

PREVENTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT BUILDING A SAFER WORKPLACE TOGETHER SHRM GUAM BREAKFAST BRIEFING FEBRUARY 7, 2024

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Why Are Anti-Sexual Harassment Presentations So Popular?





Sexual Harassment Hurts Your Company

Hurts the Company Financially

- Absenteeism
- Reduced Performance
- Increased Turnover
- Increased Hiring/Training Costs
- •Legal Costs

Hurts the Company's Reputation

- •Negative Public Image •Loss of Customers
- •Bad Reputation as Employer •Hard to Recruit New Hires





Sexual Harassment Hurts All Employees

Everyone Loses (Not Just the Target)

- Absenteeism
- •Low Morale
- •Gossip
- •Antagonism
- •Tension and Anxiety
- Decreased Job Satisfaction
- Conflict Among TeamsDecreased Performance





Sexual Harassment Devastates the Victim

Emotional/Psychological Damage

- •Anxiety
- Depression
- Decreased Self-Confidence
- •Sadness
- PTSD

Physical Damage

- Migraines
- •Sleep Difficulties
- •Frequent Sickness
- Alcohol Abuse
- •Eating Disorders



Financial Trouble

- •Unpaid Leave
- •Lost Wages
- Unemployment



There are People Only You Can Reach





You May Know People Who Are Part of the Problem





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Awareness and Intolerance are Growing





Increase in Sexual Harassment Charges after #MeToo

Figure 1. Sexual Harassment Charge Receipts, FY 2014 – FY 2021



SOURCE: U.S. EEOC, Integrated Mission Systems, Charge Data, FY 2014 – FY 2021



Sexual Harassment Continues to Damage our Businesses . . .





... and Continues to Devastate our People





Do You Know Harassing Behavior When You See It?





Would You Stop It If You Did?





Key Points to be Covered In This Briefing

- * What is sexual harassment?
- * Employer liability and the role of managers & supervisors
- * Examples of anti-harassment policy
- * Creating a Harassment Resistant Workplace



What is Sexual Harassment?

- * IT'S UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX (aka Gender)
 - Sexual harassment in the workplace is an <u>unlawful employment</u> practice and <u>unlawful discrimination</u> under both Federal and Guam law.
 - * Violates Title VII of the Federal Civil Rights Act
 - * Violates Article II of the Guam Employment Relations Act



What is Sexual Harassment?

Definition of Sexual Harassment:

- **Unwelcome** sexual advances or requests for sexual favors
- Other verbal, written, electronic, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with his or her work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Included within the category of gender discrimination because sexual harassment relates to sex which relates to the victim's gender



What is Sexual Harassment?

THE TWO FORMS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT ARE:

- **Quid pro quo** (Latin for "this for that" or "something for something").
- Hostile work environment



Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment

- Commonly referred to as "supervisor" harassment.
- Tangible employment action against the victim.
- Involves monetary loss or change in job.



Examples of Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment:

- A manager/supervisor demands sexual favors in exchange for promotion or raise.
- A manager/supervisor disciplines or discharges an employee who ends a romantic relationship.
- A manager/supervisor changes job performance expectations after the subordinate refuses repeated requests for a date.
- A person in authority threatening to discredit a subordinate employee if they won't attend a party with them after work.



Hostile Work Environment Sexual Harassment

Speech or conduct that is **severe** or **pervasive** enough to create an abusive or **hostile work environment**.

• Example: Joe Cruz stares at Sarah Hernandez every day and intentionally brushes up against her even though he knows she's not interested in him.



Hostile Work Environment Sexual Harassment (cont.)

In addition to speech or conduct, covers explicit or suggestive items that are e-mailed, texted, or electronically provided or displayed in the workplace that interfere with job performance or that create an abusive or hostile work environment.

• Example: Maria Flores sends WhatsApps to her co-worker with sexually explicit jokes and pictures.



Who Can Commit Sexual Harassment?

- Supervisors
- Co-Workers
- Customers
- Vendors
- Clients
- Contractors doing work or business on the premises



Who Can Be a Victim of Sexual Harassment?

- Any individual or individuals targeted by the statements or actions.
- Bystanders or witnesses not directly targeted.



Employer Liability for Sexual Harassment

Remember – Employers are liable for supervisor misconduct

- The actions of supervisors are considered the actions of the employer
- An employer is **strictly liable** for harassment by supervisors if it results in a tangible employment action (such as termination or demotion).



Employer Liability for Sexual Harassment (cont.)

