

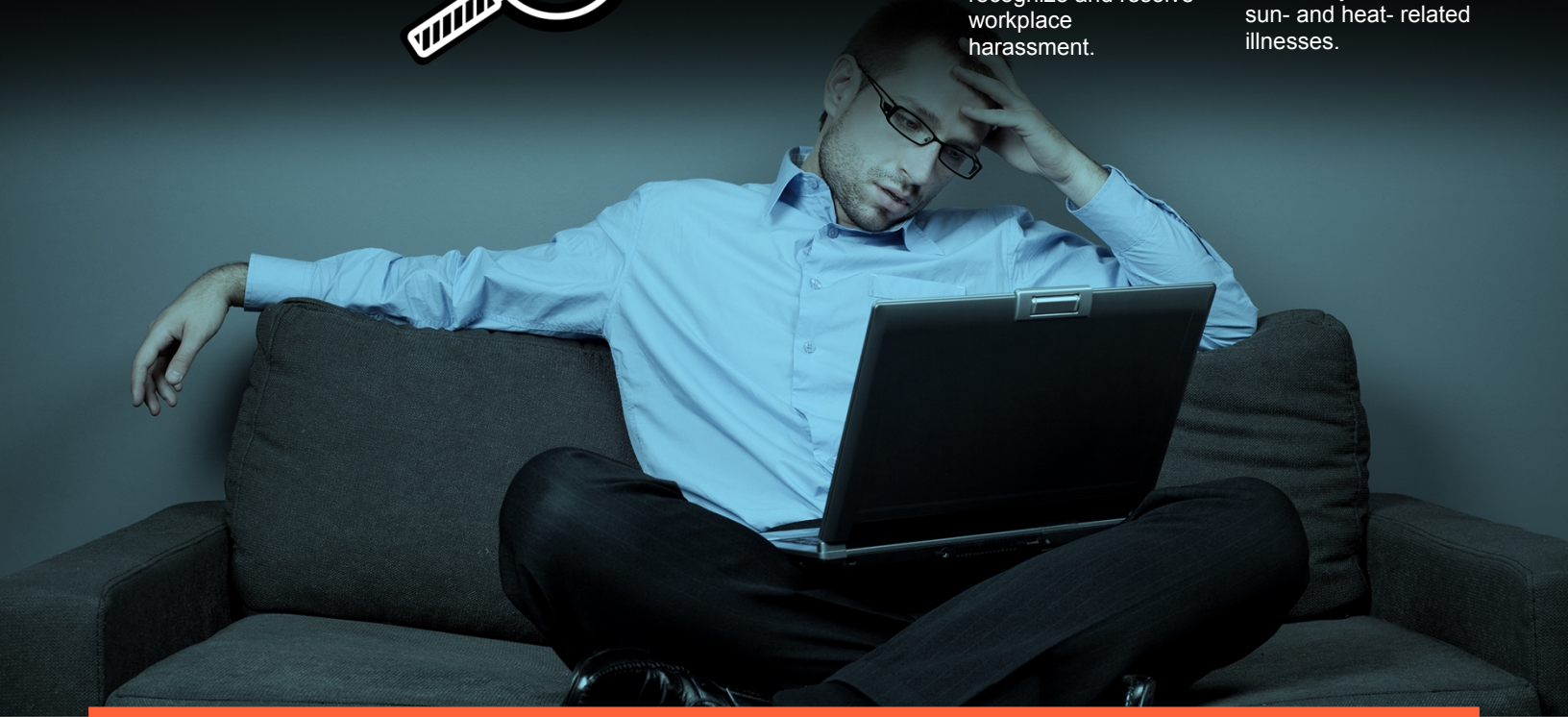


Recognizing Workplace Harassment

Learn how to recognize and resolve workplace harassment.

Sun Protection Strategies

Continued exposure to the sun will only increase your risk of sun- and heat- related illnesses.



