

VICTIM BLAMING AS RETALIATION

Harassment often includes retaliation.

Retaliation is a form of harassment. It can also be used to punish someone for reporting harassment or to stop them from reporting.

Retaliation can take many forms such as victim blaming and gaslighting. Forms of retaliation can indicate that the harassment is escalating.

1 in 5 victims of sexual assault was blamed for what happened to them.

(Statistics Canada, 2019)

Victim blaming can be hard to recognize. But it can look like:

Questioning or minimizing the severity of the harassment.

Example: *"It couldn't have been that bad."*

Blaming someone for harassment because of how they dress.

Example: *"What did you expect when you were wearing that."*

Accusing someone of inappropriate or seductive behaviour.

Example: *"That's what you get from being so friendly with a passenger."*

Doubting someone's experiences or memories of harassment.

Example: *"He's such a nice guy! Are you sure you're remembering that right?"*

Putting down someone as "weak."

Example: *"You're not tough enough for this job."*

- Blaming those who experience harassment makes the negative consequences of harassment and violence worse.
- It negatively impacts mental, emotional, and physical health, and increases feelings of isolation – all of which have consequences for workers and workplaces.