If there's no tangible employment action, an employer may establish an affirmative defense by showing:

- 1. The employer took reasonable steps to prevent and promptly correct sexual harassment in the workplace; <u>and</u>
- 2. The aggrieved employee unreasonably failed to take advantage of the employer's preventive or corrective measures

This known as the Faragher/Ellerth affirmative defense. If the employer can meet these two elements, the employer will not be liable

Examples of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment may take different forms

- Physical actions, e.g.:
 - Brushing up against a person's clothing, body, or hair.
 - Initiating unwanted contact like kissing, touching, tickling, or hugging.
 - Rubbing or touching someone sexually.
 - Exposing oneself.



Examples of Sexual Harassment (cont.)

- Verbal actions, e.g.:
 - Repeated requests for a dates to someone who has not returned interest.
 - Innuendos, jokes, stories, or comments of sexual nature.
 - Unwelcome flirtations.
 - Commenting on someone's body or appearance.
 - Calling someone "baby" or "sweetheart."



Examples of Sexual Harassment (cont.)

- Non-verbal actions, e.g.:
 - Staring or leering.
 - Blocking or cornering someone.
 - Sexually suggestive gestures.
 - Unwelcome gifts.
 - Sexually suggestive images in emails, texts or on social media.
 - Sexually suggestive virtual backgrounds in Zoom or Teams meetings.
 - Standing or sitting too close to someone.



Four Things That Matter the Most In Identifying Sexually Harassing Conduct

- 1. It's of a <u>sexual</u> nature
- 2. It's unwelcome
- 3. It affects the individual's employment

OR

4. It's <u>severe or pervasive</u> enough to create a hostile work environment.



Three Things That Don't Matter <u>at All</u> in Identifying Sexually Harassing Conduct

1. Intent of the harasser

Irrelevant. Sexual harassment may be unlawful even if not motivated by sexual desire

 <u>Gender</u> of the harasser and the victim Irrelevant. Men can harass women and/or other men; Women can harass men and/or other women.

3. Location of the harassment

Irrelevant. Sexual harassment can occur outside the workplace (*e.g.*, business trips, holiday parties, sporting events)



- HR Leads the Way By:
 - Making policy information readily available
 - All members of the team need to be familiar with the company's policies.
 - Responding swiftly
 - Hesitation and delay in responding only make things worse.
 - Ensuring proper notification and communication
 - HR should create a detailed report that summarizes interactions and results of investigations



- Take All Complaints Seriously. Supervisors should take all complaints or concerns of alleged or possible harassment seriously no matter how minor or who is involved.
- **Report Incidents to HR Immediately**. Supervisors should report all incidents to HR immediately so that a prompt investigation can occur.
- **Protect the Employees.** Supervisors should take steps right away to stabilize the situation and prevent retaliation or prohibited conduct from recurring while HR investigates.



- Supervisors should fully understand the harassment policy and reporting procedures.
- Supervisors should communicate policy and reporting procedures to **all employees** reporting to them or under their control.
- Employees should be directed to report complaints immediately to either the employee's direct supervisor or to HR.
- Supervisors should respond promptly and appropriately to complaints or questions about discrimination.



- Although confidentiality will be maintained to the fullest extent possible, supervisors should never guarantee confidentiality of reports or investigations about reports.
- Supervisors should maintain a respectful workplace and not permit inappropriate behavior to go unchecked. HR should be consulted when uncertain about appropriate activities or behavior.
- Supervisors should be models of good behavior and not participate in any harassing behaviors.



VERY IMPORTANT: Make sure there is **no retaliation.**

- Retaliation is when an employee suffers an <u>adverse</u> <u>employment action</u> (*e.g.*, demotion, reduction of hours, termination, less desirable job assignment) for engaging in a <u>protected activity</u> (*e.g.*, reporting harassment or cooperating in an investigation).
- Retaliation is prohibited by law. Supervisors should refrain from retaliating against any employee and take action to stop and prevent others on the team from engaging retaliation.


Possible Consequences to the Employer if Sexual Harassment Occurs

- <u>Compensation to the employee (e.g., back pay, emotional</u> distress damages, punitive damages)
- <u>Attorneys' fees</u> and costs.
- <u>Reinstatement</u> if the employee was terminated or demoted.
- <u>Corrective actions</u> (*e.g.*, increased training, revised reporting policies, independent monitor) if required by a court or the EEOC.



