



Women's empowerment against sexist harassment in public space  
Project Num: 2022-1-LT01-KA220-ADU-000086398



# Workplace Harassment



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“

"If you see harassment happening, speak up. Being harassed is terrible; having bystanders pretend they don't notice is infinitely worse"


- **Celeste Ng** -





# Introduction

Workplace harassment is defined as "engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome" and includes workplace sexual harassment





# 01

## What is the Workplace Harassment?







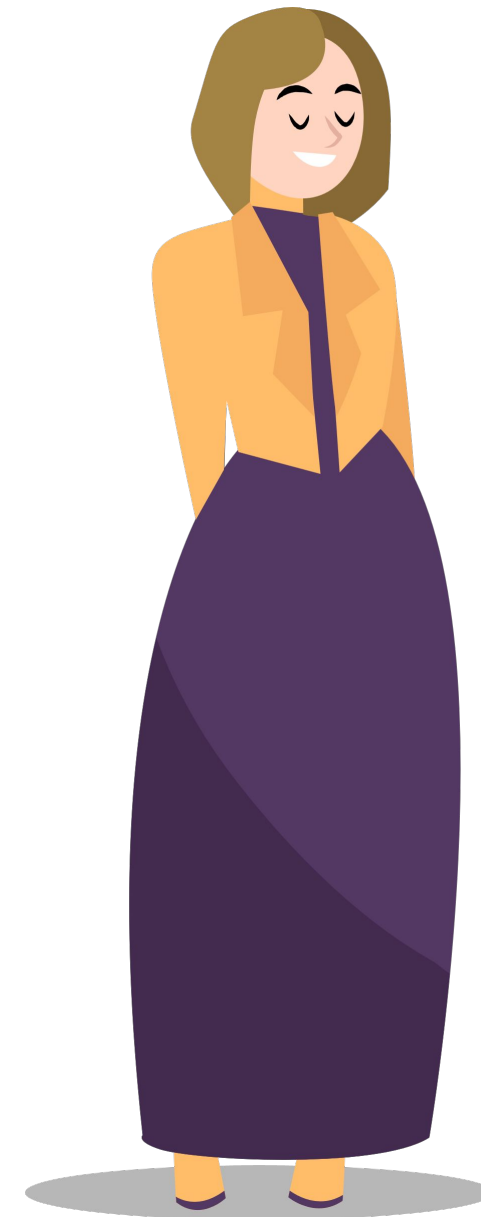
# Workplace Sexual Harassment

**Workplace sexual harassment** is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It can create a hostile work environment for the victim and is illegal under federal law.

Sexual harassment can target any demographic, regardless of age, race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or industry. Types of workplace sexual harassment:

**Hostile work environment sexual harassment**

**“Quid pro quo” sexual harassment**





# Types of Workplace Sexual Harassment:

## 1. Hostile work environment sexual harassment:

- 1) unwelcome sexually suggestive or demeaning comments, repeated and unwelcome requests for dates, offensive gestures, offensive touching, jokes or pranks, intimidating behaviors, or pornographic materials. This behavior is directed for gender status ( you are a woman, a man, or transgender).
- 2) if employer provides less favorable conditions of employment than to different-sex co-workers simply because of the gender status. This can include discriminatory hiring procedures, hours, wages, promotions, work schedules, work assignments, vacation or sick leave benefits, job evaluation, discipline, and termination.

## 2. “Quid pro quo” sexual harassment:

happens when a supervisor or other manager asks or demands sexual contact in return for employment benefits or promotions.



**54% - 81%**

**women claim to experience some level of  
workplace sexual harassment**

Source:  
[https://pasternaklaw.com/sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace-statistics/#:~:text=In%20fact%2C%20between%2054%25%20and,%25%20than%20women%20\(13%25\).](https://pasternaklaw.com/sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace-statistics/#:~:text=In%20fact%2C%20between%2054%25%20and,%25%20than%20women%20(13%25).)



