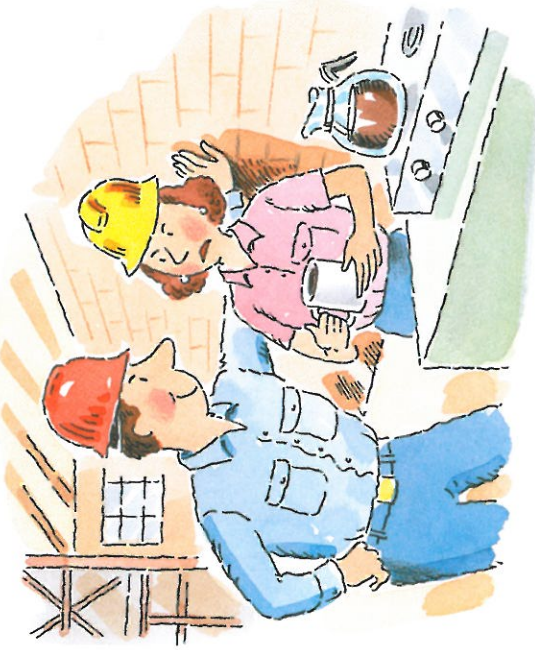


What Is Sexual Harassment?

Unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature is known as sexual harassment. This type of harassment may create unpleasant working conditions or make sexual favors the basis for employment. Sexual harassment is more than just bad manners or unacceptable work behavior. Sexual harassment is against the law.



Two Types of Harassment

Sexual harassment falls into two categories: "hostile environment" and "quid pro quo."

■ **A hostile environment** results from ongoing behavior that's offensive, such as an employee blocking a coworker's path or making sexual comments.

■ **Quid-pro-quo** (this-for-that) harassment occurs when an employer or supervisor offers an employee a job, promotion, or benefit in exchange for sexual favors.



One instance of quid-pro-quo harassment is enough to take legal action.

Recognizing Harassment

Sexual harassment may be verbal, visual, or physical. Although it is often an intentional abuse of power, harassment may simply be due to poor communication skills or insensitive behavior. It doesn't matter where harassment occurs. Unwelcome sexual behavior remains unwelcome whether it's at work or offsite.

Verbal

Verbal harassment is spoken. It includes unwanted pressure for dates, sexually oriented comments, and jokes based on gender, such as linking behavior with PMS or testosterone. Catcalls and whistles are also forms of verbal harassment.



Visual

Visual harassment is based on materials displayed in the workplace. This includes calendars, posters, and computer software showing men or women in states of undress. Behaviors such as sexual gestures and leering are also visual harassment.



Physical

Physical harassment involves invasion of personal space. It includes cornering, leaning over, brushing against, touching, or pinching a coworker. Sexual assault and rape are also forms of physical harassment.



How You're Affected

By infringing on the work relationship, sexual harassment denies coworkers the mutual respect needed for a healthy workplace. If you've experienced sexual harassment, you may feel violated or intimidated. You may also worry that your job or career will be in jeopardy if you speak out.

Personal Dignity

Is the victim at fault? No. But after experiencing sexual harassment, a person's self-worth may be shaken. Many victims try to avoid future incidents by staying away from the harasser or by changing the way they dress. If harassment continues, victims may become anxious, fearful, or angry. Left unresolved, these emotions may cause headaches, stomach and sleep problems, and depression.



Job Performance

Those who experience sexual harassment in the workplace are likely to be less focused and less productive than usual. In an attempt to avoid the harasser, they may be late to or absent from work more often. Other employees are also affected. Those who witness or hear about the harassment may feel angry, frustrated, or even confused. Conflict among employees may increase.

Innocent but Unwelcome?

The *impact* your behavior has on others determines whether or not it is sexual harassment. You may unknowingly harass another employee, depending on how that person interprets your actions. With this in mind, ask yourself the questions below.



- ☐ Do I make sexual jokes or talk about sexual situations when others may overhear?
- ☐ Do I ask my coworkers about their sex lives?
- ☐ Do I force my attentions on a coworker, perhaps by repeatedly asking for a date?
- ☐ Do I have cartoons, photographs, or other materials in my workspace that might be considered sexually offensive?
- ☐ Do I invade other people's space by standing too close or touching them during conversation?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you may need to change your behavior. As a general rule, if a behavior *might* be unacceptable in the workplace, don't do it.

Take the Next Step

Once you understand what sexual harassment is, you can take action to stop it if it occurs. If you're being sexually harassed, don't be afraid to speak out. Confront the harasser if you can. Make it clear that his or her behavior is not welcome and that you want it to stop. If you can't confront the harasser or if the harassment continues, report it to management, your EAP, or a human resources representative.



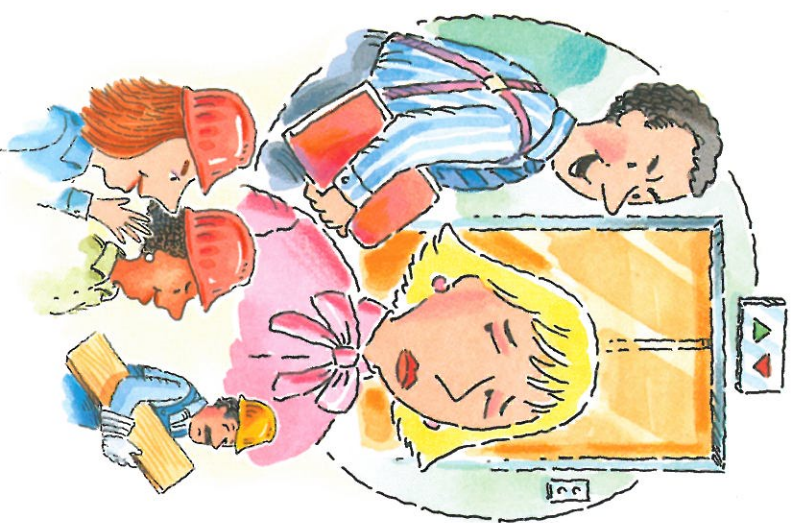
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Recognizing Sexual Harassment



You hear a sexual comment and laughter as you walk by. Or, maybe you're faced with a long, lingering stare that never meets your eyes—never goes above your shoulders, in fact. Is this sexual harassment? By defining and describing sexual harassment, this brochure can help you recognize harassment's many forms. Along with your employer's policies, this brochure can also help you stop sexual harassment in the workplace.