



Bullying Doesn't Work Here

- ✗ Threatening behaviour
- ✗ Excessive monitoring
- ✗ Unreasonable demands
- ✗ Shouting, swearing and insults
- ✗ Feeling unsafe and afraid to speak up

The workplace is no place for bullying behaviour

There are many forms of bullying at work. You don't have to accept this behaviour. Everyone has the right to respect and dignity – and to feel safe at work.



SDA

What is bullying?

Many people think of bullying as only happening in the schoolyard. But that's only part of the story.

Most bullying behaviour is not so obvious.

Belittling, intimidating, threatening or keeping people under pressure is also bullying. This is the most common form of bullying in Australian workplaces, and is a risk to health and safety.

Bullying can happen to anyone.

The workplace is no place for bullying

Is this your workplace?

- ✘ Shouting or abusive language.
- ✘ Open or implied threat of the sack or demotion.
- ✘ People afraid to speak up about conditions, behaviours, or health and safety.
- ✘ Unreasonable demands or impossible targets.
- ✘ Being required to perform tasks without adequate training.
- ✘ Being forced to stay back to finish work or additional tasks.
- ✘ Compulsory overtime, unfair rostering or allocation of work.
- ✘ Constant, intrusive surveillance or monitoring.
- ✘ Interference with personal belongings or sabotage of work.
- ✘ Pressure on staff who put in a workers' compensation claim.

Who's doing the bullying?

Co-workers, clients, customers, contractors or others from outside the workplace can be bullies. However, research shows more workers are bullied by employers and managers than by fellow workers.

What can be done

Everyone has the right to dignity and respect, and to a safe and healthy environment at work.

If bullying is happening in your workplace, there are ways to deal with it.

- ✘ Get the issues out in the open by talking with fellow workers.
- ✘ Hold a meeting, away from the workplace if necessary.
- ✘ Get your workplace health and safety representative, OHS committee, or other Delegate to take up the issues.
- ✘ Contact the SDA for assistance.

Use these processes to:

- ✘ Identify the most important issues.
- ✘ Keep records of incidents, so they are not forgotten or misrepresented.
- ✘ Raise the issues with your employer through workplace representatives.
- ✘ Arrange counselling and/or other assistance for distressed workers if needed.

How bullying can affect the workplace

Bullying not only impacts upon the victim, it also affects the workplace in general. Some of these effects include:

- x Low morale.
- x Unmotivated workers.
- x Lost productivity.
- x High staff turnover.
- x Increased sick leave usage.
- x Increased stress and workers' compensation claims.
- x An oppressive and unhappy workplace.

Employers' responsibilities

Under occupational health and safety legislation, employers have a legal duty to control all health and safety hazards in the workplace. This includes dealing with organisational structures and behaviours which may lead to bullying.

Employers must consult with their employees about policies and procedures to eliminate all hazards and risks from the workplace. There is no excuse for causing or allowing bullying.



Bullying is a growing problem

Changes at work, brought about by deregulation, privatisation, restructuring, downsizing and technology, have contributed to an erosion of working conditions for many Australians.

Casualisation and job insecurity create a climate where people are increasingly powerless and at risk of being bullied. The push for ever higher 'productivity' in an increasingly competitive environment can result in bullying tactics being used to drive workers to the limit.

Health and safety effects

Bullying can affect our health in many ways and is a major cause of stress at work. At worst, it can result in serious physical illness, alcohol and drug use, depression or suicidal thoughts.

Other symptoms include headaches, sleep difficulties, high blood pressure, digestive problems, tearfulness, anxiety, nausea, anger, irritability, and loss of motivation, concentration, self confidence and morale.

The effects of bullying also place pressure on family and friends.

The significant effects which working conditions have on the health of workers are largely underestimated or ignored in this country. If you and/or your colleagues are experiencing any of the signs and symptoms described here, the cause may well be bullying.

You don't have to put up with bullying at your workplace.

A message from your secretary, Paul Griffin



All workers have the right to be treated with respect and dignity and to feel safe at work.

Bullying has no place in the workplace.

If you are being bullied or are working in an environment where bullying is occurring, there *are* things you can do about it.

Bullying must not be tolerated.

For more information, or if you need help...

Contact the SDA:

Write to	Launceston Office (main office) 72 York Street Launceston Tas 7250	Hobart Office 75 Patrick Street Hobart Tas 7000
Phone	(03) 6331 8166	(03) 6234 1118
Fax	(03) 6334 2104	(03) 6234 1887



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