Recent Examples of Bad Consequences to Employers for Failing to Protect Employees

McDonald's Franchisee in NV/AZ/CA (\$2M) January 2023 – EEOC filed action against a McDonald's franchisee for knowingly allowing sexual harassment of young teenage employees by supervisors, managers, and co-workers to continue unabated for 6 years.

- Supervisors, managers, and co-workers engaged in frequent unwanted touching, offensive comments, unwelcome sexual advances, and intimidation, mainly directed at teenage workers.
- * Working conditions intolerable and workers forced to quit.
- McDonald's required to pay \$2M, implement extensive antidiscrimination training, revise their reporting policies, and hire an independent EEO monitor to oversee compliance.



Recent Examples of Bad Consequences to Employers for Failing to Protect Employees

Chipotle (\$400K) – EEOC action in March 2022 for failing to protect young female employees from 2 co-workers who sexually harassed them at 2 different Chipotle locations in Washington State.

- * A manager not involved in the harassment alerted the restaurant general manager that the 29-year-old worker was pursuing an inappropriate relationship with a 17-year-old employee.
- * The general manager didn't conduct an investigation but advised the worker that she might be fired for a relationship with a service manager and kept scheduling them for closing shifts together.
- * The service manager at different location sexually assaulted a teen worker while closing the store and would trap female workers in the walk-in refrigerator and make inappropriate sexual comments and requests.
- Chipotle required to pay \$400K, implement companywide training, and retain an independent consultant to help develop anti-harassment policies and procedures



Other Recent Sexual Harassment Cases

 Activision Blizzard (\$18M Settlement). Video game giant subjected employees to severe sexual harassment and pregnancy discrimination and engaged in retaliation against employees who complained.

* Second largest EEOC sexual harassment settlement ever

* Laughlin River Lodge Hotel & Casino (New EEOC Lawsuit). Owner and operator of a chain of Nevada hotels and casinos failed to prevent and correct ongoing sexual harassment and retaliation. Harassers and victims were both men and women.



Scenario 1

Lori's coworker Rob has just been through a divorce. He drops comments on a few occasions that he is lonely and needs to find a new girlfriend. Lori and Rob have been friendly in the past and have gone out to lunch together many times. Rob asks Lori to go on a date with him – dinner and a movie. Lori likes Rob and agrees to go out with him. She enjoys her date with Rob but decides that a relationship is not a good idea. She thanks Rob for a nice time, but explains that she does not want to have a relationship with him. Rob waits two weeks and then asks her out again. She refuses again.

QUESTION 1:

• Did Rob sexually harass Lori?



Answer to Question 1. Is It Sexual Harassment?

- Probably not.
- * Rob's initial comments about looking for a girlfriend and asking Lori, a coworker, for a date were not sexual harassment. Even if Lori had turned him down for that first date, Rob had done nothing wrong by asking and making occasional comments that were not sexually explicit about his personal life.
- After Lori told him she doesn't want a relationship, Rob asking for another date is pushing it a little but still probably not sexual harassment because it's not severe and probably also not pervasive.



After Lori refused Rob's request for a second date, he still keeps asking her to go out with him, so Lori complains to her supervisor, and the supervisor (as required) reports her complaint to HR. Rob is questioned about his behavior, and he apologizes. HR instructs him to stop. Rob stops for a while but then starts leaving little gifts for Lori on her desk with accompanying love notes. The love notes are not overtly offensive, but Rob's behavior is starting to make Lori nervous.

QUESTION 2:

• Did Rob sexually harass Lori?



Answer to Question 2. Is It Sexual Harassment?

* Yes.

- * Rob's continued conduct does amount to legally actionable harassment of Lori. His actions are unwelcome and pervasive. Lori should again report his behavior to HR. She is entitled to have effective assistance from HR in getting Rob to stop his inappropriate workplace behavior.
- * What Should HR Do? Because Rob returned to pestering Lori after being told to stop, he should be subject to serious disciplinary action.
 - * E.g., Suspension or termination and/or assignment to a department away from Lori



Scenario 2

Karla has noticed that her new boss, Jill, leans extremely close to her when they are going over the reports that she prepares. She touches her hand or shoulder frequently as they discuss work. Karla tries to move away from her in these situations, but she doesn't seem to get the message.

QUESTION 1:

Did Jill sexually harass Karla?



Answer to Question 1. Is It Sexual Harassment?

