


# Psychology Today

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## 10 Things You Can Do as a Bystander

### Concrete strategies for support of victims

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Many schools (high schools, colleges and professional schools) as well as corporations and organizations offer '[leadership](#) training' courses and seminars. At the same time, they have begun to call for 'bystander intervention.' Such intervention seems to require leadership skills, yet no one offers training in 'bystander techniques.' So, here are a few *concrete strategies* that even those disinclined to get involved can employ:

1. Make eye contact with the victim. Shrug your shoulders, roll your eyes in the direction of the [bully](#), arch your eyebrows, smile apologetically, shake your head and walk away. These are only a handful of the nuanced gestures of inclusion one can direct toward the victim. They go far toward negating the [impression](#) that 'everyone' is in silent solidarity with the bully.
2. Distract and /or redirect the [attention](#) of aggressors: "yeah, yeah, we know; now let's go and ....." This is a safe intervention because it neither challenges the aggressor nor appears to sympathize with the target.
3. Connect to other bystanders through [body language](#), and support those looking to be proactive. Bystanders look for backing from those who are also watching the spectacle. Catch someone's gaze. Allow yours to be caught. Again, body language can gesture support, empowering one or another to act.
4. Avoid being a gossipmonger. Find out what happened, discuss any relevant aspects with peers, but don't be a gossipmonger, fanning speculation. The less you contribute to re-hashing the incident, the faster chatter will move on to other topics. Do your small part in minimizing its social significance, and/or its life-span, by refusing to pay it undue attention. Think of the small comfort it might offer a victim to be able to think not 'everybody' stopped to witness her or his public [humiliation](#), or are chatting about it on social [media](#).

5. If the victim has transgressed and been publicly shamed, yet her ridicule and exclusion is ongoing, say—or tweet--something like, ‘Yeah but I feel bad for her, cause everybody is....’ It is not threatening, and might curtail gossip or even turn the conversation in a sympathetic direction (even if the immediate response back is ‘well I don’t’).

6. Make eye contact with the victim beyond the immediate spectacle of shaming—in the halls, in the cafeteria, on the bus. The Germans have an expression “wie Luft behandel.” It literally means “to be looked at as though air.” Failure to acknowledge a victim reinforces rejection.

7. Risk telling an aggressor to ‘chill,’ or to just ‘walk away.’ The incident is not worth getting so worked up over. This shifts the terms of the dynamic. Offering feedback to an aggressor has the potential to circumscribe abuse of the victim, while appearing to focus on the best interests of the bully.

8. Be prepared to be a pro-active witness. Film the interaction, or, in the case of cyberbullying, take screen shots. Either might be needed by victims.

9. Anonymously get word to a sympathetic teacher, supervisor or authority figure. Not only does it alert someone in a position to intervene, it spares victims the need to *identify themselves as a loser who is incapable of handling a situation*—something it may be beyond their capacity to do. (Handling it, to victims, usually means ‘taking it.’ However, as has been increasingly shown, social rejection leads to [cognitive](#) impairment, so that ‘taking it’—remaining stoic in the face of ongoing social [aggression](#)--increasingly erodes a victim’s ability to negotiate day-to-day demands.)

10. Turn [laughter](#) back on itself, defusing the situation. Young people do this every day, in hallways, in cafeterias, and on social media. “Yo—why you still bothering with this drama (laugh)?” or “Seriously? Dude, that’s pathetic.” Generated by the peer cohort, these checks tease the bully, suggesting that aggressive behavior might begin to reflect negatively on its perpetrator. Not everyone has a relationship with an aggressor that allows this banter. But someone does. Bystanders can back such nonthreatening remarks by nodding, by adding, “Yeah, it’s time,” or by simply dispersing.

BONUS POINTS: Do not become part of the ‘[bystander effect](#),’ even if you know that someone else has already intervened (in a pro-active way). Authority figures are much more inclined—and able--to act if they hear about abuse from more than once source. Victims are much more able to

negotiate their humiliation if more than one person offers a small gesture of kindness, even a surreptitious one. (*Practice* using your voice by echoing the voice of others.)

