

Procedures in cases of Victimization

All employees at SIPRI have the right to be treated with respect in a work environment free from discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, and victimization. Such actions present serious threats to health, well-being, and job satisfaction in the workplace, and they will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

SIPRI strives to offer supportive work conditions and opportunities for its employees. The different backgrounds, personalities, life experience and skills that individual staff members bring contribute to a healthy and vibrant work environment at the institute and should be nurtured.

The following procedures shall be used as an advisory document with comprehensive information on how employees can proceed in cases of reported or suspected victimization at SIPRI, affecting either themselves or their SIPRI colleagues.

What is victimization?

All organizations may experience instances of temporary disagreements, conflicts and difficulties in cooperation. Victimization—or bullying—is distinct from these temporary conflicts.

Victimization is defined as: *Acts that are directed at one or more employees in an offensive manner and that can lead to ill health or ostracism from the workplace community* (AFS 2015:4). These acts can be, for example, deliberate insults, degrading treatment, not being greeted, withholding information, being excluded from meetings or being falsely accused.

Regulations on victimization are described in the Swedish Work Environment Authority's provision on Organizational and Social work environment (AFS 2015:4).

When a suspected or reported case of victimization occurs, both individuals and teams risk being negatively affected, both in the short and long term. Those who have been subjected to victimization risk physical and mental illness, reduced self-esteem and lower work performance. The impact on workplaces can be reduced efficiency, increased staff turnover or sick leave.

Responsibility

The Director is responsible for preventing victimization in the workplace. The Director is also responsible for intervening in the event of suspected or reported cases. He/she allocates specific work environment responsibilities to HR, the Directors of Studies, Department Heads, and other line managers, according to a written distribution of tasks. The employer must ensure that procedures exist for how to act in cases of victimization in the workplace, and that all line managers have the necessary skills to prevent and manage discriminatory treatment. This will be ensured through regular work environment training.

Managers at all levels of the organization thus have a responsibility to intervene in suspected or reported cases of victimization.

Accusing another person of a violation on false grounds is itself considered a violation.

Victimization is prevented by

- Ensuring that everyone has been informed about current legislation and policies regarding discriminatory treatment – via onboarding of new staff and in connection with the annual performance and development talks (PAD);
- Creating a work environment that is characterized by:
 - openness with fora for discussion and mutual dialogue;
 - clear and unambiguous standards for relationships in the workplace; and
 - an inclusive climate as well a clear leadership that fosters a sense of security and is norm-setting for how a good work climate should be designed.

Detection of victimization

Everyone has a responsibility to prevent/detect victimization.

If a staff member becomes aware of a case of victimization, they should talk to the person or persons that feels exposed and/or contact the line manager, the Director of Studies/Department Director or Human Resources Director to get support and help to investigate the situation.

An employee can also seek support through their union representative and/or the safety representative. If the exposed person is in need of support measures, contact with the occupational health service will be arranged by the Human Resources Director.

SIPRI's procedures for handling of victimization

As soon as a line manager becomes aware of a suspected or reported instance of victimization, they are obliged to act without delay. Contact should be made at an early stage with the Human Resources Director to get guidance and appropriate support in addressing the matter.

If the line manager is unable to resolve the situation or considers it to be too complex, the matter should be referred to the Human Resources Director, who will immediately report in turn to the Institute Director.

In such instances the Human Resources Director will investigate the alleged violations, assess the risks of the situation, and report to the Institute Director. The Human Resources Director and Institute Director will address aspects of the organizational and social work environment that may cause victimization. The primary purpose of the investigation is to stop the abuse. The investigation will be handled expeditiously and confidentially, on the basis of the following provisions:

- All statements will be taken seriously and the employer will show respect for all involved. The wishes of the affected employee regarding the handling of the issue will be listened to and taken into account.
- The investigation and risk assessment will be shared with the parties involved in the investigation as well as the responsible Director of Studies/Head of Department and the Institute Director.

- The Human Resources Director will keep all involved abreast of the case as it progresses, what timetables have been decided, which measures will be taken and if no further measures will be taken.
- No information of the investigation will be disclosed by HR to other staff members without the individual's consent.

In certain cases, for example if a member of the Senior Management team is personally involved or if the case is considered to be particularly complex, an external actor may be brought in to conduct an investigation..

Prohibition of retaliation

According to the Discrimination Act, chapter 2, 18 § an employee who reports a suspected case of victimization or participates in an investigation of the same must not be subjected to negative measures (retaliation) by SIPRI.

This is what you should do

If you feel that *you have been subjected to victimization*

If someone feels subjected to victimization or notices that someone else is being subjected to such treatment, this should be reported to the line manager, the Director of Studies/Department Director or the Human Resources Director as soon as possible. Act urgently, as the problems rarely go away "by themselves".

The Human Resources Director assists with advice and support in these matters. If you want support in the contact with the employer, talk to your union representatives or the safety officer.

Anyone who feels victimized is the judge of what is unwanted and offensive to them. The person who has subjected another person to an act that is perceived as offensive must be made aware that the behavior is experienced in this way. It is therefore important that the person who feels exposed make it clear to the person who is treating you inappropriately that this behavior is unwelcome. This can be done orally, in writing or with the help of someone you trust. If you find it difficult to confront the perpetrator yourself, try to find someone you trust to support you in this, it could be a colleague, the safety representative, a union representative, a manager etc. It is important to act quickly to stop the behaviour.

If the violation is obvious you should not have to speak up in order for it to be counted as harassment within the sense of the law.

Practical advice of what to do:

- Make a note of the time and place, what happened, what was said and how you felt. Such notes can be good to have in a possible investigation.
- Tell someone that you trust about what happened. You can talk to your union representative, safety officer or someone else you trust.
- Inform your line manager, another manager and/or the Human Resources Department as soon as possible. It is important to resolve the situation quickly.
- Inform the person who exposes you to victimization clearly that you feel violated and that you want the behavior to stop. Leave no room for misunderstanding. You can also ask someone you trust to talk to the person you feel has offended or harassed you.

If you are in need of conversational support, a contact with the occupational health service will be arranged by the Human Resources Director.

If you are a *colleague of someone who feels subjected to victimization*

Victimization is a concern for everyone's work environment. Therefore, try to speak up if you feel that someone at SIPRI is offending others or behaving in such a way that they risk offending others.

If you are informed by someone who has been exposed, remind them of the importance of informing the line manager, the Director of Studies/Department Director or Human Resources Department about what happened.

Practical advice of what you can do to help:

- Take responsibility for our common working environment by drawing attention to a colleague who expresses and/or behaves inappropriately. Speak up and support each

other, hopefully stopping inappropriate behaviour before it becomes a serious incident.

- Listen to what your exposed colleague has to say. Avoid being judgmental.
- Show your support, for example by offering to accompany your exposed colleague when talking to the manager.