



Patty Clark
HR Services Manager

Sexual Harassment In The Workplace

Ways to prevent and eliminate it

In response to the many cases of sexual harassment being brought to light in the media it is a great time to review your company's harassment policy, reporting procedures, and schedule harassment training geared towards your organization and its employees.

The U.S. Equal Opportunity Employment Commission (EEOC) defines workplace sexual harassment as unwelcome sexual advances or conduct of a sexual nature which unreasonably interferes with the performance of a person's job or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment can occur at any level in the workplace, by a supervisor on the shop floor or by a non-employee while visiting the office. For harassment to occur, the conduct must be unwelcomed, the harasser may be a male or a female, and the victim can be of either gender. The victim should tell the harasser directly that the conduct is unwelcome and to stop. It is important for an employer to have a complaint process or a grievance system and to take every complaint seriously, taking immediate and appropriate action. When a complaint is filed with the EEOC the investigation will take a look at the entire scenario and a determination will be made on a case by case basis. They will look at the nature of the sexual advances and the context in which the alleged incident occurred.

The best way to eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace is prevention, and the best way to do that is to communicate that sexual harassment will not be tolerated and provide harassment training to all employees.

According to the Report of the Co-Chairs of EEOC's Select Task Force on the Study of Harassment in the Workplace there are five main principles identified that have proven effective in preventing and addressing harassment. Those principles are a committed and engaged leadership team, consistent and demonstrated accountability, strong and comprehensive harassment policies, trusted and accessible complaint procedures, and regular, interactive training tailored to the audience and the organization.

Leadership and Accountability: It is important to have senior leaders committed to creating and maintaining a workplace in which harassment is not tolerated. They can do this by making it clear that harassment is not allowed through an easy to understand and clearly communicated policy, providing money and time for training, and recognizing and minimizing risk factors where harassment could occur.

Comprehensive and Effective Harassment Policy: An essential part of an effective prevention strategy is to have a clear and comprehensive policy and to communicate to all employees on a regular basis. It should be easy to understand; be very clear that it applies to all employees, applicants, clients etc.; describe that all complaints will be taken seriously by the employer; and outline any and all steps that will take place.

Effective and Accessible Harassment Complaint System: The complaint system should clearly welcome questions, concerns, and complaints; state that the employer will treat all involved with respect; and outline consequences for harassment and any related actions.

Effective Harassment Training: The involvement of leadership, the best and effective policy, as well as an effective and accessible harassment complaint system are only effective if the employees know they are available. It is important to train all employees so the entire workplace is aware of the rules, policies, procedures, expectations, and consequences of any type of harassment – sexual, or even that based on race, religion, or age, to name a few.

A detailed description of each of the five core principles as well as a checklist for each to help employers prevent and respond to workplace harassment is available at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission website at <https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/publications/>.

Hot Off The Line

Q - We are currently in the middle of open enrollment for healthcare. I was wondering if I can offer one employee a flat amount of money to enroll in healthcare at the spouse's employer and decline it at ours?

A - Yes, but only if you will be offering that flat amount to all other employees at your company to do the same.

HR Stats & Facts

- According to a 2017 survey of approximately 3,227 HR Professionals, just over 50% provide coverage for domestic partners, regardless of whether they are the same or opposite sex. *Source: 2017 Employee Benefits Survey – SHRM*
- 83% of HR Leaders said, “employee experience” is either important or very important to their organization's success, and 56% are investing more in training, 51% are improving their work space, and 47% are giving more rewards. *Source: The Future Workplace and Beyond.com study entitled “The Active Job Seeker Dilemma”. Source: Forbes.com – The Employee Experience Is The Future Of Work.*

DID YOU KNOW?

If you are a first-tier government contractor with \$50,000 or more in federal government contracts and 50 or more employees at one location; or, a second-tier government contractor (supplies to a first-tier contractor) with \$50,000 or more in contracts and 50 or more employees at one location you are required to have an Affirmative Action Plan. MACNY can audit your plan, rewrite it, or create one for you as well as complete your Adverse Impact. If you are interested in receiving a quote or would like additional information please contact Patty Clark, HR Services Manager at 315-474-4201 x 10 or pclark@macny.org.

CPI

Wage/Clerical	October	September	Pt. Chg. (Mo.)	% Chg. (Mo.)	% Chg. (Yr.)
1967=100	716.6	717.7	-1.1	-0.2%	2.1%
1982-84=100	240.6	240.9	-0.4	-0.2%	2.1%
Urban					
1967=100	738.9	739.4	-0.5	-0.1%	2.0%
1982-84=100	246.7	246.8	-0.2	-0.1%	2.0%
Unemployment Rates					
October - Onondaga County: 4.4; Metropolitan Syracuse Area (MSA): 4.6					