**DOUBLE BONUS POINTS:** If you are brave enough to confront someone behaving aggressively, think to do so in the form of a question. (Otherwise, you risk being perceived as someone looking to shame and humiliate a perpetrator, raising the stakes of the encounter). Asking “why do you keep ragging on him?” or “look at her—haven’t you said enough?” sidesteps a direct challenge, asking, instead, that they explain/justify their ongoing behavior. A request is much less threatening than a denouncement, yet sends the same message.

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## Racial discrimination and vilification: A and TSI people

(Racial discrimination and vilification for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples)

### What is race discrimination?

Race discrimination is being treated less fairly than someone else because you're Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. This treatment may be illegal.

Examples:

- You've been singled out for 'dirty jobs' at work because you're the only Aboriginal staff member.
- You were refused a house rental because the last Aboriginal people 'got too far behind with the rent'.
- A staff member in an upmarket clothes shop, follows you round the racks, but ignores non-Aboriginal shoppers.
- A taxi driver makes you pay the fare up-front, but takes payment from non-Indigenous people at the end of the trip.

### When and where can discrimination happen?

Unlawful discrimination on the basis of your race can happen at work, school or college, at a public venue, in a shop, looking for a house to rent or buy, applying for credit, insurance or a loan, or dealing with tradespeople, businesses or state or local government.

### What is vilification based on race?

Vilification is different from discrimination. While discrimination is about unfair treatment, vilification is a public act that incites others to hate you or your group (or have serious contempt for, or severely ridicule you) because of your race.

This sort of hatred can show up in a number of ways including through speech, leaflets, graffiti, websites, and public abuse or media remarks.

Examples:

- Someone paints 'death to all blacks, Jews and Muslims' on the building where you work.
- A group prints a card for their members which is a 'License to shoot Aborigines'.

Note: It is a criminal offence, if either you and / or your property are threatened with physical harm.

### How can I tell if it's vilification?

You'd need to show a few things to make out a complaint of vilification.

### Did it happen publicly?

In other words, apart from those involved, could other people see it, hear it or read it? If it happened in private, it's not vilification.

## **Could it incite hatred (serious contempt or severe ridicule) of you because of your race?**

How serious was it? Serious enough to have an impact on other people? If the act was fairly minor, or a light-hearted joke, it's not vilification.

## **Was it something that could be seen as free speech, and therefore legal?**

The law allows for free speech to be protected, and says that things like fair reports, discussions or debates, or material used in parliament, courts, tribunals or other government inquiries are not vilification.

## **What can I do about it?**

You could:

- deal with it yourself by talking to the person or people involved;
- if the behaviour happened at work, ask your manager, union representative, or contact officer what you might do. If your workplace has a process for dealing with complaints, you could lodge a complaint with your employer.
- give us a ring or visit one of our offices. We can talk to you about the law and explain how complaints are handled.

## **How do I make a complaint?**

Write down the details of what happened to you in a letter, [get a complaint form from our website](#) or [call one of our offices](#) for a form.

You can also contact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in our Brisbane and Cairns offices by calling tollfree 1300 130 670 or TTY 1300 130 680.

Include:

- your name, contact address, and phone number;
- what happened, when, and where;
- who the complaint was about and their contact details; and
- any other useful information.

A complaint of vilification can also be lodged on your behalf by an organisation that works for the interests or welfare of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Your complaint must be lodged with the Commission within twelve months of the discrimination or vilification happening.

The Commission's service is free. However, you may have to pay for any legal or other advice you decide to get.

## **What happens to my complaint?**

Your complaint will be assessed to see if the behaviour you describe is illegal. If so, [we may arrange a meeting](#) with both you and the person or people you have complained about to discuss the issues and try to come to some agreement. The Commission will not take sides or represent anyone.

If you can't agree, the complaint may be referred to:

- the [Queensland Industrial Relations Commission](#) for work-related complaints; or
- the [Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal](#) for all other complaints.

for a public hearing and a decision based on the evidence.

### **What else do I need to know?**

- The Commission has an information resource for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples — [Tracking Your Rights](#). Fact sheets can be downloaded from this website and education sessions are available.
- The ADCQ runs [education sessions in Brisbane and regional areas](#).
- [Brochures about all types of discrimination](#), sexual harassment and vilification are available to download from this website.
- There is a federal *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*, which is administered by the [Australian Human Rights Commission](#) , phone 1300 656 419.

# Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service

## Principle and Values

### 1 Integrity and impartiality

The Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 states:

In recognition that public office involves a public trust, public service agencies, public sector entities and public officials seek to promote public confidence in the integrity of the public sector and -

- a. are committed to the highest ethical standards;
- b. accept and value their duty to provide advice which is objective, independent, apolitical and impartial;
- c. show respect towards all persons, including employees, clients and the general public;
- d. acknowledge the primacy of the public interest and undertake that any conflict of interest issue will be resolved or appropriately managed in favour of the public interest; and
- e. are committed to honest, fair and respectful engagement with the community.

#### 1.1 Commit to the highest ethical standards

As public service employees we are required to ensure that our conduct meets the highest ethical standards when we are fulfilling our responsibilities.

We will:

- a. ensure any advice that we provide is objective, independent, apolitical and impartial
- b. ensure our decision making is ethical
- c. engage with the community in a manner that is consultative, respectful and fair, and
- d. meet our obligations to report suspected wrongdoing, including conduct not consistent with this Code.

#### 1.2 Manage conflicts of interest

A conflict of interest involves a conflict between our duty, as public service employees, to serve the public interest and our personal interests. The conflict may arise from a range of factors including our personal relationships, our employment outside the public service, our membership of special interest groups, or our ownership of shares, companies, or property.

As public service employees we may also experience conflicts of interest between our public service ethics and our professional codes of ethics (for example as health care professionals or as lawyers), or with our personal beliefs or opinions.

Having a conflict of interest is not unusual and it is not wrongdoing in itself. However failing to disclose and manage the conflict appropriately is likely to be wrongdoing.

As public service employees we are committed to demonstrating our impartiality and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and as such we will:

- a. always disclose a personal interest that could, now or in the future, be seen as influencing the performance of our duties. This will be done in accordance with our agency policies and procedures
- b. actively participate with our agency in developing and implementing resolution strategies for any conflict of interest, and
- c. ensure that any conflict of interest is resolved in the public interest.

### 1.5 Demonstrate a high standard of workplace behaviour and personal conduct

We have a responsibility to always conduct and present ourselves in a professional manner, and demonstrate respect for all persons, whether fellow employees, clients or members of the public.

We will:

- a. treat co-workers, clients and members of the public with courtesy and respect, be appropriate in our relationships with them, and recognise that others have the right to hold views which may differ from our own
- b. ensure our conduct reflects our commitment to a workplace that is inclusive and free from harassment
- c. ensure our fitness for duty, and the safety, health and welfare of ourselves and others in the workplace, whether co-workers or clients
- d. ensure our private conduct maintains the integrity of the public service and our ability to perform our duties, and
- e. comply with legislative and/or policy obligations to report employee criminal charges and convictions.

### 3 Commitment to the system of government

The Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 states:

In recognition that the public sector has a duty to uphold the system of government and the laws of the State, Commonwealth and local government, public service agencies, public sector entities and public officials -

- a. accept and value their duty to uphold the system of government and the laws of the State, the Commonwealth and local government;
- b. are committed to effecting official public sector priorities, policies and decisions professionally and impartially; and
- c. accept and value their duty to operate within the framework of Ministerial responsibility to government, the Parliament and the community.

(This) does not limit the responsibility of a public service agency, public sector entity or public sector official to act independently of government if the independence of the



agency, entity or official is required by legislation or government policy, or is a customary feature of the work of the agency, entity or official.

### 3.1 Commit to our roles in public service

Our role is to undertake our duties, and to give effect to the policies of the elected government, regardless of its political complexion.

We will:

- a. accept that the elected government has the right to determine policy and priorities
- b. be responsive to the government of the day and implement decisions and policies professionally and impartially
- c. comply with the laws of State, Australian and local governments
- d. comply with all relevant awards, certified agreements, subsidiary agreements, directives, whole-of-government policies and standards, and
- e. adhere to the policies, organisational values and organisational documents of our employing agency.

# Racially motivated comments unacceptable in workplace

Wednesday 18 November, 2015 | By: Darrell Giles | Tags: Fair Work Commission, unfair dismissal, racism, Islamic State;

Nasty comments in the workplace based on religion or culture are no longer acceptable – but the Fair Work Commission has also warned employers about following the right dismissal procedures.

