



# Workplace Bullying

## Information for SIAST Students

### 1. What is workplace bullying?

Workplace bullying (sometimes called *psychological* or *personal* harassment) can mean any repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed toward an employee, or group of employees, that creates a risk to their health and safety.

“Unreasonable behaviour” means behaviour that a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would expect to victimize, humiliate, undermine, or threaten.

Bullies may be fellow employees (including supervisors and managers) or clients/customers.

### 2. What can it include?

It may include:

- verbal abuse or intimidation
- excluding or isolating workers, supervisors, or managers
- assigning meaningless tasks unrelated to the job
- giving employees impossible assignments
- deliberately changing work rosters to inconvenience particular employees
- deliberately withholding information that is vital for effective work performance

This list doesn't include everything that could constitute bullying.

### 3. Is it covered under OHS laws?

Workplace bullying is not presently covered under Saskatchewan's occupational health and safety legislation. It does not fall under the definition of *Harassment* in *The Occupational Health and Safety Act*. The definition determines what can be dealt with

under the legislation. Behaviour that does not fall under the definition must be dealt with through other avenues.

### 4. What can be done to prevent it?

The employer can prevent bullying by applying normal management practices. For example, the employer can:

- create awareness
- with the help of workers develop, implement, and post a policy to prevent bullying
- assign responsibilities for administering the policy
- inform, instruct, and train employees
- encourage reporting
- enforce the policy fairly and consistently
- update it regularly with advice from workers

Employees can help the employer by not engaging in bullying, reporting incidents, and supporting people who are bullied.

### 5. What should I do if I am bullied?

1. Don't ignore it.
2. Ask the bully to stop.
3. Document each incident.
4. Use the workplace's rules and policies – complain to your supervisor, contact human resources, use the employer's respectful workplace policy, etc.
5. Use other avenues.

### 6. Where can I go for information about workplace bullying?

The *WorkSafe Saskatchewan* website has links to a variety of resources. You can access the site at: [www.worksafesask.ca/](http://www.worksafesask.ca/).

To contact the Occupational Health and Safety Division:

Visit our website: [www.labour.gov.sk.ca](http://www.labour.gov.sk.ca)

**Regina** call: 1-800-567-7233 (toll-free) **Saskatoon** call: 1-800-667-5023 (toll-free)