**Know Your Rights: Bullying Edition!**

Did you know the State of Maryland has an official [**Workplace Bullying Policy**](https://dbm.maryland.gov/employees/Documents/Policies/Bullying%20in%20the%20Workplace%20Policy%20revised%2010%2001%202024.pdf)?
Do you understand the different types of bullying?
Do you know how to [**file a complaint**](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSftRKtpjBk7x7KHyZJJHdT5v-7uAttbyr5r2Nh9NQWFaOXpJA/viewform) if you or a coworker is experiencing bullying?

Let’s break it down:

**Bullying 101**

There are **two types of workplace bullying**:

* **Bullying NOT based on a protected class** (general bullying or harassment)
* **Bullying based on a protected class**, including:
	+ Race
	+ Gender
	+ Age
	+ National origin
	+ Religion
	+ Disability
	+ Sexual orientation
	+ Other categories protected by law

**Examples of workplace bullying include, but are not limited to:**

* Personal attacks (angry outbursts, excessive profanity, or name-calling);
* Personal insults and use of offensive nicknames;
* Public humiliation.
* Encouragement of others to turn against the targeted employee;
* Spreading rumors and gossip about the targeted employee;
* Sabotage of a coworker’s work product or undermining of an employee’s work
* performance;
* Threats of abuse to an individual or an individual’s property (defacing or marking
* up property);
* Being unjustifiably offensive toward fellow employees, wards of the State, or the
* public;
* Making threats about job security without foundation; or
* Repeated infliction of verbal abuse, such as the use of derogatory remarks, insults

and epithets.

**Bullying conduct does not include:**

* A single incident of unreasonable behavior;
* Disciplinary action taken in accordance with applicable law, regulation or policy;
* Routine coaching and counseling, including feedback about and correction of work
* performance or conduct;
* Exercising management’s prerogative to appoint, promote, transfer, or reassign an

employee, to direct or assign work, and to determine and redetermine the methods

and means by which an agency’s functions will be carried out;

* individual differences in styles of personal expression which may lead to conflict,

provided that the expression is not meant to intimidate; and

* Having differences of opinion on work-related concerns.

**How to File a Complaint**

* Start by completing the **intake form** at [Do You Believe You Have a Grievance? Need to File an appeal? Want to report workplace mistreatment? Need to report a Health & Safety Concern or Workplace injury?](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSftRKtpjBk7x7KHyZJJHdT5v-7uAttbyr5r2Nh9NQWFaOXpJA/viewform) *(Note: local3661.org under Connect with 3661)*
* **For bullying NOT based on a protected class**:
	+ Will be filed with the **Appointing Authority**
* **For bullying based on a protected class**:
	+ Will be filed with the [**Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (OEEO)**](https://dpscs.maryland.gov/eeo/Internal%20Complaint%20Form2022.pdf) and/or the [**Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR)**](https://doit.state.md.us/selectsurvey/TakeSurvey.aspx?PageNumber=1&SurveyID=7423578&Preview=true)

**What You Should Do**

* [**Review the State’s Workplace Bullying Policy**](https://dbm.maryland.gov/employees/Documents/Policies/Bullying%20in%20the%20Workplace%20Policy%20revised%2010%2001%202024.pdf) *(Find it under "Policies" on your agency’s site)*
* **Document everything** *(Note: Recordings people secretly is not allowed!)*
	+ Include **who**, **what**, **when**, **where**, **why**, **how**, and **any witnesses**
* **Submit your complaint in writing** to the proper agency or authority
* **Act promptly and follow up**

**What Happens After You File**

**If NOT Based on a Protected Class:**

* An investigation should begin promptly
* The process may include:
	+ Meeting with the complainant
	+ Interviewing witnesses
	+ Meeting with the person the complaint is against
* A decision and any disciplinary action should be completed **within 30 days** of the agency becoming aware of the incident
* You will receive a **written summary** of the steps taken
* If you disagree with the outcome, you may file a **grievance within 20 days**

**If Based on a Protected Class:**

* The **OEEO has 60 days** to investigate and make a recommendation
* The **agency head** will issue a written decision and may provide appropriate relief
* You can **appeal** to the **Statewide OEEO** in writing within **10 days** of receiving the decision
* The appeal must be resolved within **30 days**

**Important Reminders**

✅ You can file a complaint as a **witness**
🚫 **Retaliation is strictly prohibited**
🤝 Bullying impacts the entire workplace — we all play a part in creating a safe environment

**AFSCME Local 3661 is Here for You**

We are committed to helping members maintain a safe, respectful, and productive work environment.

Visit [www.local3661.org](http://www.local3661.org) for tools, resources, and support related to bullying and workplace safety.

**Let’s work together to end bullying — one safe workplace at a time.**