer etc.) and tell the Member that they must put in a formal grievance using the engager's formal grievance procedures. Equity would also expect the engager to signpost the Member to any additional support services provided by their HR Department during this formal process and other expert services such as the National Stalking Helpline.

In the interim, and whilst the formal grievance is being investigated, the Union will expect the alleged stalker to be immediately suspended from work and/or the engager will have risk assessed and, in consultation with the Member and Equity, put in place all of the actions possible to safeguard the Member entering or leaving the workplace. It is expected that the engager will advise the alleged stalker that no communications should take place with the Member, and that if any communication takes place using work facilities this will be deemed gross misconduct. If other interim arrangements are put in place to prevent contact, the Union would expect that any breach of any interim arrangements would result in the immediate expulsion of the alleged stalker.

If the engager does not suspend during the investigation, then arrangements would need to be put in place to prevent any contact on stage or backstage or in other parts of the building, including the stage door and provide chaperones etc.

If a grievance is brought against a Member they can contact the Union for advice.

### **The workplace in Film and Recorded Media**

The same procedure would apply, modified by practical arrangements that apply to Film and TV sets e.g. shared transport, pick-ups and drop-offs, set security, isolated locations, varying amount of time on set etc.

### **The workplace in clubs and other venues**

The Union would advise the member to immediately report the matter to the police and provide them with information as to any other relevant support services such as the National Stalking Helpline.

The Member would be advised to alert the Club Secretary and club security staff of a possible stalker who could be present in the audience.

The member would be advised to locate the best route to the venue, avoiding quiet backstreets and to park their vehicle (if not using public transport) in a well-lit area.

The member would be advised to consider taking a companion to the booking if possible.

### **Stalker outside of the same workforce /workplace**

The Member would first be signposted to both the police and relevant support services such as the National Stalking Helpline.

If the Member gives permission, the Union would ensure that the engager is aware that a member of their workforce is potentially at risk and, in consultation with the Member, ensure that as many practical steps as possible are taken by the engager to ensure the Member's safety in areas that may be publicly accessed, such as the auditorium, backstage areas, stage door area, studios' entrances and exits and at events that the Member has to attend such as film premieres or awards ceremonies.

### **At Equity branch meetings.**

Between Members of Equity branches, Union staff can signpost the person affected to the relevant support services and will encourage the Member to report the matter to the police.

The Union can assist in providing support to the member, branch chair and branch secretary to think about practical arrangements that could be made. The Union is unable to oversee branch member meetings.

Equity is unable to report the alleged stalker to the police or instigate criminal proceedings on a Member's behalf. This must be done by the Member themselves.

## **A Member being stalked away from the workplace, including working from home**

If a Member contacts our Harassment and Bullying Reporting Line they will be advised to report the matter to the police and will be signposted to relevant support services.

### **Helplines:**

Members can contact Equity's Bullying and Harassment Helpline on **020 7670 0268** (Monday to Friday, 9.30am – 5.30pm), or email [harassment@equity.org.uk](mailto:harassment@equity.org.uk).

The [National Stalking Helpline](#) is the key expert service and operates a telephone helpline: **0808 802 0300** The Helpline is open 09:30 to 16:00 weekdays except for Wednesdays when it is open 13:00 to 16:00. The Helpline is not open on Bank Holidays.