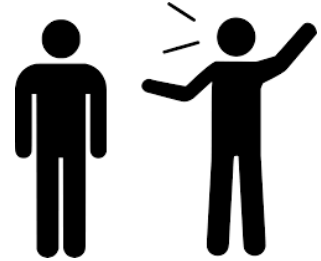




Summary

A Parking Services employee was patrolling a parking lot near Education North. A vehicle pulled up and parked in the access road near where two electricians were working, blocking their U of A vehicle. The driver was asked not to park there, but they ignored the request and got out of the vehicle.

As the parking employee began to write a citation, the individual became confrontational and began yelling at the employee. The employee attempted to de-escalate the situation and the individual eventually left. The electricians and several contractors came over to ensure the employee was alright.



Consequences

Verbal harassment is something that many employees have experienced, particularly those in front line service roles. The consequences can include psychological harm to the employee and can also escalate into physical abuse or violence. These outcomes can be severe and so we need to work to prevent verbal harassment and to support those who experience it.

Culture of Care

The Culture of Care initiative speaks to employees having a safe environment to work. One way to improve our environment is for employees to watch out for one another. This incident highlights excellent behaviours from U of A staff and contractors who immediately stopped their work and went over to check on the employee. This simple act can go a long way to help minimize the impacts from a verbal harassment incident; whether it is having someone check in on you, or knowing that others are nearby to help as required.

Call to Action

Verbal harassment is unacceptable in the workplace and we want to ensure all staff who may be exposed to psychological hazards as part of their work are protected.

1. Review the risks of verbal harassment and ensure proper controls are implemented to minimize the risk. These could include de-escalation training, having a buddy system, physical barriers to prevent escalation and administrative controls such as [signage reminding people it will not be tolerated](#).
2. Wherever possible, watch out for one another. If you witness a situation where verbal harassment has occurred and it is safe to do so, take a moment and check in with the employee to ensure they are alright.
3. [Report all incidents of harassment](#). You may also [report to the Office of Safe Disclosure](#).
4. Familiarize yourself with supports such as the [Employee and Family Assistance Program](#) and take advantage of them if you experience harassment or other forms of psychological hazards.