

# SAFETY TALK

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# Workplace Violence and Harassment

## Physical Aggression

- Non-contact aggressive behaviour (ex. slamming doors, banging fists on table, etc.)
- Damaging property (ex. tools, work space, vehicles)
- Any unwanted contact (ex. spitting, pushing, sexual touch, etc.)
- Threatening harm (ex. "I want to punch you!", "Let's take this outside.")



## Online Behaviour

- Posting defamatory information online
- Sharing information or intimate pictures about others without consent
- Making online threats to others



## Violence & Harassment:

Any action, conduct, or comment, including of a sexual nature, that can reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation, or other physical or psychological injury or illness to an employee. Examples include physical and psychological aggression, abuse of authority, and inappropriate online behaviour.

## Psychological Aggression

- Use of condescending, degrading, or abusive language
- Use of facial expressions (ex. rolling eyes)
- Ignoring or excluding others



## Abuse of Authority

- Belittling others' work
- Taking advantage of a position of authority to exploit, intimidate, threaten, or blackmail others
- Withholding information pertinent to another role

*NOTE: Workplace harassment does not include appropriate management actions when they are conducted in a fair manner and for legitimate reasons.*



Like other workplace hazards (ex. noise, dust, or chemical exposure), we all have different tolerances. If you are unsure if a particular action or set of actions could be considered violence or harassment, consider whether a reasonable person would have known those behaviours to be unwelcome.

## Intent, Impact, and Perception

Intent is the meaning or motivation behind an action; what the person is thinking or feeling. Impact is how the action makes an individual feel. Perception is where the intent and the impact intersect. When intent and impact don't align, the perception may be that violence or harassment occurred, regardless of the intent. It is important to realize that even though you had positive intent, a negative impact can cause real harm. For example, telling someone with a disability that they are "an inspiration" may seem like a nice thing to say, but a person with a disability may interpret this as people with disabilities can't be successful.

Generally speaking, misunderstandings are part of life. We all have our own perspective, experience, and bias. A person's intentions and the other person's perception are both valid. In the workplace, it is important to consider your intention, the impact, and the perception of such actions. If you believe that you have experienced violence or harassment in the workplace, ensure you report these instances following your internal reporting of workplace violence and harassment policy and procedures.