



Hillsborough
County

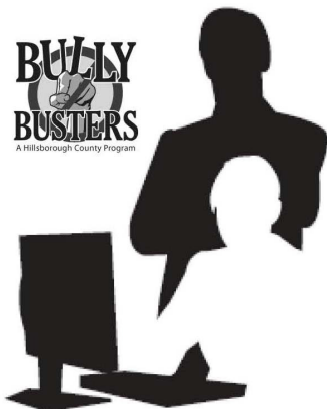
Crime prevention and safety tips



Board of County Commissioners | Criminal Justice Liaison

November 2011

WORKPLACE BULLYING AND HARASSMENT



According to some estimates, as many as 54 million American workers have been subject to workplace bullying. Moreover, an estimated 2 million acts of violence take place in the American workplace every year.

Workplace bullying is defined as unwanted and unwarranted behavior that a person finds offensive, intimidating, or humiliating and is repeated so as to have a detrimental effect upon a person's dignity, safety, and well-being. It isn't against the law. But if it has sexual, gender, religious, racial, or ethnic overtones, it may be harassment and that is often against the law. And if it results in any type of violence at all, both the perpetrator and the employer will face consequences.

Workplace bullying includes the following behavior:

- Excluding someone from the group
- Giving someone the silent treatment
- Belittling someone in public
- Using condescending or demeaning language

- Taunting someone
- Screaming at someone
- Sabotaging a person's contribution
- Talking about someone behind his or her back
- Telling lies about the person
- Repeatedly interrupting someone when he or she is speaking
- Acting in a condescending manner
- Staring, dirty looks, or other negative eye contact
- Refusing to answer the person's phone calls or emails

If you are being bullied, take the following steps:

- Tell a friend or colleague that you trust what is going on. You need support.
- Keep a written journal with names, dates, and times of what is going on.
- If anyone else witnesses a bullying incident, ask the bully to repeat his or her comments or actions in front of the witness. He or she will frequently be embarrassed and back down.
- Don't react to the bullying behavior.
- Tell the bully to stop.
- Don't engage the bully in a debate about his or her behavior. You may end up getting blamed for a fight.
- Report the incidents to your supervisor or manager, to the bully's supervisor or manager, or to your human resources department.
- Avoid being alone with the bully for any reason at any time.
- Seek advice from your employee assistance

program or a mental health professional if the stress of dealing with the bully is taking too much of a toll on your professional performance and your personal life.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment occurs when one employee makes continued, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, to another employee, against his or her wishes.

Under specific circumstances, forms of sexual harassment can include

- Promising you monetary incentives or promotion in exchange for romantic or sexual favors
- Touching you
- Making unwelcome or inappropriate remarks about your appearance
- Making remarks about your sexuality
- Using foul or sexual language
- Using obscenities
- Telling dirty jokes
- Displaying sexually graphic materials

Many perpetrators of sexual harassment are supervisors or managers who use the power of their position to control and intimidate their targets. And while women are the most frequent targets of harassment, men are not immune. Regardless of whether the harassment is against the law, the victim should first try to resolve the situation on his or her own. He or she should keep records, enlist witnesses, and report the problem to the perpetrator's supervisor and the human resources department if he or she was unable to reach a resolution.



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202-466-6272 • www.npc.org



The Wireless Foundation
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Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioner goals are to reduce property crime, violent crime and overall crime by 2015. These tips are intended to increase your awareness and help avoid crime. If you have a proven prevention or awareness tip that can be shared, fax it to 813-276-2630 for consideration for a future Crime Prevention and Safety Tip. If you have questions regarding this tip, call 813-276-2033.

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