The Commission has heard the case of an Australian man blaming his Iraqi work colleague for the conduct of the Islamic State terrorist organisation in Syria.

Describing his comments as stupid, the FWC said it was no longer appropriate for employees to ‘stir up’ or ‘take the micky’ out of their colleagues based on their sex, religion, culture or heritage in order to get a reaction.

CCIQ Employer Assistance experts said the recent case highlighted the need for employers to develop and maintain an acceptable workplace culture, as well as the risks employers face in dismissing an employee without following due process.

Toll Holdings Ltd, trading as Toll Transport, terminated the man’s employment after finding he had made racist comments regarding religion and ethnicity. Specifically, he had blamed an Iraqi work colleague, for the conduct of the Islamic State in Syria.

After he was dismissed, he brought an unfair dismissal claim requesting reinstatement.

The FWC found that Toll had had a large number of these types of incidents and was a workplace that was “yet to accept multiculturalism in its culture”. The FWC noted that, “It is no longer appropriate for employees to ‘stir up’ or ‘take the micky’ out of their colleagues based on their sex, religion, culture or heritage in order to get a reaction”.

During the hearing it was noted that both men had previously both made inappropriate remarks toward each other with these matters resolved amicably on the shop floor and without formal warnings.

The Commission found that, while the main protagonist had previously been spoken to about his inappropriate conduct, he had not been given any formal warning in relation to this behaviour.

Furthermore, complaints of a similar nature had arisen against him during the investigation process which were not investigated.

Evidence of a failure by Toll to maintain an acceptable workplace culture and its flawed investigation process further supported the conclusion that the dismissal was, in the circumstances, either “harsh, unjust or unreasonable”.

Accordingly, the FWC ordered that the employee be reinstated with no loss of continuity of service.

The FWC found that, given this hostile environment and inappropriate workplace culture, he thought he was being funny or was looking for a reaction, but, in fact the remarks were stupid.

The FWC ordered that the employee:

- be reinstated;
- be back-paid for 16 weeks, less 9 weeks as a penalty for his misconduct;  
and
- have a first and final warning placed on his record for 12 months.

<https://www.fwc.gov.au/documents/decisionssigned/html/2015FWC3830.htm>

**Downloaded 26 March 2019 from**

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/employers/good-practice-good-business-factsheets/racial-discrimination>

## **Racial Discrimination Act**

Racial discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably, or not given the same opportunities, as others in a similar situation, because of their race, the country where they were born, their ethnic origin or their skin colour.

The **Racial Discrimination Act 1975** (RDA) makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person because of his or her race, colour, descent, national origin or ethnic origin, or immigrant status.

The RDA protects people from racial discrimination in many areas of public life, including employment, education, getting or using services, renting or buying a house or unit, and accessing public places.

**The RDA also makes racial hatred unlawful.**

## **Employees and potential employees**

The RDA makes it unlawful to discriminate when advertising jobs, during recruitment and selection processes, when making decisions about training, transfer and promotion opportunities, and in the terms, conditions and termination of employment.

Examples of racial discrimination in employment could include:

- insisting that all employees speak English at all times, even during their breaks
- not employing someone from a particular racial group because ‘those people are unreliable’
- not employing or promoting someone because of assumptions they wouldn’t ‘fit in’ with their colleagues, or
- unfair treatment in the course of work on the basis of race such as subjecting employees to negative comments about their race.

*For example*, Sam, who was born in Ghana, worked in a manufacturing company. His co-workers would call him a “black bastard” and “monkey” and ask him “Where is there a well-developed black country?” Sam said his work was over-scrutinised compared to other employees and that he was rarely acknowledged by his co-workers and manager.

The RDA also protects people from being treated unfairly because of their association with a person of a particular race, colour or national or ethnic origin.

All types of employers and employment relationships are covered under the RDA, including Commonwealth Government employees, state government employees and private sector employees, full-time, part-time and casual employees, contract workers and commission agents, as well as apprentices, trainees and those on probation.

It also covers recruitment processes organised through labour hire companies and recruitment and employment agencies.

## **Customers**

The RDA makes it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of services, such as banking and insurance services; services provided by government departments; transport or telecommunication services; professional services, such as those provided by lawyers, doctors or tradespeople; and services provided by restaurants, shops or entertainment venues.