# Workplace Harassment Statistics

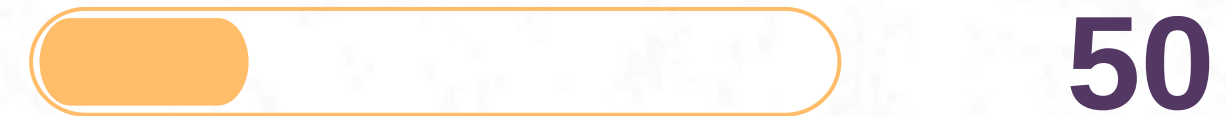


## Workers



Harassed workers choose not to file formal charges

## Reports



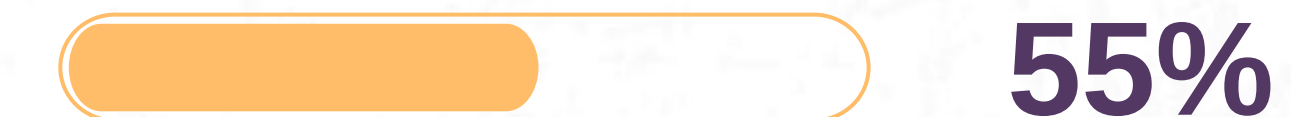
Among 310 reports of sexual harassment, only 50 resulted in arrests

## Women



Women have reported experiencing sexual harassment in the workplace

## Retaliation



Victims experience retaliation after speaking up or making a claim



# Workplace Harassment Statistics

## Disabled people



**7x**

People with intellectual disabilities are 7x more likely to be sexually assaulted

## Bisexual women



**46%**

Bisexual women have experienced workplace sexual harassment

## Transgender



**47%**

Transgender people experienced sexual assault

## Trauma



**31%**

Individuals who have been victims of rape develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)





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# 02 Impacts of Sexual Harassment

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# EMOTIONAL Impacts of Sexual Harassment



Sexual harassment creates negative consequences and harming not just the target but also bystanders who witness the behavior. *Bystander - a person who is standing near and watching something that is happening but is not taking part in it.*

## Victims

- ▲ **Emotional distress:** Sexual harassment can lead to a range of emotional problems, including anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), feelings of shame, humiliation, and anger.
- ▲ **Physical health:** The stress of harassment can manifest in physical symptoms like headaches, stomachaches, sleep problems, and changes in appetite.
- ▲ **Reduced self-esteem:** Victims may experience a decline in self-confidence and question their own abilities.
- ▲ **Work performance:** The hostile work environment can make it difficult to concentrate, be productive, and meet deadlines. This can lead to absenteeism and hinder career advancement.
- ▲ **Social withdrawal:** Victims may withdraw from social activities and relationships due to feelings of isolation and fear of judgment.

## Bystanders

- ▲ **Feeling helpless:** witnessing sexual harassment can make bystanders feel helpless and unsure of how to intervene or support the victim.
- ▲ **Fear of retaliation:** bystanders may fear retaliation from the perpetrator or even the company if they report the harassment.
- ▲ **Moral distress:** witnessing harassment can create a sense of moral ambiguity and distress, especially if the bystander doesn't intervene.
- ▲ **Reduced work satisfaction:** the overall work environment can become uncomfortable and tense, leading to decreased job satisfaction for  
The severity of the impact can vary depending on the nature and frequency of the harassment, the victim's support system, and the workplace culture.





# LEGAL Impacts of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment in the workplace can have serious legal ramifications for both the perpetrator and the employer. Here is the potential consequences:

## Employers

- ▲ **Financial compensation:** the employer may be liable for financial compensation to the victim, including lost wages, medical bills, and pain and suffering.
- ▲ **Fines:** Regulatory agencies may impose fines for violations of anti-discrimination laws.
- ▲ **Damaged reputation:** a sexual harassment lawsuit can damage the company's reputation and make it difficult to attract and retain qualified employees.
- ▲ **Increased costs:** legal fees, settlements, and potential turnover due to a hostile environment can be costly.
- ▲ **Government action:** the equal employment opportunity commission (EEOC) can investigate claims of sexual harassment and may require the employer to take steps to prevent future harassment, such as implementing anti-harassment training.

## Harassed employees

- ▲ **Lawsuit:** employees who are sexually harassed can file a lawsuit against their employer under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination based on sex. This can lead to financial compensation for emotional distress, lost wages, and punitive damages in severe cases.
- ▲ **Safer work environment:** by reporting the harassment, the employee can help ensure a safer work environment for themselves and others.
- ▲ **State laws:** many states have their own laws against sexual harassment that may provide additional protections for employees.

