

Food Standards Agency: Information released under the Freedom of Information Act

Date released: 31 October 2018

Request

- 1. How many people have made complaints that they suffered bullying by other members of staff in the last three calendar years (up to and including September 2018)? Please could you break this information down by year and gender.*
- 2. How many members of staff have faced disciplinary investigations as a result of an accusation of bullying made against them in the last three calendar years (up to and including September 2018)? Please could you break this information down by year, gender. In each case, please could you state whether any misconduct was found and, if so, what type of disciplinary action was taken including verbal/written/final warnings, suspension, dismissal etc.*

Response

Where an FSA employee wishes to officially report an issue, they should complete the Bullying & Harassment Reporting Form. The appropriate procedure for addressing an incident which is reported this way will, in most cases, be determined following discussion between the employee and their manager (or other relevant manager to whom the issue has been reported to/discussed with). This may include a discussion with the perpetrator, mediation etc. If the issue is not resolved through this route or is serious enough to warrant at the time of reporting it, our formal process will apply. This will be treated as a formal grievance dealt with under the FSA grievance policy which may lead to disciplinary action being taken. Not all individuals complete a reporting form but chose to raise the matter as a grievance. Cases are recorded as 'bullying/harassment', so it is not possible to split them by type. The following information is taken from bullying and harassment reporting and formal grievance records and covers both bullying and harassment complaints. As an incident reported on an incident form could result in a formal grievance, the same case may appear under both set of figures.

Some of the information has been withheld from disclosure under section 40 (personal information) of the Act.

Formal Grievances:

Year	Number	Gender
2015	Fewer than 5	Section 40(2) & (3)
2016	8	
2017	0	
2018	Fewer than 5	

Incident reports:

Year	Number	Gender
2015	5	Section 40(2) & (3)
2016	Fewer than 5	
2017	Fewer than 5	
2018	Fewer than 5	

1. The number of disciplinaries as a result of an accusation of bullying is:

Year	Number	Gender	Outcome
2015	Fewer than 5	Section 40(2) & (3)	Received a written warning
2016	0	-	-
2017	0	-	-
2018	0	-	-

The FSA takes all allegations of bullying seriously. We have an established bullying and harassment policy and an Employee Assistance Provider who offers advice and counselling. In addition, we have a Behaviour Network which is a group of staff who act as a confidential first point of contact and whose role it is to listen and help identify the options that staff have, to overcome the different situations they may face. We also work closely with our trade union colleagues to ensure all staff feel able to come to work without threat of bullying, harassment and victimisation.