

# WHERE CAN YOU GO FOR HELP?

## Websites

- **Canada Safety Council:**  
[www.safety-council.org/info/OSH/bullies.html](http://www.safety-council.org/info/OSH/bullies.html)
- **No Bully for Me:**  
[www.nobullyforme.org](http://www.nobullyforme.org)
- **Mobbing.ca:**  
[www.mobbing.ca](http://www.mobbing.ca)
- **Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety:**  
[www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/bullying.html](http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/bullying.html)

## Contacts

1. Local Steward
2. Local Health & Safety Committee
3. OPSEU Equity Unit  
416.443.8888 ext. 8790  
[sroe@opseu.org](mailto:sroe@opseu.org)



Ontario Public Service Employees Union  
100 Lesmill Road  
Toronto, Ontario M3B 3P8  
Phone: (416) 443-8888  
[www.opseu.org](http://www.opseu.org)

# WHAT CAN YOU DO?

## Individually

**Speak Up** – If possible, tell the person(s) that you think their behavior is inappropriate and will not be tolerated.

**Document** – If the behaviour continues, start taking detailed notes about the behaviour you experienced in writing. Be sure to include relevant dates, times, witnesses, clear descriptions of the behaviour, the impact on you etc.

**Get Support** – Try and develop relationships with other coworkers. Approach your local steward or manager about the situation. Read about the issue and talk to your own friends and family for support.

## Systemically

Ask your employer for:

- Language in the collective agreement
- An anti-bullying and psychological harassment policy
- Education and training in the workplace about this issue

Ask your union to:

- Push the employer for the above
- Establish or activate a Joint Health and Safety Committee



# CHALLENGE BULLYING & PSYCHOLOGICAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

- Targets endure bullying for almost two years before filing a complaint
- Targets have a 70% chance of losing their jobs
- Only 13% of bullies are punished or terminated
- 71% of bullies have higher positions than their targets
- 84% of bullied employees are female
- 21% of all workers have been targeted by bullies

# PROFILES OF BULLIES AND THEIR TARGETS



## Bullies

Workplace bullies tend to be insecure people with poor or non-existent social skills and little empathy. They turn this insecurity outwards, finding satisfaction in their ability to attack and diminish the capable people around them. Regardless of specific tactics, the intimidation is driven by the bully's need to control others.

## Targets

It is important for targets to know that they do not deserve to be bullied. The common stereotype of a bullied person is someone who is weak, an oddball or a loner. However, workplace targets are often chosen because they are capable, dedicated staff members, and they are well liked by co-workers. Bullies are most likely to pick on people with an ability to cooperate and a non-confrontational interpersonal style. The bully considers their capability a threat, and is determined to cut them down.

# SIGNS OF BULLYING & PSYCHOLOGICAL HARASSMENT

## General bullying behaviours

- Verbal attacks — raised voices, shouting, swearing, pointing fingers or making rude gestures
- Getting angry easily
- Openly or indirectly threatening others
- Embarrassing or intimidating people through words or gestures
- Physical attacks like throwing things, kicking, hitting or pushing

## Bully managers

- Work interference — constant public criticism, overloading an individual with work, imposing unrealistic deadlines, removing areas of responsibility
- Unable to value others, constantly devalues and demotivates
- Alienates, divides, creates fear and uncertainty

## Bully co-workers

- Starting or spreading gossip about co-workers
- Excluding and isolating the target, giving them the 'silent treatment'

# IMPACTS OF BULLYING

Although the impact is not always evident, the short and long-term impacts of bullying and psychological harassment can be considerable.

Symptoms may include:

- Sleeplessness
- Depression
- Lowered self-esteem and self-doubt
- Digestive and musculoskeletal problems
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Reduced immunity to infection
- Panic attacks, feelings of nervousness and anxiety, excessive sweating, trembling, palpitations
- Exhaustion and chronic fatigue

