

## Victimisation

Victimisation is when someone is treated less favourably as a result of being involved with a discrimination or harassment complaint.

Ways someone could be victimised include:

- being labelled a troublemaker
- being left out
- not being allowed to do something

Victimisation is a specific type of discrimination under the law (Equality Act 2010). It's different to [bullying](#).

### What the law says

The law says victimisation means 'suffering a detriment' because you've done or intend to do a 'protected act'.

A 'protected act' means taking action related to discrimination law. This includes:

- making a complaint of discrimination or harassment
- supporting someone else's complaint
- gathering information that might lead to a complaint
- acting as a witness in a complaint
- saying something or giving evidence that does not support someone else's complaint

The law also protects a person from victimisation when someone else thinks the person has done or intends to do any of the things above.

'Detriment' means someone experiences one or both of the following:

- being treated worse than before
- having their situation made worse

### Acting in good faith

The law only protects someone from victimisation if they've done something 'in good faith'. This means not acting maliciously.

Someone is not protected from victimisation if they:

- deliberately give false evidence
- deliberately make a false allegation of discrimination or harassment

### Example of victimisation

Luca was a witness at an employment tribunal, supporting a colleague who made a claim of sex discrimination.

Luca applies for a promotion and does not get it. A member of the selection panel says Luca is a troublemaker who supported a discrimination claim against the company.

If this is the reason for the panel's decision, Luca is being victimised.

## Find more examples

Read more examples in our advice on:

- [age discrimination](#)
- [disability discrimination](#)
- [gender reassignment discrimination](#)
- [marriage and civil partnership discrimination](#)
- [pregnancy and maternity discrimination](#)
- [race discrimination](#)
- [religion or belief discrimination](#)
- [sex discrimination](#)
- [sexual orientation discrimination](#)

## What you can do

If you think you've been victimised at work, you should raise the issue with your employer. You can raise the problem informally or formally.

If you're an employer, you should take any complaint of victimisation very seriously and look into it as soon as possible. You must follow a full and fair procedure.

If you think someone else at work is being victimised, there are actions you can take.

Find out more about:

- [what to do if you've experienced victimisation](#)
- [how employers should handle a victimisation complaint](#)
- [witnessing discrimination](#)

## Get more advice and support

You can contact the:

- [Acas helpline](#)
- [Equality Advisory and Support Service \(EASS\)](#)

You can find more detailed legal guidance on the Equality Act 2010 in the [Employment: Statutory Code of Practice from the Equality and Human Rights Commission](#).