



SCIENT INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Ibrahimpattanam, R.R Dist, Telangana

Prevention of Sexual Harassment

The most effective weapon against sexual harassment is prevention. Harassment does not disappear on its own. In fact, it is more likely that when the problem is not addressed, the harassment will worsen and become more difficult to remedy as time goes on.

Sexual Harassment of women in workplace

The Commission has taken up the issue of sexual harassment of women in the workplace. It has started consultations with Government Departments, Private Institutions/Agencies as well as NGOs with a view to setting up of Complaints Mechanisms in these organizations for the redressal of grievances relating to sexual harassment.

The Commission has also taken up the issue of sexual harassment of women in universities and educational institutions, which generally have a large number of women students and employees. To discuss and evolve a consensus as to how these institutions could be involved in implementing the guidelines and norms prescribed by the Supreme Court in the Vishakha judgment, on 25 April 2001 it held a meeting chaired by the Chairperson, NHRC and attended by the Member concerned and Secretary General of NHRC; Secretary, Department of Secondary & Higher Education and Secretary, Department of Elementary Education and Literacy of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India; Chairman, UGC; Chairman, CBSE; Principal Secretary, Education, NCT of Delhi; Senior Advocates and NGO representatives.

Below are some measures that employers can take in order to create a harassment-free workplace, based on guidelines from the NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF INDIA (NHRC). The protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 (with Amendment Act 2006). Then the protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Act was modified again in 2019.

Employer Responsibilities

- Make it clear that this is a workplace where harassment will not be tolerated.
- Provide education and information about harassment to all staff on a regular basis.
- The circulation of information, open communication and guidance is of particular importance in removing the taboo of silence which often surrounds cases of sexual harassment. Information sessions, personnel meetings, office meetings, group discussion and problem-solving groups can prove very effective in this respect. Staff should also be informed of the best way of coping with aggression by means of guidelines and staff development programs on sexual harassment at work.
- Develop an anti-harassment policy together with employees, managers, and union representatives.
- Communicate the policy to all employees
- Make sure that all managers and supervisors understand their responsibility to provide a harassment-free work environment.
- Ensure that all employees understand the policy and procedures for dealing with harassment - new and long-term employees alike - this involves training, information and education.
- Show you mean it - make sure the policy applies to everyone, including managers and supervisors.
- Promptly investigate and deal with all complaints of harassment.
- Appropriately discipline employees who harass other employees.
- Provide protection and support for the employees who feel they are being harassed.
- Take action to eliminate discriminatory jokes, posters, graffiti, e-mails and photos at the work site.
- Monitor and revise the policy and education/information programs on a regular basis to ensure that it is still effective for your workplace.

Employers should provide a mechanism for addressing sexual harassment in a confidential and sensitive manner after a grievance has been filed. A well constructed and well-implemented plan within an organization may stop inappropriate conduct before it creates a problem for individual employees.

Employee Responsibilities

In addition to the employees responsibility to provide a non-discriminatory and non-violent workplace atmosphere, employees must also assume an active role in the prevention of sexual harassment. Employees should commit to do the following:

Understand

- Obtain and become familiar with the organizations policy on sexual harassment.
- Examine ones feelings, attitudes, and behaviors in relation to sexual harassment.
- See that behavior corresponds with the expectations and behavioral requirements of the organizations sexual harassment policy.

Observe

- Be aware and conscious of engaging in potential sexual-harassment behaviors or incidents at work;
- Be sensitive to individuals who may be offended by the verbal and non-verbal behavior of others;
- Be aware of subtle forms of sexual harassment.
- Watch for and discourage sexual behaviors that negatively affect work.

Examine

- Pay attention to the response of others in order to avoid unintentional offense.
- Do not assume that employees or co-workers enjoy or want to hear risqué jokes or sexually oriented comments about their appearance, or be touched, stared at, flirted with, or propositioned for dates or sexual favors.

- Ask yourself if your verbal or non-verbal behaviors might have a negative impact on other co-workers attitudes toward work.
- Examine your behaviors, gestures, and comments. Ask yourself, "Could I unknowingly be encouraging sexual interplay by the way I interact or communicate.
- Do not take sexual harassment lightly. If you think you are being sexually harassed by an individual or a group, do not accept it as a joke. Do not encourage the harasser by smiling, laughing at his/her jokes, or flirting back. Let the harasser know that you do not enjoy and do not want this type of attention.

Confront

- If possible, confront the sexual harasser immediately. Tell him/her that you find that type of attention offensive.
- If possible, tell the harasser that the behavior affects you negatively and has the potential of negatively affecting you job.
- If possible, tell the harasser what behaviors (gestures, physical or verbal) behaviors you find offensive.

Resolve

- Seek confidential advice to develop your personal resolution strategy.
- Consider writing a letter to the harasser and keep a copy for yourself.
- Document all the incidents of sexual harassment. Be detailed, precise about date, time, location, and person/persons involved.

Support

- If you know someone who is being harassed, give him or her your support. Encourage the recipient to talk about it and to take immediate action to stop it;
- If you actually see or hear an incident of sexual harassment or are subjected to an offensive environment, you can also take the appropriate steps to resolve the harassment or co-file with the complainant;

- When a recipient files a complaint, if possible, support him or her throughout the complaint process.

For Complaints

Complaint Email: **prevention.sexualharassment@scient.ac.in**