This means that it is against the law for a provider of goods or services to discriminate against a person by:

- refusing to provide a person with goods, services and facilities
- providing them with goods, services and facilities on less favourable terms and conditions, or
- providing the goods, services and facilities in an unfair manner

because of his or her race.

*For example*, it would be discriminatory if a real estate agent refused to rent a house to a person because they were of a particular race or skin colour.

## Direct and indirect discrimination

Discrimination can be direct or indirect.

**Direct discrimination** happens when a person is treated less favourably than another person in a similar situation because of his or her race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin or immigrant status.

*For example*, it would be direct discrimination if an employer refused to hire a suitably qualified Aboriginal person as a shop assistant and instead hired a less qualified person of a different race because they felt they could lose customers if they had an Aboriginal person working in the shop.

**Indirect discrimination** can be less obvious. It can happen when employers or service providers put in place conditions, requirements or practices which appear to treat everyone the same but which actually disadvantage some people because of their race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin or immigrant status. If the requirement is not reasonable in regards to the circumstances of the case, it could be indirect discrimination.

*For example*, it may be indirect discrimination if a company says that employees must not wear hats or other headwear at work, as this is likely to have an unfair effect on people from certain racial or ethnic backgrounds.

## When discrimination is not unlawful

Like other anti-discrimination laws, the RDA sets out certain limited circumstances in which it is not unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of their race. However, the exceptions included in the RDA are more restricted than those in other anti-discrimination laws and only permit discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnicity in very limited circumstances.

## Special measures

The primary exception in the RDA involves special measures. Special measures have the goal of fostering greater racial equality by assisting groups of people who face, or have faced, entrenched discrimination so they can have similar access to opportunities as others in the community.

*For example*, the rental assistance given to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tertiary students as part of the Aboriginal Study Grant Scheme (ABSTUDY) is a form of special measure. The purpose of this assistance is to increase participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in tertiary education to a level equivalent to the non-Indigenous community.

## Nationality, citizenship and visa status

Although acts of discrimination based on 'national or ethnic origin' are prohibited by the RDA, acts of discrimination based on nationality or citizenship are not prohibited by the RDA. 'National origin' is different to 'citizenship'. According to the law, 'national origin' should be limited to

characteristics determined at the time of birth – either by the place of birth or by the national origin of a parent or parents, or a combination of some of those factors.

However, it can be against the law for an employer to not employ someone or offer them employment opportunities because of their immigrant status. This does not mean that an employer has to employ someone who does not have a valid work visa.

It is also possible for an employee to bring a complaint against his or her employer in relation to discrimination on the basis of nationality under the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* – see the fact sheet, [Other areas of workplace discrimination](#).

### **Complaints of racial discrimination resolved by the Commission**

A Greek woman employed by a large company as a travel consultant asked her team leader for leave on a particular Friday for religious and cultural reasons, as Greek Orthodox Good Friday did not coincide with the Easter weekend public holidays. She alleged that her team leader laughed at her request, said ‘You are in Australia and should celebrate Australian Easter’, told her that if she was unhappy about this she should ‘go back to her own country’ and made fun of her surname by calling it ‘the alphabet’.

The complaint was resolved through conciliation with the company agreeing to provide the woman with financial compensation, a statement of regret and a statement of service.

A man claimed that a staff member at a supermarket checked his bag on the way out because of his race and skin colour. The supermarket stated that it is a condition of entry that customers may be randomly asked to have their bags checked and that the race or skin colour of customers are not factors in the random selection of customers for bag checks.

The complaint was resolved through conciliation and the man accepted a private statement of regret from the supermarket.

## **What is racial hatred?**

Under the RDA, it is unlawful to do or say something in public that is reasonably likely to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate a person or group because of their race, colour, or national or ethnic origin.

This behaviour is called racial hatred.

Examples of racial hatred could include:

- racially offensive material in print or on the internet (including e-forums, blogs, social networking sites and video sharing sites), such as:
  - displaying racist posters, or
  - posting racially offensive cartoons, ‘memes’ or other images, or
- racially offensive behaviour or language in a public place, like a workplace or a shop, such as:
  - calling people racist names, or
  - making racially offensive comments, jokes or gestures.

