

Workplace Violence

Is Verbal Abuse Considered Workplace Violence?

Over the last decade there has been a move to consider and treat verbal abuse, whether from customers or co-workers as workplace violence. So, the answer is yes, but it depends where you are located, in terms of actual laws.

Consider that each state or province may have laws protecting people from verbal abuse as if it is equivalent to more extreme physical violence.

To make it more complicated, existing laws may fall under different legislation. For example, there's Workplace Safety and Health Laws, harrasment laws, and Department of Labour laws can be in place.. On top of that there are also domestic and stalking laws that can apply to verbal abuse situations.

Your Employer's Policies On Verbal Abuse Apply Too

Apart from laws that differ from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, your employer may also have policies in place that classify verbal abuse, regardless of source, as workplace violence. Obviously, this too, differs from company to company, but again, it's become much more common for companies to include verbal abuse in their workplace policies, recognizing that verbal abuse (or psychological abuse) can be traumatic, and potentially damaging to the company and its employees.

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