



# MAHILA JAGAT LIHAZ SAMITI

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## POLICY FOR PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT WORKPLACE

1. The organisation is committed to maintaining a workplace free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of workplace discrimination. All employees are required to work in a manner that prevents sexual harassment at the workplace. Sexual harassment is against the law and all employees have a legal right to a workplace free from sexual harassment and employees are urged to report sexual harassment by filing a complaint internally with the organisation. Employees can also file a complaint with the police.
2. The policy applies to all employees, applicants for employment, interns, whether paid or unpaid, vendors and persons interacting with the organisation. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Any employee or individual covered by this policy who engages in sexual harassment or retaliation will be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary action (e.g., counseling, suspension, termination).
3. Retaliation Prohibition: No person covered by this Policy shall be subject to adverse action because the employee reports an incident of sexual harassment, provides information, or otherwise assists in any investigation of a sexual harassment complaint. The organisation will not tolerate such retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports or provides information about suspected sexual harassment. Any employee who retaliates against anyone involved in a sexual harassment investigation will be subjected to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. All employees, paid or unpaid interns, or non-employees working in the workplace who believe they have been subject to such retaliation should inform a supervisor or manager, or the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) on Sexual Harassment of the Organisation constituted as per the provisions of the law with an external member in addition to internal ones. All employees, paid or unpaid interns or non-employees who believe they have been a target of such retaliation may also seek relief in other available forums, as explained below in the section on Legal Protections.
4. The organisation will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation through the ICC that ensures due process for all parties, whenever management receives a complaint about sexual harassment, or otherwise knows of possible sexual harassment occurring. The organisation will keep the investigation confidential to the extent possible. Effective corrective action will be taken whenever sexual harassment is found to have occurred. All employees, including managers and supervisors, are required to cooperate with any internal investigation of sexual harassment.

### Definition of Sexual Harassment

5. Sexual harassment includes harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, self-identified or perceived sex, gender expression, gender identity and the status

of being transgender. it includes unwelcome conduct which is either of a sexual nature, or which is directed at an individual because of that individual's sex when:

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, even if the reporting individual is not the intended target of the sexual harassment;
  - Such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; or
  - Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting an individual's employment.
6. A sexually harassing hostile work environment includes, but is not limited to, words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation or physical violence which are of a sexual nature, or which are directed at an individual because of that individual's sex. Sexual harassment also consists of any unwanted verbal or physical advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements or sexually discriminatory remarks made by someone which are offensive or objectionable to the recipient, which cause the recipient discomfort or humiliation, which interfere with the recipient's job performance. Sexual harassment also occurs when a person in authority tries to trade job benefits for sexual favours. This can include hiring, promotion, continued employment or any other terms, conditions or privileges of employment. This is also called quid pro quo harassment.
7. The following describes some of the types of acts that may be unlawful sexual harassment and that are strictly prohibited:
- Physical acts of a sexual nature, such as:
    - Touching, pinching, patting, kissing, hugging, grabbing, brushing against another employee's body or poking another employee's body;
    - Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults.
  - Unwanted sexual advances or propositions, such as:
    - Requests for sexual favours accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning the target's job performance evaluation, a promotion or other job benefits or detriments;
    - Subtle or obvious pressure for unwelcome sexual activities.
  - Sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks or jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience, which create a hostile work environment.
  - Sex stereotyping occurs when conduct or personality traits are considered inappropriate simply because they may not conform to other people's ideas or perceptions about how individuals of a particular sex should act or look.
  - Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the workplace, such as:
    - Displaying pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional material, reading materials or other materials that are sexually demeaning or pornographic. This includes such sexual displays on workplace computers or cell phones and sharing such displays while in the workplace.
  - Hostile actions taken against an individual because of that individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and the status of being transgender, such as:
    - Interfering with, destroying or damaging a person's workstation, tools or equipment, or otherwise interfering with the individual's ability to perform the job;
    - Sabotaging an individual's work;
    - Bullying, yelling, name-calling.

## **Investigation of Sexual Harassment**

8. All complaints or information about sexual harassment will be investigated, whether that information was reported in verbal or written form. Investigations will be conducted in a timely manner, and will be confidential to the extent possible. While the process may vary from case to case, investigations should be done in accordance with the following steps:
  - Upon receipt of complaint, the ICC will conduct an immediate review of the allegations, and take any interim actions (e.g., instructing the respondent to refrain from communications with the complainant), as appropriate. If complaint is verbal, encourage the individual to file the complaint in writing.
  - If documents, emails or phone records are relevant to the investigation, take steps to obtain and preserve them.
  - Request and review all relevant documents, including all electronic communications.
  - Interview all parties involved, including any relevant witnesses;
  - Create a written documentation of the investigation (such as a letter, memo or email), which contains the following:
    - A list of all documents reviewed, along with a detailed summary of relevant documents;
    - A list of names of those interviewed, along with a detailed summary of their statements;
    - A timeline of events;
    - A summary of prior relevant incidents, reported or unreported; and
    - The basis for the decision and final resolution of the complaint, together with any corrective action(s).
  - Keep the written documentation and associated documents in a secure and confidential location.
  - Promptly notify the individual who reported and the individual(s) about whom the complaint was made of the final determination and implement any corrective actions identified in the written document.
  - Inform the individual who reported of the right to file a complaint or charge externally as outlined in the next section.

## **Legal Protections And External Remedies**

Sexual harassment is also prohibited by the law. Aside from the internal process of the organisation, employees may also choose to pursue legal remedies with government entities.