



An initiative of PFLAG Brisbane Inc
Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

www.pflagbrisbane.org.au

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The "Tradies" guide to ending homophobic behaviours & abuse at the work site



What is homophobia and why does it matter

Homophobia is classified as the hatred or fear of homosexuals. Just like all kinds of abuse, homophobia seeks to alienate people in society, by exclusion and even through violence.

People who are homophobic may see gays and lesbians as fair game or sport and often seek to influence others into organised groups who then direct their hatred and/or ignorance at individuals.

Trivialising and teasing is also homophobic even though many consider it just good fun. Homophobic comments hurt, you can insult workmates unknowingly, if they have loved ones who are lesbian or gay without even realising.

Why people are offended

There is nothing positive or good that comes from homophobia. It only has negative repercussions and you may never know how much your words hurt.

Workmates may have loved ones who are lesbian and gay, but remain silent due to shame, hurt pride and fear of losing credibility in the eyes of you, their workmates.

Homophobic slurs and name-calling are no longer tolerated by society today. Laws are in place now to support those who feel abused.

Please note, people can now lose their jobs if homophobic slurs or actions continue in the workplace.

Your Boss, your company and your union won't stand by you if you persist in this behaviour.

Bad behaviour is seen as a poor reflection of the company and Unions and employers are now quick to act, to halt homophobia.

Worksites are a public area, what you do and how you go about doing it will be judged by the public. When you engage in homophobic abuse you not only offend the person you are targeting but also your employer.

Engaging the public in homophobic abusive or slurs will quickly bring your company name under scrutiny.

This action puts your job; along with your work crew and company jobs in jeopardy.

How to eliminate homophobia from the worksite

Basically just get on with your job, that's what you're paid for. Try being more considerate to others at the worksite. Everyone is working hard and nobody deserves the extra frustration of homophobic abuse.

As an individual you can encourage improvement at the worksite, improve training, if concerned ask your supervisor for resources on eliminating homophobia on the work site, speak up if you see abuse and if necessary report the incident to the supervisor.

You, may only make one homophobic comment once but if everyone in the workplace felt it was OK to say it just "once" then that's a lot of insults going the victim's way and the problem becomes systemic.

If you feel homophobic abuse is happening where you work, report it to your company or the Prime Builder along with your Union.



Excuses; we've heard them all

Once caught out, many will try to justify their behaviour with an excuse. For example:

1. Anger or having a bad day
2. I was drunk
3. Religious beliefs
4. Nobody seemed to mind
5. It was a hot day or I was tired
6. I was joking. Can't they take a joke?
7. I didn't mean anything by it
8. They are just too sensitive
9. I wasn't talking to them!

None of these excuses have a place on the worksite! Remember silence is cowardly, it condones bad behaviour and leaves the victim feeling helpless, isolated and often traumatised.

What to do if you see or hear something inappropriate:

1. The sooner we act to stop homophobic abuse, the less likely it will become an issue.
2. Apologise immediately. The person who overstepped these boundaries should make it known to the victim that he/she is sorry for the outburst and it will never happen again. Then stick to their word.
3. Inform a supervisor if the incident isn't resolved immediately to the satisfaction of victim.
4. Supervisors should ensure that all workers are treated equally and actively discourage homophobia in the workplace.
5. The company should ensure that safeguards are put in place to remove homophobia at the work site with proper training provided.

Need further information?

Explore our resource library at www.pflagbrisbane.org.au