

Your First Job: The "Safe & Sane" Safety Checklist

Because your paycheck should never cost you your peace of mind

Congratulations on entering the workforce! Whether it's a part-time cafe gig or your first full-time role, you have **legal rights** in Aotearoa that protect you from bullying, harassment, and entrapment.

Use this checklist to ensure your new workplace is a "Safe Harbor."

1. The "Paper Trail" (Your Legal Foundation)

In New Zealand, "handshake deals" aren't enough. You are legally entitled to a written agreement.

- **The Contract:** Do I have a signed Employment Agreement? (Keep a digital copy in a safe place).
- **The Pay Slip:** Does my boss provide a breakdown of my pay, tax, and KiwiSaver?
- **The 90-Day Trial:** If I'm on a trial period, do I know my rights if things don't work out? (Tip: You still have a right to be treated with "Good Faith").

2. Digital Boundaries (Your Privacy Rights)

Your boss pays for your time, not your private life.

- **Social media:** Am I being pressured to give my manager access to my private Instagram or Facebook? (Answer: You don't have to).
- **Location Tracking:** Does my workplace app track my GPS when I'm off the clock? (Check your app permissions!)
- **Personal Devices:** If I use my own phone for work, do they have a policy on how my data is protected?



3. Identifying "Workplace Entrapment"

Bullying at work looks different than in the classroom. Watch these "Red Flags":

- [] **The "Banter" Trap:** Is "it's just a joke" being used to excuse comments about your appearance, gender, or race?
- [] **Isolation:** Is a manager or colleague "gatekeeping" information or is it cutting you off from team meetings to make you feel incompetent?
- [] **Coerced Hours:** Are you being "guilted" into working extra hours or "under the table" for no pay?

4. Your Support Network (Who has your back?)

You never have to navigate a "sticky" situation alone.

- [] **The Support Person:** Did you know you have a legal right to bring a friend, family member, or union rep to any disciplinary meeting?
- [] **The Victims' Protection Act:** If things get tough at home, you are entitled to **10 days of paid leave** to find safety—regardless of how long you've worked there.
- [] **Health & Safety:** Your employer is legally required to protect your **mental health**. If the "vibe" is making you sick, it's a Health & Safety issue.

The "Stay Sane" Rule: Trust Your Gut.

If it feels like "Social Entrapment," it probably is. If you wouldn't accept it from a friend, don't accept it from a boss.

Need a Digital Safety Audit or advice on workplace rights? Visit [Staying Safe and Sane NZ](#) or message us for a confidential kōrero.

[Link: www.stayingsafeandsane.nz] [Instagram: [stayingsafeandsane](#)]

