

Checklist

What to do if you are being bullied (see

www.tuc.org.uk/tuc/rights_bullyatwork.cfm)

If you feel you are being singled out or bullied at work you should not have to put up with it. There are steps you can take.

- ✓ First, speak to the bully. A direct approach is usually the best. Tell the person that you find their behaviour unacceptable and ask them to stop. This is sometimes all that is needed. Bullies do not like being confronted, particularly by someone who is calm and civilised.

- ✓ The majority of bullying goes on behind closed doors. So tell a friend or work colleague. You may well find out you are not the only one who has suffered. It is important that you do not try to cope on your own.

- ✓ If you are in a union and there is a union safety representative where you work, tell them what has been happening. This will be in confidence and does not mean that a formal complaint will automatically be made. A safety representative will do only what you want them to and will give you the advice and support you need. They will want to have the bullying stopped quietly and quickly and can go with you to speak to the bully, or see them on your behalf. The safety representative will also help you with a formal complaint, if it goes that far, giving advice and support throughout the procedure.

- ✓ If you are in a union but it is not recognised where you work, call your local union office. The number will be on your membership card or in the local telephone directory. You will still get the legal advice and support you need.

Where unions are not recognised, employers are obliged by law to consult the workforce on health and safety issues either directly or through members of staff independently elected as Representatives of Employee Safety (ROES). Where they exist, you should consult the ROES who is likely to be a union member as well.

- ✓ If you are not already in a union, join one. You have every right to do so. You do not have to tell your employers but if they find out, it is illegal for them to sack you or to cause you detriment. The union will listen to you and ensure you have the best advice. The union can give you free legal advice, support you, put you in touch with support groups and approach the employer on your behalf.

- ✓ Keep a diary. This will give a vital record of the nature of the bullying and when it occurred. It will be important when the bully is confronted. Many of the incidents may appear trivial in isolation so it is important to establish a pattern over a period of time.

- ✓ Tell your manager or supervisor. If it is one of them who is bullying you, go and tell their manager. Take your diary with you to back up what you have to say. They may not believe you but you have at least told them there is a bullying problem. The more people that know, the more difficult it is for the bully to flourish.

- ✓ In the end you may have to make a formal complaint and go through the grievance procedure. If you do take this route, never go to a meeting connected with the complaint without your union representative or a friend as a witness.