

Workplace harassment or *mobbing*

Mobbing refers to a series of actions that are repeated systematically, last over time, and are intended to humiliate, offend, or unjustifiably harm the physical or psychological integrity of one or more people in a work environment, sometimes with the aim of getting them to voluntarily leave their job at no cost to the company.

The actions are intended to destroy the person's reputation, belittle their work skills, and isolate them from their social environment, disrupting the performance of their duties. It occurs in both private and public companies and can occur between coworkers or in situations of abuse of power.

When is it not workplace harassment?

It could be a collective act by the organization, a single act, or isolated conflicts between two or more individuals. However, if these situations become abusive, they can become the starting point for harassment.

How can you tell?

Unfair pressure and criticism: causing the person to make mistakes, discrediting them professionally.

Isolation: giving someone the silent treatment, physical isolation, not letting them speak, not listening to them, and ignoring their contributions.

Attacks on dignity: personal insults and disparagement, mockery, gestures of contempt.

Verbal, physical, or sexual violence: physical threats, pushing, slamming doors, shouting, phone calls outside working hours, damage to property, intimidating and non-consensual physical contact.

The victim cannot identify the cause of this situation and cannot clearly or directly reproach anyone. They feel trapped and

immobilized; they do not know what they are being accused of; they cannot explain the situations that arise; they tend to believe that everything is their fault, and they become destabilized and even think that they are "losing their mind."

Can it make you ill?

Yes, mobbing causes anxiety, depression, headaches, and other disorders that can affect your health. Victims often try to avoid all situations where mobbing occurs. Once it is over, they may be left with a fear of it happening again and a great deal of insecurity.

What can be done?

Your family doctor can refer you to mental health and occupational health services. The affected person needs to receive information from unions, lawyers, and associations of affected persons to know how to act.

Sick leave is not the solution to the problem, but a way to temporarily alleviate the patient's suffering. If the leave is too long, the problem can become chronic and phobias about returning to work may appear.

It is also possible to report the situation to the Labor Inspectorate.

As far as possible, it is good to enrich one's life outside of work and leisure time [to boost self-esteem and seek the necessary support.](#)

