

## **Guidelines to Finding a Qualified Anti-Harassment/Bullying Workplace Specialist**

If you are Employer or Employee wishing to prevent, provide early intervention, or help to restore a workplace experiencing **workplace harassment or bullying**, it is important to choose qualified resources.

A workplace environment and/or individual impacted by workplace harassment or bullying may include one or more employees known as targets, bystanders, and those who are disruptive. Often the people who are impacted feel vulnerable, unsafe, and experience trust issues. You may be reading this to improve a work environment, offer support to staff, or a loved one, and intentions to prevent further harm. Organizations also seek knowledge on how best to proceed; whether it be from a proactive or reactive perspective.

***ABRC.ca and the Coalition of Alberta Workplace Specialists offer Qualified Resources in Canada. We also receive calls from the UK, Australia, & USA.***

My objective in creating this document is to help you select professionals who bring qualifications, experience and specialization in Workplace Harassment and Bullying and Psychological Safety in the Workplace, where ever you are.

**You are within your rights to ask any or all the following questions until you have established a level of comfort with the service provider where you can talk openly and honestly about the situation that encouraged you to step forward:**

- Ask about the specialist's educational background, specialized training, and their experience in addressing workplace bullying. You may wish to verify this information by requesting a copy of the individual's portfolio: including resume or CV, training certificates, references and testimonials) i.e.: investigators need to be licensed under the Solicitor General.
- Is the individual's training and practical experience current? Where did they study? Who is their mentor? Training and hands on learning in this area is a never-ending process.
- Perspectives may differ from one specialist to another depending upon current or previous professions. For example, a police officer, teacher, clinical therapist, or coach will support you by drawing upon the experience and training they bring to the relationship. Here is an opportunity for you to explore the individual's background and

approach prior to making a commitment to work with this person. It is important to note that information will be delivered differently with each profession. Learn about their perspectives and ask about their scope of practice. This will help you determine which professional background is best for your needs.

- Ask about professional boundaries i.e. how the information you disclose will be used and ensure that you will be involved in any decision making. What are the boundaries of their scope of practice? For example: a police officer or teacher who is coaching in this area, must have clear boundaries when cases require mental health interventions.
- In some cases, you want to authorize an individual to speak on your behalf; this is not about transferring responsibility for decision-making, but this may alleviate some of the associated stress knowing that someone else is fielding your mail from the employer and suggesting or drafting a suitable response on your behalf. The authorized individual you select will be transparent and inclusive with you and supporting your return.
- Inquire whether the professional is prepared to speak to their personal experience (if any) about bullying. Ask about techniques and coping mechanisms that they found helpful and what steps they personally explored to recover. Appropriate self- disclosure builds trust, validation, safety, and provides an example of openness. This also provides an example of moving forward.
- Consider how and where the specialists promote their practice. Conduct a google search and or look at their business profiles: LinkedIn, Website, Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook for more information on their services, skills, and perspectives.
- Ask if the individual connected to any anti-bullying networks? What does this network offer i.e.: current research material, conferences etc. Do they share a practice with other professionals or specialists?
- There are occasions when an individual dealing with workplace bullying may find it difficult to seek support due to limited financial resources. Will the service offer flexibility i.e. temporary sliding scale, non-profit budget, or monthly installments?

**Transparency is essential.**

ABRC.ca and CAWS members can offer Employers, Employees or Individuals, a variety of qualified resources to meet the needs of each unique case.

**Education, Prevention, Intervention, and Repair/Recovery Options.**

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