

Employee fact sheet:

What to do if you experience bullying or inappropriate behaviour



Bullying and inappropriate behaviour at work can affect your confidence, wellbeing, psychological safety and ability to do your job. It may leave you feeling anxious, isolated, upset, unsafe or unsure about what to do next.

If you are experiencing behaviour that feels harmful, disrespectful or unreasonable, it is important to take it seriously. You do not need to manage the situation alone. Confidential support is available through your EAP PeopleSense by Altius, to help with aspects like understanding what has happened, managing the impact on your wellbeing or thinking through your next steps.

What bullying and inappropriate behaviour can look like

Bullying may involve repeated unreasonable behaviour that creates a risk to health and safety. Inappropriate behaviour may include conduct that is disrespectful, intimidating, excluding, aggressive or harmful.

This may include:

- being repeatedly criticised, belittled or undermined
- being excluded from information or opportunities without a reasonable explanation
- being shouted at, threatened or intimidated
- having rumours spread about you
- having your work sabotaged or unfairly blamed on you
- being humiliated in front of others
- experiencing offensive comments, jokes or behaviour
- being pressured to do something unsafe, inappropriate or outside reasonable expectations

Not every difficult interaction is bullying. However, if behaviour is repeated, unreasonable, harmful or affecting your wellbeing, it is worth seeking guidance and support.

When to seek support

It may be helpful to seek support if:

- the behaviour is affecting your confidence, wellbeing or ability to work
- you feel anxious, unsafe, isolated or distressed
- you are unsure whether the behaviour is bullying or inappropriate conduct
- you are worried about raising the issue
- the behaviour is repeated or escalating
- you have tried to address the issue and it has not improved
- you are unsure what records to keep or what steps to take next
- the situation is affecting your sleep, mood, relationships or daily life

What you can do

Experiencing bullying or inappropriate behaviour can feel overwhelming. Looking after your wellbeing, connecting with others and seeking support early can make a big difference. You can also access [EAP sessions through PeopleSense](#) by Altius at any stage. Support from a qualified psychologist can help you understand what you are experiencing, put helpful strategies into practice, and identify other ways to support your wellbeing.

1. Trust your response

If something feels harmful, intimidating or unreasonable, take that seriously. You do not need to dismiss your concerns or wait until things get worse.

2. Focus on specific behaviour

When thinking about what happened, try to separate facts from assumptions. Focus on the behaviour, the impact it had and any patterns you have noticed.

3. Use workplace processes

Your organisation may have policies or reporting pathways for bullying, harassment, inappropriate behaviour or workplace conduct concerns. These processes can help guide what to do next and who to speak with.

4. Consider your safety

If the behaviour is making you feel unsafe, distressed or unable to work, seek support as soon as possible. If there is an immediate risk to your safety, follow your workplace safety procedures or contact emergency support.

5. Prepare

Before speaking with a manager, HR or another workplace contact, it may help to organise your notes, identify what outcome you are hoping for and think about what support you may need. [PeopleSense by Altius](#), your EAP, can help you prepare for these conversations.

6. Seek support

Speak with someone you trust, such as a manager, HR representative, union representative, workplace contact or support person. Confidential support is also available through [PeopleSense by Altius](#), your EAP.

7. Look after yourself

Raising concerns can feel stressful, particularly if the behaviour has been happening for some time. Make time for support, rest and connection where you can. Speaking with a qualified psychologist through your [EAP](#) can help you manage the emotional impact.



Reaching out early makes a real difference.
Contact [PeopleSense](#) to book a confidential appointment with a qualified psychologist.

If you are having thoughts of self-harm or suicide, seek urgent support immediately. Call 000, Lifeline on 13 11 14.

peoplesense.altius.au
reception@peoplesense.com.au

AU: 1300 307 912
NZ: 0800 425 526