

Taking action to reduce workers' compensation stigma

Support injured workers to claim workers' compensation



Employers and human resources (HR) professionals have an important role in promoting positive and inclusive work environments to support injured or ill workers. This fact sheet provides information for employers about practical ways they can reduce stigma around workers' compensation.

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



Raise awareness of workers' compensation. Employers who promote workers' rights and responsibilities around work health and safety and workers' compensation, and who positively support access to workers' compensation, actively reduce stigma in their organisation.



Build leadership capability. Workplace leaders strongly influence workplace culture and can create supportive and inclusive work environments. The most efficient and cost-effective way to reduce workers' compensation stigma and other forms of discrimination is to create a supportive, inclusive, and mentally healthy workplace.



Implement formal policies and procedures. Employers who have formal policies around reporting of injuries and proactive injury management systems encourage workers to speak up and seek help for injuries and illnesses.



Make information available. Making information related to workplace injuries and workers' compensation easily accessible helps employers provide a supportive environment. Keeping information current also builds confidence in its use.



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



safe work australia



Provide support services. Employers should provide and promote any available counselling and support services. These can be used to help workers following an injury or illness, and help reduce the impacts of stigma.

The business case for taking action

Workers' compensation stigma is expensive. The cost is driven by delayed reporting and treatment of injuries, resulting in increased treatment costs and longer recovery times. Stigma can also lead to secondary psychological harm that can further extend the recovery process.

Stigma affects everyone — the injured or ill worker, their team and the broader organisation. Not only does stigma affect all stages of the workers' compensation process, it lowers morale and productivity, and makes some workers leave the workplace.



For information about how to create a supportive and inclusive workplace free of workers' compensation stigma, 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.