**Severity matters:** the severity of the consequences will depend on the facts of the case, such as whether the harassment was a single incident or a pattern of behaviour, and whether the employer took steps to address the harassment once they were aware of it.



# 03

## How to Prevent (Sexual) Harassment in the Workplace as a Manager





# The Do's and Don'ts for Handling Workplace Harassment

## Do

- ▲ **Clear policy:** have a clear anti-harassment policy in your handbook defining bullying and harassment.
- ▲ **Responsibilities:** outline employer and employee responsibilities regarding harassment.
- ▲ **Complaint process:** detail both informal and formal complaint procedures.
- ▲ **Communication:** clearly communicate the policy to all employees and make it readily available.
- ▲ **Regular reviews:** review and update the policy frequently to ensure compliance.
- ▲ **Train leaders:** equip managers and team leaders to understand and enforce the policy.



## Don't

- ▲ **Don't be passive:** do not sit back and do nothing when concerns are raised.
- ▲ **Follow the full process:** don't stand back until the issue is raised formally or in writing.
- ▲ **Take shortcuts:** make sure to follow the full process when dealing with raised concerns or formal complaints.



# Steps to Handle Workplace Harassment as a Manager:

## Take confidentially actions

create a safe environment for the worker who has made the complaint

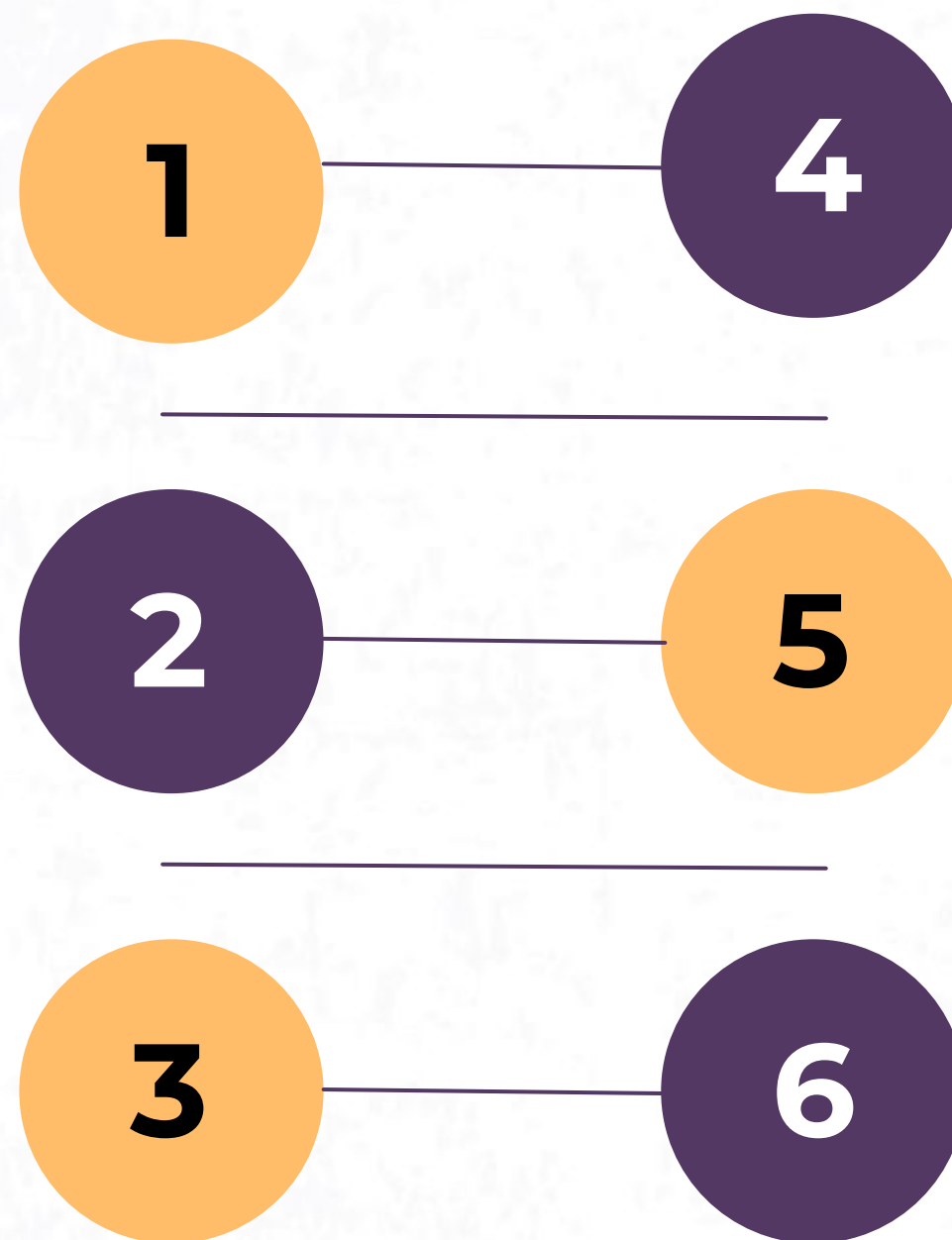
## Listen and believe

listen attentively and express empathy, believe their account and avoid making judgments

## Gather information

Ask clarifying questions to understand the nature and frequency of the harassment.

Take detailed notes, including dates, times ect.



## Review company policy:

Familiarize yourself with your company's anti-harassment policy and reporting procedures.

## Report the incident:

Follow the company's established procedures for reporting the harassment. This may involve HR or a designated compliance officer.

## Support and follow-up:

Offer support and resources to the victim after the incident.

Follow up to ensure the harassment has stopped and the victim feels safe





04

**Respectful Workplace:  
5Ds of Bystander  
Intervention**



# 5Ds of Bystander Intervention

The most important thing is to take some kind of action. The 5Ds of Bystander Intervention provide a framework for anyone to act when they witness sexual harassment.



