

Hostile Working Environment

A hostile work environment is a situation in which an employer or co-worker's repeated actions make it impossible for an employee to perform his or her job duties. The term we most commonly use in Australia is "workplace harassment".

There are many different types of actions that can make a workplace uncomfortable.

Harassment

Harassment occurs when someone is made to feel intimidated, insulted or humiliated because of their race, colour, national or ethnic origin, sex, disability, sexual preference, or some other characteristic specified under anti-discrimination or human rights legislation. Harassment can be both physical and psychological.

Bullying

Bullying occurs when a person or a group of people behaves unreasonable and repeatedly towards a worker or a group of workers whilst at work and **the behaviour creates a risk to health and safety**. Kids learn from adults' actions, by treating others with kindness and respect, adults show kids that there is no place for bullying. Kids are watching how adults manage stress and conflict as how they treat their friends, colleagues and families. By showing this, not only helps you but children in your lives are always watching and learning the example being set. Bullying can occur amongst co-workers, from persons in supervisory positions downwards and from employees upwards.

Unlawful Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination occurs when an employee or group of employees is treated less favourably than another employee or group of employees in the same or similar circumstances because of their gender, sexual preference, sexual history, pregnancy, marital status, a disease, illness or disability of the physical, mental or emotional health.

If an employee feels uncomfortable in a workplace due to the above, this can bring on stress and anxiety which continues on from last month's Health Tip being Preventing Work Related Stress.

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In order to maintain an environment based on mutual respect, Klinge will encourage anyone in the workplace to bring forward a complaint if they have or are being subjected to unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying. All complaints will be taken seriously and confidentially and workplace investigations will be conducted promptly and thoroughly.

An employee who considers that they have been discriminated against may raise their concern in either informally or formally.

- You can informally speak directly to their Manager, Supervisor, General Manager or Company Directors and request assistance in making a direct request for the behaviour to cease.
- You can also do this formally by lodging a written and signed complaint to the Company Directors in relation to the alleged discriminatory behaviour. Where a formal complaint is lodged the matter will be investigated and the findings of the investigation be recorded and be retained in the strictest of confidence.

A range of strategies for resolution may be considered including;

- Agreement by the employee that the behaviour will cease
- Conduct a general awareness program for staff
- A mediated discussion between the parties in an attempt to reach an agreed outcome
- Counselling and support to the parties involved in the matter
- Relocation of one of the parties to another work location
- Referral of the matter for formal disciplinary action under WKI-K&C-019 Supervisory Guide.



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