



## Bullying and harassment

### What constitutes bullying and harassment?

Bullying and harassment can occur in multiple settings, from the workplace to when people are online at home. However, despite the location, bullying and harassment involves a variety of behaviours that span from verbal, physical, social or psychological abuse. These behaviours may include:

- Making someone the target of practical jokes
- Hurtful remarks
- Sexual harassment
- Being intimidating
- Pressure someone to behave in an inappropriate way
- Excluding someone from work-events or
- Making unreasonable working demands

### What are some of the mental health consequences of bullying and harassment?

Bullying in the workplace or online can result in lower health and well-being of the target. Victims generally have the following:

- Physical Symptoms
  - Sleep problems
  - Chronic fatigue / low energy levels
  - Difficulty eating or overconsumption of food
- Psychological Symptoms
  - Low job satisfaction
  - Anxiety
  - Anger
  - Depression
  - Low self-esteem.



## Links Psychology

### **What steps can I take if I believe I am the target of bullying and harassment?**

If you believe that you are the subject to workplace bullying and harassment, there are many steps you can take.

- Keep calm
- Read up on your workplaces bullying policy and complaints procedure
- Speak to your supervisor, workplace health and safety representative, or human resource department.
  - Make sure all correspondence is well-documented
- Report to the Fair Work Commission
- Participate in an *EAP program*
- Speak to an external psychologist

### **What is Work Cover and what happens if I go on Work Cover?**

Workplace bullying and harassment can lead to severe depression and anxiety. Work Cover is Australia's worker compensation in the event of mental injury or trauma during employment. This allows the worker to seek the appropriate treatment by making a claim. If the claim is approved, workers are able to seek treatment for their psychological ailment. The psychologist is able to provide an assessment about whether the worker is fit to resume work or is unfit to return to work. Alternatively, an assessment can be conducted about whether the worker needs new and accommodating duties or a graded entry into the workplace.



### **Indications that I may not be fit for work**

An indication that you may not be fit to work can be evident in many aspects of life. The following are a few examples:

- Physical Symptoms
  - Loss of energy and / or sleep changes
  - Panic attacks
  - Headaches, muscle aches or upset stomach
- Psychological Symptoms
  - Feeling depressed and rejected by peers
  - Withdrawal from daily activities
  - High stress levels - feeling of being overwhelmed and unable to cope
  - Reduced concentration / Memory problems
  - Poor judgement
  - Constant worrying

**If you have been subject to bullying and harassment in your workplace, the specialist professionals at Links Psychology can assist.**

Links Psychology provides psychodynamic treatment for anxiety, depression and workplace stress. This allows for an in-depth analysis in addressing problems that you may be facing, as well as a client-centred approach for solutions. Links Psychologists are specialised in cognitive behavioural therapy and long-term psychotherapy to achieve the most positive outcome when you are returning to work.