

## Handling Discrimination and Unfair Treatment in the Workplace

Discrimination unfortunately does happen in the workplace, even in places trying to be inclusive. This can include coworkers or supervisors underestimating you, treating you delicately, or being awkward around you since they don't fully understand your disability. The most serious examples include harassment from coworkers and being fired or demoted due to your disability.

Here's some steps you can take to address intentional or unintentional discrimination you experience in the workplace:

- **Talk to the person you experienced discrimination from.** They might have unintentionally been discriminatory and apologize once it's brought to their attention.
- **Reach out to your HR department.** Letting your HR department know about an incident of discrimination is a key way to address major issues in the workplace culture. The HR department can take significant steps to reduce discrimination, such as providing training for other employees, reassigning coworkers to make you feel more comfortable, or more serious deterrents.
- **Pursue legal action.** If your employer and HR department don't work to deter discrimination in the workplace, or don't address issues you've raised, you can take legal action. Each province has a Human Rights association, such as a committee, council, or board, which can hear your case against your employer. This should be a method of last resort, only used when you've exhausted all other possibilities of mitigation.

Here's some steps you can take to improve your social relationships with coworkers and handle any unfair treatment you experience:

- **Speak out when necessary.** Stigma often stems from a misunderstanding of your disability, so talking about your disability might help others get to know it better. However, remember that you only have to disclose information about your disability if you feel comfortable doing so.
- **Get to know your coworkers.** Learning about your coworkers and trying to make friends can help others see past your disability and understand that your differences aren't significant.

**Adapted from: [Disability at Work: How to Cope with Challenges and Thrive](#)**