

when i'm at work: stopping neglect

a fact sheet for supported employees



This fact sheet tells you:

- ▶ what your human rights are
- ▶ what neglect is
- ▶ about the different kinds of neglect
- ▶ what you can do if you are neglected
- ▶ who you can help you to stop neglect.

What are your human rights?

The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** says that everyone in the world has the right to **freedom, justice and peace**.

This means that you have the right:

- ▶ to live without fear
- ▶ to feel safe where you live, and enjoy the same rights that other people do.

These rights spread into every part of your life, for example, your family, home, community and workplace. They include the right to:

- ▶ make your own decisions about things
- ▶ get help and a fair go if you are in trouble
- ▶ work where and when you choose.

If your rights are not looked after, you might be neglected. There are laws to stop this from happening.

What is neglect?

Neglect is when someone who is meant to look after you does not look after you properly.

What kinds of neglect are there?

There are different types of neglect.

Physical neglect

(Source: www.disabilityhotline.org)

Physical neglect includes:

- ▶ not having enough good food
- ▶ not having a good place to live
- ▶ not having enough clothes to wear
- ▶ not having enough help to stay healthy or to look neat and tidy
- ▶ not being given the right medicine
- ▶ not being taken to the doctor if you are sick or need a check-up.

Emotional neglect

(Source: www.disabilityhotline.org)

Emotional neglect includes:

- ▶ being ignored
- ▶ not having anyone to talk to about your problems
- ▶ not having anything to do.





Passive neglect

Sometimes neglect can occur because the person or people who are supposed to look after you do not notice that you need something, or forget to pay attention to you.

They might not mean to do it but they are still neglecting you. This is called **passive neglect**.

Wilful neglect

You are also being neglected if someone decides to ignore your needs or wants on purpose. This is called **wilful neglect**.

What is neglect in the workplace?

Neglect can happen in your workplace in a number of ways. You might be neglected by your supervisors or by your fellow workers.

You are being neglected if:

- ▶ your physical needs for the right equipment or workspace are ignored
- ▶ you are not given any training, help or practice that you might need to do a job
- ▶ your need to have someone tell you how you are going in your job and how you can improve, is ignored.

What can you do if you are being neglected?

If you think you are being neglected, it is very important that you tell someone who you trust about it.

Telling someone can stop neglect from happening again. This is called **reporting the neglect**.

Reporting neglect outside work

If the neglect is happening in your home or outside work, you could tell:

- ▶ a family member
- ▶ a support worker
- ▶ a friend
- ▶ a member of your church
- ▶ the police.

You need to make sure you give details like:

- ▶ what is happening
- ▶ why you think you are being neglected
- ▶ when it is happening
- ▶ who is neglecting you.

The person you tell should listen to what you are saying and should do something quickly to stop the neglect from continuing.

They should tell you what they are going to do to help you, and how long they will take to do it.

They should also tell you how they will let you know what is going on about your complaint.

If you tell someone but they do not do anything about it, do not give up. Tell someone else.



Reporting neglect in the workplace

If you are being neglected at work, something must be done.

All Disability Business Services that are funded by the Australian Government have policies and procedures to protect the rights of people with disability. The Disability Services Standards agree with this. The Standards also help to protect the rights of people with disability.

If you work in a Disability Business Service, your workplace must protect you from neglect. The Disability Services Standards (the rules that Disability Business Services must follow) make this clear.

Disability Services Standard 12 is about the protection of human rights. This means that your workplace must make sure that you are safe and treated fairly when you are at work.

You workplace rights

Your workplace must stand up for your rights when you are at work and when you are training. Your workplace must make sure that nobody can:

- ▶ hurt you
- ▶ talk to you in a way that you do not like
- ▶ treat you badly because of your disability.

Workplace complaints

Your workplace has a complaints policy. If your needs at work are being neglected, your workplace's complaints policy will tell you how to make a formal complaint about it.

Your support worker, supervisor or manager can help you with this. They can give you a copy of the complaints policy and tell you the things you need to do if you want to make a formal complaint.



One of your rights as a worker is to have access to these things and to get help to use them if you need it.

Other people who can neglect you

Sometimes, the people you rely on for help can also be the people who neglect you. They could be people like parents or guardians, support workers, supervisors, or team leaders.

If this is the case, you should report the neglect to someone else, for example, another supervisor or manager, another relative or a good friend, or the police.

Contacting an advocacy service

Your workplace will also be able to give you details about how to contact an advocacy or complaints service. These are other places you can contact if you need help.

It is really important to remember that neglect harms you in all sorts of ways, not just physically.

If someone who should be looking after you is not doing so, they are taking away your human rights and you should tell someone it is happening.

Who can help you stop abuse?

If you are in danger call the police

Phone: 000

TTY: 106

Speech to speech relay service phone: 1800 555 727

From mobile with no network coverage: 112

If you need help, but are not in danger, you can call the following people.



National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline

You can talk to the people at the National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline about abuse issues, or to find out more about what the people there can do to help you.

The Hotline can also help you if you need someone else to talk about your problem for you, and to sort it out quickly. This is called 'advocating' for you. The Hotline will find that special person for you.

Telephone: 1800 880 052 (free call)

Fax: 02 9318 1372

TTY: 1800 301 130 (free call)

NRS: 1800 555 677
(ask them to call the Hotline for you)

Website: www.disabilityhotline.org

Email: enquiries@disabilityhotline.org

The Hotline is open from 8am to 8pm across Australia, seven days a week.

If you do not speak English, contact the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450.

Complaints Referral and Resolution Service

People at the Complaints Referral and Resolution Service (CRRS) can help you with any problems about abuse that you have. It is their job to help you sort out these problems.

Remember that anything you say to people at the CRRS is confidential. They will not tell anyone else what you say.

Telephone: 1800 880 052 (free call)
02 9370 3174

Fax: 02 9318 1372

TTY: 1800 301 130 (free call)

NRS: 1800 555 677
(ask them to call the CRRS for you)

Website: www.crrs.org.au

Email: crrs@pwd.org.au

You should ask your supervisor or support worker if you need further help.

This might include contacting a local:

- ▶ counselling and support service
- ▶ refuge or shelter.