

# Lawyer Wellbeing Research Report

## Experiences of incivility by lawyers

This research explores the experiences of incivility by lawyers, including the frequency and instigator of the behaviours. Previous research has found negative individual and organisational outcomes associated with the experience of incivility. This research finds a clear relationship between incivility and a less engaged ethical climate, and lawyers’ greater psychological distress.

The results: Levels of incivility experienced by lawyers and impact on wellbeing

The experience of incivility regardless of the instigator or other demographic or situational factors was consistently associated with higher levels of psychological distress.

Top 3 incivility behaviours reported often or very often by lawyers:

1.

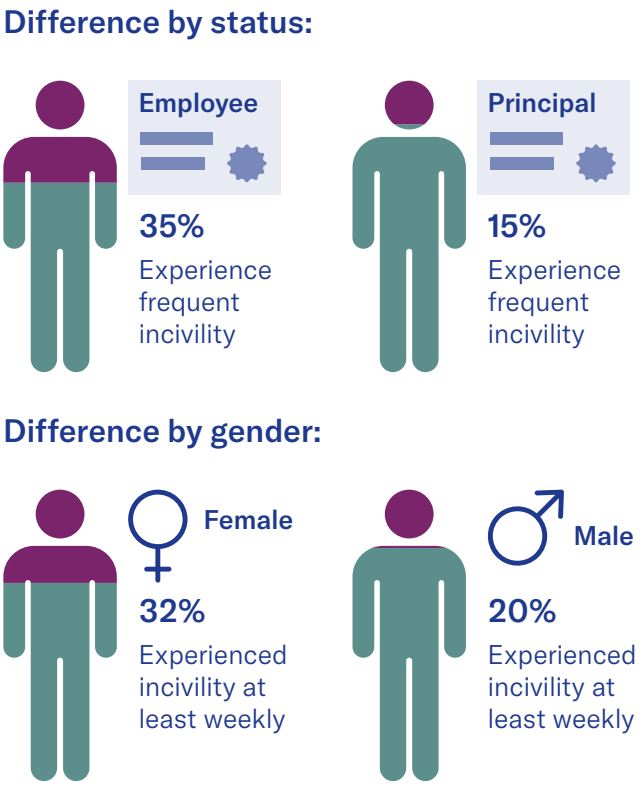
Paid little attention to a statement you made or showed little interest in your opinion (18.3%)

2.

Put you down or was condescending to you in some way (16.7%)

3.

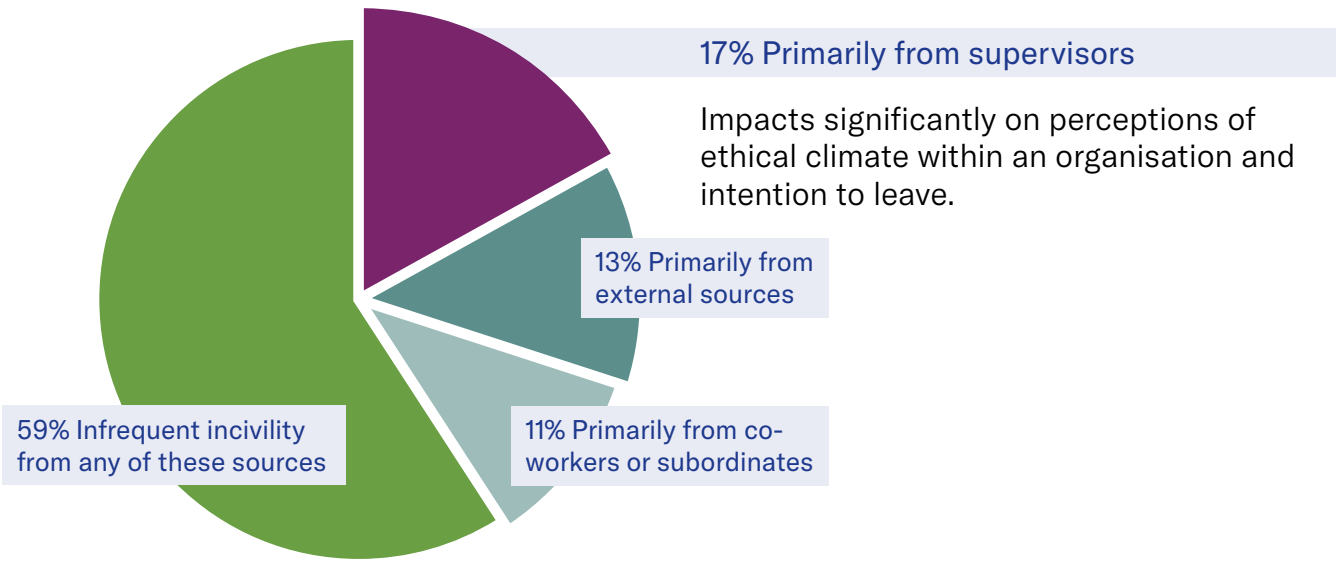
Doubted your judgement in a matter over which you have responsibility (14.9%)



The results: Sources of incivility

New insights and a pathway for action – The finding of a heightened negative effect of top-down incivility on positive wellbeing and perceptions of ethical climate highlight the impact of supervisors and managers on setting the tone and culture in legal workplaces.

Sources of incivility



Where lawyers report experiencing:

#@!!

Incivility primarily from their supervisor

We also see:

Lower perceptions of positive ethical behaviours and relationships

A more negative impact on positive wellbeing

More likely to rate ethical climate as self-protective/ self-interested

More likely to leave their employer

Researcher insight:

“The experience of incivility regardless of the instigator or other demographic or situational factors was consistently associated with higher levels of psychological distress.” (page 43)

Respondent experience:

“There is nothing worse than belittling responses and criticisms of performance when trying to do your job.” (page 35)

**Systems change insight:** Results for all key measures in the report were similar for lawyers across Victoria, New South Wales and Western Australia. This highlights the opportunity to work collaboratively for positive wellbeing change across jurisdictions.