



Sexual Harassment  
Policy and  
Complaint/Investigation  
Procedure\*

**The Nonprofit Center at  
La Salle University**  
[lasallenonprofitcenter.org](http://lasallenonprofitcenter.org)

\*from the Society for Human  
Resources Management

**Please Note:** *Employers should review federal and state anti-harassment provisions before implementing any new anti-harassment policy.*

### **Objective**

The objective of [Company Name] in implementing and enforcing this policy is to define workplace sexual harassment, prohibit it in all forms, carry out appropriate disciplinary measures in the case of violations, and provide procedures for lodging complaints about conduct that violates this policy and investigating sexual harassment claims.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all employees of [Company Name] and those working for the company at all locations. All workers, including supervisors and managers, will be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge, for any act of sexual harassment they commit.

### **Defining Sexual Harassment**

"Sexual harassment" is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that is sufficiently persistent or offensive to unreasonably interfere with an employee's job performance or create an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. Sexual harassment is defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example: a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, there are two types of sexual harassment: a) quid pro quo and 2) hostile work environment. Sexual harassment can be physical and psychological in nature. An aggregation of a series of incidents can constitute sexual harassment even if one of the incidents considered on its own would not be harassing. Employees are prohibited from harassing other employees whether or not the incidents of harassment occur on employer premises and whether or not the incidents occur during working hours.

### **Examples of prohibited conduct**

Though sexual harassment encompasses a wide range of conduct, some examples of specifically prohibited conduct include the following:

- Physical assaults of a sexual nature, such as rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults, and intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another employee's body or poking another employee's body.
- Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions or other sexual comments, such as sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks, jokes or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience.
- Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment to an employee for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit any employee to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward.
- Subjecting, or threats of subjecting, an employee to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct or intentionally making performance of the employee's job more difficult because of that employee's sex.
- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in [Company Name]'s workplace by the [Company Name] employees.
- Retaliation for sexual harassment complaints.

## **Responding to Conduct in Violation of Policy**

### ***Employees***

If an employee believes that he or she has been subject to sexual harassment or any unwelcome sexual attention, he or she may address the situation directly and immediately to the harasser, if possible. If the inappropriate conduct does not cease, or if the employee is unable to or uncomfortable with addressing the alleged harasser directly, he or she should report the incident to his or her own supervisor or manager, or to the human resource (HR) director. It is helpful, but not required, to provide a written record of the date, time and nature of the incident(s) and the names of any witnesses.

It is important to report any and all concerns of sexual harassment or inappropriate sexual conduct to the HR director or a supervisor/manager as soon as possible. Management must be made aware of the situation so that it can conduct an immediate and impartial investigation and take appropriate action to remediate or prevent the prohibited conduct from continuing.

### ***Managers and supervisors***

Managers and supervisors must deal expeditiously and fairly with allegations of sexual harassment within their departments whether or not there has been a written or formal complaint. They must:

- Take all complaints or concerns of alleged or possible harassment or discrimination seriously no matter how minor or who is involved.
- Ensure that harassment or inappropriate sexually oriented conduct is immediately reported to HR so that a prompt investigation can occur.
- Take any appropriate action to prevent retaliation or prohibited conduct from recurring during and after any investigations or complaints.

Managers and supervisors who knowingly allow or tolerate sexual harassment or retaliation, including the failure to immediately report such misconduct to HR, are in violation of this policy and subject to discipline.

### ***Human resources***

The HR director is responsible for:

1. Ensuring that both the individual filing the complaint (hereafter referred to as the "complainant") and the accused individual (hereafter referred to as the "respondent") are aware of the seriousness of a sexual harassment complaint.
2. Explaining [Company Name]'s sexual harassment policy and investigation procedures to the complainant and the respondent.
3. Exploring informal means of resolving sexual harassment complaints.
4. Notifying the police if criminal activities are alleged.
5. Arranging for an investigation of the alleged harassment and the preparation of a written report.
6. Submitting a written report summarizing the results of the investigation and making recommendations to designated company officials.
7. Notifying the complainant and the respondent of the corrective actions to be taken, if any, and administering those actions.

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### **Discipline**

Employees who violate this policy are subject to appropriate discipline. If an investigation results in a finding that this policy has been violated, the mandatory minimum discipline is a written reprimand. The discipline for very serious or repeat violations is termination of employment. Persons who violate this policy may also be subject to civil damages or criminal penalties.

### **Confidentiality**

All inquiries, complaints and investigations are treated confidentially. Information is revealed strictly on a need-to-know basis. Information contained in a formal complaint is kept as confidential as possible. However, the identity of the complainant is usually revealed to the respondent and witnesses. The HR director takes adequate steps to ensure that the complainant is protected from retaliation during the period of the investigation. All information pertaining to a sexual harassment complaint or investigation is maintained by the HR director in secure files. The HR director can answer any questions relating to the procedures for handling information related to sexual harassment complaints and investigations to complainants and respondents.

### **Other Available Procedures**

The procedures available under this policy do not preempt or supersede any legal procedures or remedies otherwise available to a victim of sexual harassment under local, state or federal law.

### **Administration**

This policy will be administered through [Company Name]'s HR director.