

Taking action to reduce workers' compensation stigma

Support injured workers
to claim workers' compensation



Supervisors are the link between an organisation and its workers. They have a critical role in building a positive and supportive workplace culture that can protect injured or ill workers from workers' compensation stigma.

This fact sheet provides information for supervisors about practical ways they can help reduce workers' compensation stigma and support workers to claim workers' compensation.

How you can help reduce workers' compensation stigma in your workplace



Build a positive workplace culture. As a supervisor, you have a direct influence on the workplace culture for those around you. The best way to reduce workers' compensation stigma and other forms of discrimination is to create an inclusive and mentally healthy workplace. Be aware of stigma, bullying and discriminatory behaviour and take steps to prevent it. For example, bullying could be co-workers making comments that make the injured worker feel like they don't belong, or gossiping about their injury or illness. Examples of discrimination include demoting or terminating the employment of an ill or injured worker, or treating a worker less favourably for opportunities such as training or promotion.



Be supportive. People who get injured or ill because of work may have experienced a traumatic event. As a supervisor, you have one of the most important relationships with an injured or ill worker.



Investing in recovery and return to work = better outcomes for all



safe work australia

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Communicate early and regularly. Check in with your workers as soon as you become aware they are injured or ill. Keeping in touch with injured and ill workers as they recover, and throughout a workers' compensation claim, leads to greater success in returning to work.



Know your business. As a supervisor you will likely be the first person that a worker will report an injury or illness to. Knowing your organisation's processes around workers' compensation will assist you to support injured or ill workers.



Lead by example. Set a good example of how to support injured or ill workers by calling out poor behaviour, using inclusive language and displaying empathy. Sometimes a lack of physical symptoms leads to stigma and scepticism. As a supervisor, it is important that you communicate with and support your broader team when changes are made to the work duties and workplace to accommodate an injured or ill worker.



For information about how to create a supportive and inclusive workplace, visit the Safe Work Australia website: swa.gov.au/workerscompensationstigma.

Safe Work Australia develops national policy about workers' compensation.

If you would like further information or have questions about workers' compensation, whether you are covered or when you can claim, contact the workers' compensation authority in your state or territory at swa.gov.au/workers-compensation.