- * Maybe.
- * It's unclear at this point whether Karla's actions in moving away from Jill conveyed the message to Jill that Karla is uncomfortable with Jill touching her. If it should be obvious to Jill based on Karla's reaction that Jill's behavior is unwelcome, and if Jill still repeatedly does it, then Jill's conduct could be considered pervasive and severe and legally actionable harassment.
- * Karla has options. She can tell Jill to please back off because her closeness and touching is making her uncomfortable or she can complain to her supervisor or HR, who will speak with Jill.



Before Karla gets around to complaining, Jill brushes up against her back in the conference room before a meeting. Karla is now getting really annoyed but puts off doing anything about it. Later Jill "traps" Karla in her office after they finish discussing work by standing between her and the door of the small office. Karla doesn't know what to do, so she moves past her to get out. As she does so, Jill runs her hand across Karla's butt.

QUESTION 2:

Did Jill sexually harass Karla?



Answer to Question 2. Is It Sexual Harassment?

- * Yes.
- * Jill is now engaged in a pattern of escalating behavior. It has now become pervasive and her actions in brushing up against Karla and running her hand across her butt would be considered severe.
- * Even before being trapped in Jill's office, Karla should have reported all of the behavior she had experienced that made her uncomfortable.
- * What should HR Do? Any type of sexual touching is very serious. Jill should receive formal discipline, possibly including termination.



Scenario 3

Tina is hoping for a promotion to a position that she knows will become vacant soon. She knows that her boss, Brian, will be involved in decided who will be promoted. She tells Brian that she will be applying for the position, and that she is very interested in it. Brian says, "We'll see. There will be a lot of others interested in the position."



A week later, Tina and Brian travel together on company business, including an overnight hotel stay. Over dinner, Brian tells Tina that he hopes he will be able to promote her, because he has always really enjoyed working with her. He tells her that some other candidates "look better on paper" but that she is the one he wants. He tells her that he can pull some strings to get her into the job and Tina thanks Brian. Later Brian suggests that they go to his hotel room for "drinks and some relaxation." Tina declines his "offer." QUESTION 1:

Did Brian sexually harass Tina?



Answer to Question 1. Is It Sexual Harassment?

- * Maybe.
- * Brian's behavior, at this point, may or may not constitute quid pro quo harassment. Brian made no threat that if Tina refuses his advances he will handle her promotion any differently. But his offer to "pull some strings" followed by a request that they go to his hotel room for drinks and relaxation might be considered potentially coercive.
- * Even if not yet quid pro quo harassment, if Brian continues his advances, this could create a hostile work environment for Tina for which the employer could still be liable because Brian is her supervisor.



After they return from the trip, Tina asks Brian if he knows when the job will be posted so that she can apply. He says that he is not sure, but there is still time for her to "make it worth his while" to pull strings for her. He then asks, "How about going out to dinner this Friday and then coming over to my place?"

QUESTION 2.

Did Brian sexually harass Tina?



Answer to Question 2. Is It Sexual Harassment?

* Yes.

- * It is now evident that Brian has engaged in quid pro quo sexual harassment by offering to help Tina with the promotion in exchange for sexual favors.
- * What should HR do? The employer is now exposed to potential strict liability for Brian's actions if the harassment results in a tangible employment action. If HR becomes aware of this, Brian should be seriously disciplined, including possibly terminated, and he should be excluded from involvement in the decision on the promotion Tina is applying for.



Scenario 4

Melanie transfers to a new location with her employer. Her supervisor, Kevin, is friendly and helps her get familiar with her new job duties. After a few days, when no one else is around, Kevin comes over to Melanie's work area to chat. Kevin talks about what he did last night, which was go to a strip club. Melanie is shocked that Kevin would bring up such a topic in the workplace and says nothing in response. Kevin continues talking and says that all women in the office are so unattractive that he needs to get out and "see some hot chicks" once in a while. He tells Melanie he is glad she joined the staff because, unlike the others, she is "easy on the eyes." Melanie feels very offended and demeaned that she and the other women in her workplace are being evaluated on their looks by their supervisor. **QUESTION 1:**



Did Kevin sexually harass Melanie?

Answer to Question 1. Is It Sexual Harassment?

- * Probably yes.
- * Kevin has made sexually explicit statements to Melanie, which are derogatory and demeaning to Melanie and her female coworkers.
- Simply bringing up the visit to the strip club is inappropriate in the workplace, especially by a supervisor, and it would be appropriate for Melanie to report this conduct.
- * What should HR do? Even this one-time comment about going to a strip club is inappropriate and potentially offensive behavior and HR should tell Kevin to stop it immediately. The employer should consider removing Kevin from his supervisory role.



