



# CRA BULLETIN

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## GUIDELINES ON WORKPLACE BULLYING

Workplace bullying is a significant hazard in New Zealand.

Not only does it affect people physically and mentally, it can disrupt workplaces and reduce productivity. Employers have a duty to control all workplace hazards, including bullying and other undesirable behaviour.

The guidelines titled '**Preventing and Responding to Workplace Bullying**' have been developed by WorkSafe New Zealand and the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment assisting both Employees and Employers to address the issue of workplace bullying. The focus is on responding early before a situation gets out of hand.

While some bullying activities are easy to identify eg. personal attacks and put downs, other forms of bullying are not eg. undermining credibility or confidence.

For the purposes of the guidelines, WorkSafe NZ and MBIE have adopted the Safe Work Australia definition of workplace bullying.

**Workplace bullying is defined as:** repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or a group of workers that creates a risk to health and safety.

- Repeated behaviour is persistent and can involve a range of actions over time.
- Unreasonable behaviour means actions that a reasonable person in the same circumstances would see as unreasonable. It includes victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening a person.

A single incident of unreasonable behaviour is not considered workplace bullying, but it could escalate and should not be ignored.

Bullying behaviours can be Personal (eg. belittling remarks, threats of violence, inaccurate accusation) or they can be Task Related (eg. giving unachievable tasks, impossible deadlines, lack of role clarity).