A person who subjects another person to racially offensive behaviour is primarily responsible for his or her behaviour. However, employers can be held responsible – or vicariously liable – for acts of racial hatred by their employees or agents.

The RDA aims to strike a balance between freedom of speech and the right to live free from racial hatred or vilification.

To strike this balance, the RDA outlines some things that are not against the law, provided they are ‘done reasonably and in good faith’ – even if they are done in public. Under the RDA, the things that are not against the law if they are “done reasonably and in good faith” are:

- An artistic work or performance – for example, a play in which racially offensive attitudes are expressed by a character
- A statement, publication, discussion or debate made for genuine academic or scientific purposes – for example, discussing and debating public policy such as immigration, multiculturalism or special measures for particular groups
- Making a fair and accurate report on a matter of public interest – for example, a fair report in a newspaper about racially offensive conduct
- Making a fair comment, if the comment is an expression of a person’s genuine belief.

### **Complaint of racial hatred resolved by the Commission**

Two Nigerian men were employed as factory workers with a manufacturing company. They alleged that their supervisor made racially derogatory comments towards them such as “black idiot”, “you eat like a monkey” and “go back to Africa”. They also alleged that he verbally and physically threatened them.

Following conciliation, the company agreed to pay the men financial compensation and provide them with written apologies. The company also agreed to establish an anti-discrimination policy, to provide anti-discrimination training to all staff members and to encourage the supervisor to attend training and counselling.

### **Employers’ obligations**

Employers have a legal responsibility to take all reasonable steps to prevent racial discrimination.

‘Reasonable steps’ may include putting in place policies and procedures to create a discrimination-free environment. It could also include procedures to deal with allegations of discrimination and harassment made by employees or customers.

It is against the law to victimise a person for making, or proposing to make, a complaint to the Australian Human Rights Commission about racial discrimination or racial hatred.

Employers can also be held legally responsible for discrimination or harassment by their employees. For more information, see the fact sheet, [Vicarious liability](#).

### **Useful links**

Workplace Cultural Diversity Tool  
<https://culturaldiversity.humanrights.gov.au>

Racism. It Stops with Me  
<https://itstopswithme.humanrights.gov.au>

Targeted recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: A guideline for employers  
[www.humanrights.gov.au/targetedrecruitment](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/targetedrecruitment)

These documents provide general information only on the subject matter covered. It is not intended, nor should it be relied on, as a substitute for legal or other professional advice. If required, it is recommended that the reader obtain independent legal advice. The information contained in these documents may be amended from time to time.

## Workplace Policy for the Department of Justice and Attorney-General

### 1. Showing respect for the dignity, rights and views of others

The QPS Code of Conduct states that “*we will treat co-workers, clients and members of the public with courtesy and respect, be appropriate in our relationships with them, and recognise that others have the right to hold views which may differ from our own*”. This means:

- treating all people with respect, courtesy, and honesty and giving everyone a fair hearing;

- respecting the dignity, rights and views of others, including different values, beliefs, cultures and religions;

...

- ensuring that your relationships with clients and other colleagues are professional and respectful of their rights and dignity;

- treating others fairly and equitably when making decisions, taking actions and treating others without favouritism;

- responding to the reasonable demands of all clients in a helpful, courteous and timely manner;

...

- avoiding offensive, abusive and discriminatory language and behaviour, workplace harassment and other forms of intimidation; and

...

You are obligated to maintain impartiality and not allow personal beliefs to influence your judgments and decisions on work-related matters. People who come into contact with the justice and regulatory functions of the Department are sometimes anxious, upset and unfamiliar with the procedures of the Department. By being courteous, helpful and sensitive to their needs, these stresses can be minimised.

### Discrimination and sexual harassment

Unreasonable behaviour may involve discrimination or sexual harassment which in isolation is not considered to be bullying.

Discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than others because they have a particular characteristic or belong to a particular group of people. For example, it would be discriminatory not to hire or promote a woman because she is pregnant or may become pregnant.



## **18. Knowing the laws and policies that apply to your work**

You have an obligation to have a working knowledge of the laws, directives, policies, industrial instruments and delegations (if any) that apply to your work. Managers and Supervisors have an obligation to ensure that all staff have access to the relevant policies, and that new employees have adequate induction.