Recognizing Workplace Harassment

Harassment in the workplace can take many forms, such as hurtful jokes, slurs or stereotypes. And, if left unaddressed, harassment can lead to more serious transgressions, such as violence or sexual harassment. To establish and maintain positive relationships with your co-workers, it's important to know the signs of workplace harassment and the best practices to resolve it.

Because you likely interact with your co-workers on a daily basis, it can be difficult to determine when workplace harassment takes place. Here are some common indicators:

- **Antisocial behavior:** You may be experiencing workplace harassment if you feel apprehensive about interacting with your co-workers or attending social events.
- **Lower work performance:** Feelings of anxiety or stress from harassment can lead to a drop in performance when you try to complete your work.
- **Frustration or anger:** Any form of harassment can often lead to aggressive feelings, which may only

make the situation worse.

Usually, the best way to address workplace harassment is to clearly communicate your feelings with your co-workers or manager. The following are some best practices for resolving harassment:

- Try to have an informal conversation with any co-workers that you have a problem with. Oftentimes they are unaware that their behavior may be bothering you.
- Know the workplace policies regarding harassment. Knowing what behavior is and is not acceptable can help you communicate your feelings and experiences more clearly.
- Speak with your manager or HR representative if you cannot resolve workplace harassment, or if you feel uncomfortable speaking with your peers.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission received 89,385 charges of workplace discrimination in 2015.

Sun Protection Strategies

Unfortunately, many workers believe that continued exposure to sunlight leads to an “immunity” from sun- and heat-related illnesses. However, continued exposure to sunlight and high temperatures will only increase your chances of developing dangerous health conditions. As summer temperatures continue to rise and workers spend more time outdoors, it’s more important than ever to stay protected from harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays, which can lead to sunburn and skin cancer.

One of the best ways to protect your skin is to avoid excessive exposure to the sun. Here are some helpful tips to stay protected while working outdoors:

- Use sunscreen on any exposed skin. A sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 is recommended, but also be sure that you use a broad-spectrum sunscreen, which protects against both types of UV rays.
- Wear loose, light-colored clothing and a hat that covers your face. Dark-colored clothing absorbs heat and can lead to excess sweating and dehydration.

- Avoid overexerting yourself, especially at midday, when the sun is at its peak.
- Drink water every 15 minutes—even if you’re not thirsty. If you are performing strenuous work, you may need to drink water more frequently.
- Take breaks in the shade when possible, and remove any outer protective gear you may be wearing.
- Avoid drinking liquids with caffeine or sugar, such as soda and energy drinks.
- Wear sunglasses with a uniform tint. Ideally, sunglasses should block 99 to 100 percent of UV radiation.

Call 911 immediately if you or a co-worker exhibits symptoms of heat stroke, such as flushed skin, rapid breathing, a throbbing headache or an altered mental state.

For more tips on staying safe while working outdoors, contact The Insurance Exchange today.

Safety in NUMBERS 123



Warning signs of heat-related illnesses:

- Nausea and vomiting
- Weakness
- Heavy sweating
- High body temperature
- Hot, red skin
- Lightheadedness

Real-life Case Study

Evelyn, an accountant for a small Washington-based software company, enjoys chatting with her co-workers at break time. However, one day, one of her male co-workers makes a joke regarding Evelyn’s ethnicity.

Although she believed that the joke was a small incident, Evelyn was reluctant to speak with her co-workers afterwards. Eventually she stopped attending social events entirely, and became easily frustrated when performing her regular work.

During a meeting with her manager, Evelyn confessed that she was avoiding interactions with her co-workers out of fear that they would make more jokes at her expense. Her manager recommended that she have a conversation with the employee who originally made the joke in order to reconcile the situation.

Although she was nervous about the conversation, Evelyn spoke with her co-worker and explained how the joke made her feel. He apologized, and said that he didn’t know that he had hurt her feelings. Since then, Evelyn has felt more confident about her workplace relationships, and has felt less stressed and anxious at work.