



# Reduce harmful work stressors

## Improve job quality and health

## Work Stress Solutions

### **Reducing workplace injustice**

**Workplace injustice** is a range of behaviors ranging from disrespect, unfairness and illegal discrimination or harassment. Some unjust behaviors are illegal, for example **workplace physical violence** (assault) **sexual harassment** or **discrimination** based on “legally protected categories” (age, gender, race/ethnicity, religion/nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity). But many other behaviors, including **workplace bullying**, and exclusion, are not illegal, but can have severe impacts on individuals and organizations.

We recommend organizations create policies that rise above the minimum of legal compliance to also recognize the costs of unjust and inappropriate or disrespectful behaviors that can negatively impact employee health.

#### **I. Workplace Policies & Practices**

These are recommendations or resources for implementing changes in an organization to reduce workplace injustices. They often go beyond just legal compliance, to also reduce harmful behaviors such as workplace bullying and incorporating dignity, respect and inclusion.

1. **PREVENT AND IDENTIFY** illegal behavior or practices. Be familiar with the [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission \(EEOC\)](#) and with [laws & guidance on workplace sexual harassment](#) and [laws & guidance on employment discrimination](#).
2. **ESTABLISH POLICIES & PROCEDURES** that include precise definitions for workplace bullying (abuse), sexual and other harassment,

discrimination and physical violence at work. Include proactive steps that address [offenders](#)—not just the targets. Regularly review enforcement and implementation. Get help from experts [here](#).

3. **INCORPORATE A RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE STATEMENT** into the company mission—intended to promote the values of fairness and respect, and to prevent abusive behaviors between coworkers and toward the public.<sup>1</sup>
4. **TRAIN ALL EMPLOYEES** (and all new hires) regarding their rights, [diversity equity & inclusion](#) policies and practices, and how to be part of [creating respectful workplaces](#).<sup>2</sup>
5. **TRAIN ALL LEADERS** - executives, managers, supervisors on creating respectful workplaces through [respectful leadership](#), and how to create [Thriving Workplaces](#)<sup>3</sup> for all by opposing toxicity, instilling a “culture of safety” (physical and psychological), practicing nondiscrimination, ethical leadership, collaboration and kindness.
6. **RECOGNIZE EMPLOYEES** and SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS for being good role models for respect and fairness in the workplace.
7. **DEVELOP A CODE OF CONDUCT** - to raise awareness for workers, leaders and the public being served, about the importance of [dignity and respect](#) for all, and to prevent disrespectful and abusive or violent behavior.<sup>4</sup> There are also many [examples of D&R campaigns](#) within organizations and community groups.

## II. Healthy Work Strategies Case Studies and Resources

- [A training program for workers and managers on reducing male bullying and workplace violence \(U.S.\)](#)
- [Preventing threats and violence against bus drivers](#)
- [Collective bargaining agreement \(contract\) designed to improve working conditions and reduce stressors for Rutgers University faculty, graduate and teaching assistants.](#)
- [Panic Buttons: An intervention to prevent psychological trauma and](#)

physical assault among hotel housekeepers

- [Reducing workplace bullying through a union-sponsored Respectful Workplace Policy and collective bargaining](#)
- [SAG-AFTRA creates code of conduct to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace](#)

## References

1. [Diversity Equity and Inclusion](#) - for organizational leaders, or DEI training programs for employees are numerous and often difficult to determine quality. They should ideally include attention to the following topics: understanding diversity, power, and unconscious bias, including sex/gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity/culture, religion, nationality, class, disability, age, inclusive leadership, safe communication, anti-bullying/harassment, respectful, fair treatment in the workplace. List of Leadership D&I Training Programs: [Diversity & Inclusion Certification Programs - Academy to Innovate](#) HR List of DEI Training Programs for Employees: [HR University](#) [List of Diversity and Inclusion Programs](#)
2. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Training Institute [Harassment Prevention and Creating Respectful Workplaces Training](#)
3. [The Work Doctor - Workplace Bullying Institute \(HWC Partner\)](#)
4. [United for Respect. Promoting Dignity and Respect in the Workplace Toolkit. United Nations HR Portal](#)

\*The HWC and CSE do not officially endorse any of the above suggested programs or the websites that list them.

## III. Making Changes Beyond the Workplace

Laws and regulations can be used to reduce sources of stress at work, including workplace bullying, sexual harassment, discrimination.

- [Laws and regulation to prevent workplace violence in healthcare](#)
  - [CDC/NIOSH Occupational Violence resources](#)
  - [California SB 553 - the first general industry workplace violence prevention safety requirements in the United States.](#)
- [Legislation to prevent workplace sexual harassment](#)
- [Workplace bullying prevention laws and regulations](#)
- [Preventing threats and violence against bus drivers](#)