

Good practice, good business



Australian
Human Rights
Commission

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Eliminating discrimination and harassment from your workplace

HOW TO IMPLEMENT AN ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT POLICY IN YOUR WORKPLACE

Whether you're running a small business employing 10 people, or you're the CEO of a large company, it is vital that your staff have the information they need to do their job well. The same is true if you want to develop a cohesive and productive workplace, free from discrimination and harassment.

An important first step you can take is to develop a policy which makes it clear that your workplace does not tolerate discrimination and harassment.

It's important that all employees (including contractors and other paid or unpaid staff) are familiar with the policy. The policy can be displayed on workplace notice boards, included in pay slips, discussed at staff meetings or posted on your company intranet.

If your workplace provides goods or services to others, your policy should clearly state that it is against the law to discriminate against or harass members of the public or people with whom you do business. In these cases both the individual and the company could be legally liable for any act of discrimination or harassment.

Implementing successful workplace policies

Following are some of the necessary steps, skills and expertise when implementing a successful program to eliminate discrimination and harassment in the workplace.

First step

- Develop policy and procedures to provide information and solutions to ensure harassment and discrimination does not occur within the workplace.
- Disseminate the policy and procedures on a regular basis.

- Ensure managers and supervisors have face to face contact with staff to disseminate the policy and procedures.

Second step

- Provide training for managers and supervisors to assist them in the identification of unlawful or unacceptable behaviour within the workplace.
- Ensure managers and supervisors communicate and respond appropriately to situations where such behaviour is observed or reported.
- Promotion and education of correct workplace practices by workers' colleagues and their peers can be very effective.

Skills necessary to implement successful program

- Managers benefit greatly if they undergo interactive training sessions, with written materials supplied as a back up.
- Primary focus should be on face to face communication.

Expert advice

Any successful program needs expert people trained to step in when managers and supervisors don't have the level of expertise to undertake remedial action, or they are involved in the unacceptable behaviour themselves. Your procedures need to take this into account.

Help outside the organisation

For links to a range of business and employer bodies that provide advice and training courses for employers go to:

www.humanrights.gov.au/employers/

FACT SHEET:
**How to implement an anti-discrimination and harassment policy
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Outcome of effective policy and procedures

- ✓ Reduces the likelihood of misunderstanding and confusion about the organisation's policy and procedures.
- ✓ Reduces the likelihood of employer liability.
- ✓ Provides a more harmonious work environment.
- ✓ Greater productivity.

This fact sheet is part of *good practice, good business* – information and resources for employers to address discrimination and harassment in the workplace.

Available online at www.humanrights.gov.au/employers/

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