

# Understanding reasonable management action

Employer resource



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When a WorkCover claim is lodged, we check it to decide if it meets the criteria for acceptance.

In Queensland, mental injury claims caused by reasonable management action, when it's taken in a reasonable way, are excluded from worker's compensation.

Knowing what reasonable management action is in relation to mental injury claims can help you confidently manage and support your workers.

## What does management action mean?

Management action means steps your workplace takes to manage your workers' employment.

This could include, but isn't limited to:

- giving feedback on, or managing, a worker's performance
- investigating complaints and misconduct
- changing a worker's role
- taking disciplinary action, such as dismissing a worker.

## Exclusion for reasonable management action

As an employer, you'll make decisions related to workers, like who to promote or transfer, how to approve leave and who is eligible for promotion.

It's reasonable for managers and supervisors to allocate work or give feedback on a worker's performance in a fair and constructive way.

Sometimes, difficult management decisions at work can lead to a worker feeling uncomfortable, and even developing a mental injury.

But if that mental injury is caused by reasonable management action, taken in a reasonable way, then they can't receive workers' compensation.

## Reasonable management action and bullying

Management actions can't be considered bullying if they are done in a lawful and reasonable way, taking the unique circumstances into account.

## What if a claim is denied due to this exclusion?

Remember, even if a worker's claim is denied due to reasonable management action, they may still have a genuine mental health concern.

Always show empathy and support. One way you can help is to check in with your worker and connect them to mental health support services, if needed.

You'll find a **list of support services on our website**.



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## How do we decide if management action is considered reasonable?

When deciding if the management action taken was reasonable, WorkCover will look at:

- The actual management action taken, rather than the worker's perception of it
- Whether the decision was in line with the workplace's established policies or procedures
- and if not, whether it was reasonable in the circumstances.

Management action must be taken in a reasonable way, so it should always be done fairly.

It's not about being perfect, just fair, objective, and sensible, including in the eyes of an outside observer.

## Here are some practical tips:

- Inform workers about the purpose of any meeting.
- Follow established policies and consult where necessary.
- Keep records of discussions and decisions.
- Offer workers the chance to bring a support person to important or difficult meetings.
- Make sure you don't unreasonably delay taking management action.



## WorkCover is here to help

If you have any questions, you can find your claim contact on WorkCover Connect and reach them directly. Or you can call one of our team on **1300 362 128**.

[worksafe.qld.gov.au](https://worksafe.qld.gov.au)

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