Sample: Sexual Harassment Policy

- **Objective**. The objective of this policy is to define workplace sexual harassment and to outline procedures for filing complaints, investigating sexual harassment claims and issuing appropriate disciplinary measures in the case of violations.
- Scope. This policy applies to all employees of [COMPANY NAME] at all locations. All workers, at every level, will be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge, for any violation of this policy. Employees are prohibited from harassing others both on and off the employer premises and during or outside of work hours.
- **Defining Sexual Harassment**. Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that is persistent or offensive and interferes with an employee's job performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.



• Examples of Prohibited Conduct

- Though sexual harassment encompasses a wide range of conduct, some examples of specifically prohibited conduct including 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 [COMPANY NAME]'s employees.
- Retaliation for sexual harassment complaints.



Responding to Conduct in Violation of Policy

* **Employees.** If an employee feels that he or she is being subjected to sexual harassment he or she may immediately inform the harasser that the conduct is unwelcome and needs to stop. 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 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.



* **Managers and Supervisors.** Managers and supervisors must deal expeditiously and fairly when they have any knowledge 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 seriously no matter how minor or who is involved.
- Report all incidents to HR immediately 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.



Human Resources.

• The HR director will determine if an in-house investigation will be conducted or if a third party will be contracted to complete the investigation. All complaints involving senior management at the vice-president level or above will be handled by an external third party.

Complaint Resolution Procedures

• Complaints should be submitted as soon as possible after an incident has occurred, preferably in writing. To ensure the prompt and thorough investigation of a sexual harassment complaint, the complainant should provide as much detailed information as is possible.



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 complaints and investigations are treated confidentially to the extent possible and information is disclosed strictly on a need-to-know basis. The identity of the complainant is usually revealed to the parties involved during the investigation and the HR director takes adequate steps to ensure that the complainant is protected from retaliation during and after the investigation. All information pertaining to a sexual harassment complaint or investigation is maintained in secure files within the HR department.



Sample: Romance in the Workplace Policy

Employers can prohibit workplace romance OR allow it with some conditions.

- EXAMPLES:
 - <u>**Prohibited</u>**. Romantic or dating relationships between employees are prohibited.</u>

OR

 Allowed with Conditions. [COMPANY NAME] strongly discourages romantic or sexual relationships between a manager or other supervisory employee and an employee who reports directly or indirectly to that person, because such relationships tend to create compromising conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts.



Sample: Romance in the Workplace Policy (cont.)

- If any employee of [COMPANY NAME] enters into a consensual relationship that is romantic or sexual in nature with an employee who reports directly or indirectly to that employee, or if one of the parties is in a supervisory capacity in the same department in which the other party works, the parties must notify the HR director or other appropriate corporate officer.
- [COMPANY NAME] will review the situation with human resources in light of all the facts (reporting relationship between the parties, effect on co-workers, job titles of the parties, etc.) and will determine whether one or both parties need to be moved to another job or department.



- * Focus on Civility
- * Encourage Reporting
- * Bystander Intervention



* Focus on Civility

- * Make a Commitment to Mutual Respect part of your company's policy.
- * Make reporting inappropriate conduct everyone's duty.
- Require employees at all levels to follow a higher code of conduct than just not violating the laws harassment and discrimination.
- * Pay attention to the workplace to make sure no one ever feels disrespected.



* Encourage Reporting

- Offer multiple ways to file a complaint
- Give numerous people within the company responsibility for receiving complaints
- Make it clear to your team that harassers are not automatically fired
- Consider other ways to make people feel safe in reporting harassment (*e.g.*, "information escrow")



- <u>5</u> D's of Bystander Intervention
 - 1. **Distract** (indirect approach to de-escalate)
 - 2. Delegate (get help from someone with authority)
 - **3. Document** (record the incident if safe to do so)
 - 4. **Delay** (check in with the person sometime after its over)
 - **5. Direct** (intervene directly if safe to do so)

Source: righttobe.org 2022.



Bystander Intervention

•Start a conversation (with the victim) •Cause a commotion

•Get in the way





Bystander Intervention

Talk to the harasser later

Talk to other bystanders later

Talk to the victim later





•Bystander Intervention

Start a conversation (with the harasser)
Ask the victim if she's okay

Assess your safety first







Visit the SHRM Guam Chaper website at https://www.guam.shrm.org to become a SHRM member

A Wealth of Valuable Guidance regarding Prevention of Sexual Harassment and sample Workplace Policies is Available on the SHRM Website at the following link: <u>https://www.shrm.org</u>



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THANK YOU!









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