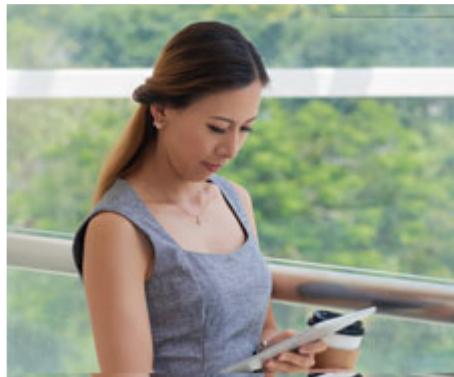




Your Employee and Family Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

Dealing With Racism and Discrimination in the Workplace as a Result of COVID-19



Chinese individuals and others of Asian descent—regardless of where they're from or where they've travelled—have reported racist incidents and discrimination both in public and at work, related to the pandemic.

These behaviours are never acceptable, no matter what's going on in the world. If you're managing a team where there have been instances of racism, racial abuse, or discrimination against other members as a result of their background, it's important to deal directly with the issue. Likewise, if you're involved in crafting company policies or messages, taking a proactive, sensitive approach is vital to creating a safe, inclusive space for all employees during the pandemic.

If you're a manager

Refer any incidents to your human resources (HR) department. An HR representative will be able to investigate any incidents according to company policy and also determine whether disciplinary action needs to be taken place.

Reiterate your company's policies about discrimination and harassment. Remind people that discrimination arising specifically from COVID-19 might look like:

- stating or implying that a person of Asian descent is responsible for the pandemic
- stating or implying that a person of Asian descent is more likely to have the virus than anyone else
- not recruiting candidates from any ethnic minority to certain roles after finding out some ethnic minorities are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19

Make sure that team members understand how to report an incident. Speak to all of the employees you supervise to make sure that everyone is familiar with the policies. If someone asks a question you don't know the answer to, let them know that you'll work to find out the answer or refer them to an HR representative.

Educate your team about the facts. If misinformation, conspiracy theories, or fake news is being spread within your organization, act quickly to address it.

Be vigilant. Managers should be ready to act to protect those who may be the victims of workplace discrimination as a result of COVID-19.

© 2026 LifeWorks (Canada) Ltd. Your program may not include all services described on this website, please refer to your benefit material for more information. For immediate assistance, call 1.844.880.9137.