



Scenario: To Report or Not to Report

Group Size: 4-15

This scenario may contain explicit language and references to harmful situations which may be emotionally activating for some people. If you need support, services are available through the [CAF Member Assistance Program \(CFMAP\)](#) and the [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#).

You are a claims clerk at a base Headquarters (HQ). One senior supervisor who works in the same HQ has submitted questionable claims in the past. For instance, the dates and expenses were excessive for the task that he had been assigned; he often used statutory declarations instead of receipts because he had a habit of “misplacing the originals.” Whenever you asked him about the details of his claims, he would become angry and remind you that he outranks you and that “it is not your job to question your superiors.” The last time it happened, he told you that military members should look after one another. He reminded you that “the senior members in this headquarters stick together” and that they “often discuss subordinates.” He inferred that it would be terrible for your career if you got a “bad rep.” He then told you to process his claim.

He submits another claim that is, once again, filled with inconsistencies. You know that he is fraudulently claiming expenses that he has not incurred, such as car rental and accommodation costs. Afraid to approach him, you are now in a quandary.

Categories

Principles:	Obey and Support Lawful Authority
Values:	Integrity, Loyalty, Courage, Stewardship, Teamwork
Cultural Themes:	Service, Identity, Leadership
Misconduct Types:	Abuse of Power, General Misconduct
GBA Plus Themes:	Income
Audience:	Defence Team

Facilitator's Guide

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the ethical principle of “Obey and Support Lawful Authority” in the workplace.
- Discuss the ethical values of loyalty and integrity in the workplace.

Facilitation Questions:

1. What would you do in this situation? What are the considerations?
 - Allow open discussion from the group.
 - Ethical concerns: You know that the senior member is falsifying claims and that you are responsible to report these irregularities. You know that if reported, it could result in legal actions against him. You also fear for your career as he has threatened you.
 - Personal factors: Even though you know that this senior member is committing fraudulent acts, you are aware that he outranks you. You have always valued loyalty to superiors and to the Department of National Defence (DND) and the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF).
 - Environmental factors: This senior member's authority can be weighed against your position. You could also be ostracized for reporting one of your superiors.
2. What is the ethical dilemma in this situation?
 - The senior member is most likely committing fraud and should be investigated. It is also your job to make sure that items being claimed are in accordance with regulations.
 - However, there is the question of competing ethical values. Loyalties to a senior rank versus the duties and responsibilities to apply CAF regulations. The question of harassment and abuse of authority play an important role because of the difference in rank (or levels for DND employees). This makes your decision to intervene tough because of the consequences.
 - You question if your gender is impacting the way you are treated and spoken to by the supervisor. What do you do in this situation if you perceive sexism is contributing to their threats against you?
3. What are some potential courses of action that could be taken in this scenario?
 - Option 1: Process the claim. The senior member will continue to claim false expenses and your lack of action will contribute to the problem.
 - Option 2: Attempt to clarify the claim to ensure that there are no honest mistakes. The senior member may remind you of your position, opening you up for more harassment.
 - Option 3: Seek advice from an experienced, trusted colleague, your immediate supervisor, or the officer responsible for your section and explain what has happened in the past (consistent questionable claims) and have them deal with it. The senior member could face administrative or disciplinary proceedings for his actions.
 - Option 4: Speak to a harassment advisor if you feel that your actions have precipitated any negative reaction from the senior member or others. You could be ostracized for “turning in” one of your superiors.