



Addressing Harassment in Apprenticeship: A Fact Sheet for Those Who Manage, Train, and Mentor Apprentices

This resource provides guidance on workplace harassment for journeymen, forepersons, front-line supervisors and others who manage, train or mentor apprentices.

WHAT IS HARASSMENT?

- Harassment occurs when someone's conduct (words or actions) creates a situation where an apprentice or a group of apprentices feels uncomfortable, belittled, offended, threatened or intimidated in the workplace.
- Harassment in Registered Apprenticeship programs is unlawful when it is:
 - Because of someone's religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, age (40 or older), or genetic information, or because he or she filed an EEO complaint;
 - Unwelcome; and
 - So frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or results in an adverse employment decision.
- Unlawful harassment may include behavior such as:
 - Outright discrimination, physical aggression, bullying, intimidation or verbal abuse
 - Subtle innuendos, off-color jokes, unwelcome flirtatious behavior, or abuse directed to individuals with disabilities
- Historically, women, minorities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender workers, and workers with disabilities have been particularly likely to experience harassment in the workplace – but they are by no means the only targets. Harassment can occur in many different contexts and can target people from many different backgrounds.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO TO ADDRESS WORKPLACE HARASSMENT?

- Never participate in, ignore, or appear to condone harassing behavior.
- Lead by example -- foster a welcoming environment in which the diverse opinions, experiences, interests and backgrounds of all apprentices and other employees are valued and respected. When employees feel safe and comfortable, they can focus on their work and thus be more productive.
- Take advantage of opportunities to remind apprentices and other employees that unlawful harassment won't be tolerated.
- Ensure that the employees you work with are informed about the processes and points of contact for reporting harassment. Do not, under any circumstances, retaliate against an apprentice for reporting harassment or other discrimination or participating in the process of investigating such a report.



WHAT SHOULD YOU DO TO ADDRESS WORKPLACE HARASSMENT?

- Treat all claims of harassment, intimidation, or retaliation for filing harassment complaints seriously, and make sure such claims are promptly investigated.
- If an investigation finds that harassment has occurred, suggest appropriate consequences for the harasser. It's not appropriate to simply move the target of the harassment to another work area, as that sends the message to other workers that the harasser is free to continue his/her behavior.
- Keep in mind that failure to address unlawful harassment could result in suspension of an apprenticeship program's right to register new apprentices; deregistration of the apprenticeship program; loss of federal contracts or grants; payment of significant money damages; and/or negative publicity and injuries to the organization's reputation.

ADDITIONAL ANTI-HARASSMENT RESOURCES

The U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship has developed anti-harassment tools and resources to help Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors. Please visit <http://doleta.gov/oa/eeo> for an anti-harassment video with interactive “knowledge questions,” a customizable PowerPoint presentation, Frequently Asked Questions, and more.