# 5Ds: Direct, Distract, Delegate, Delay



## 1 - Direct

**Example:** you witness a colleague making inappropriate comments to another coworker. You can directly confront the perpetrator by saying, "Those comments were offensive. Please stop."

**Resources:** practice assertive communication skills. There are many online resources and communication workshops available.

## 2 - Distract

**Example:** you see someone following a coworker uncomfortably close. You can distract the perpetrator by asking them a question or interrupting the situation, "Hey, I need some help with this report. Can you give me a hand?"

**Resources:** think creatively and practice creating diversions beforehand. Role-playing exercises can be helpful.



## 3 - Delegate

**Example:** you witness a manager harassing a subordinate but don't feel comfortable intervening directly. You can delegate the responsibility by reporting the incident to HR or a trusted supervisor.

**Resources:** familiarize yourself with your company's sexual harassment reporting procedures and contact information for HR or relevant support personnel.

## 4 - Delay

**Example:** you overhear a harassing voicemail left for a coworker. You can't intervene at the moment, but you can delay the impact by notifying your coworker and offering support.

**Resources:** encourage open communication among colleagues. Let them know you're a safe person to talk to if they experience harassment.



# 5Ds: Document

## 5 - Document

**Example:** you witness a public incident of sexual harassment, like inappropriate gestures or touching. If it's safe, you can document the behaviour by taking notes or discreetly recording the incident (depending on local laws).

**Resources:** be aware of your local laws regarding recording conversations or taking photos/videos without consent. This information can be found online or by contacting your local legal aid organization.



## Before stepping in, try the ABC approach

**Assess for safety:** If you see someone in trouble, ask yourself if you can help safely in any way. Remember, your personal safety is a priority – never put yourself at risk.

**Be in a group:** It's safer to call out behaviour or intervene in a group. If this is not an option, report it to others who can act.

**Care for the victim.** Talk to the person who you think may need help. Ask them if they are OK



# Role-Play Scenarios to Practice Bystander Intervention Techniques

By practicing these role-play scenarios, you and your colleagues can become more comfortable and confident in intervening when you witness sexual harassment in the workplace.

## **ROLE-PLAY SCENARIO 1: Inappropriate Jokes**

**Characters:** You (the Bystander), Sarah (Target of Harassment), Mark (Perpetrator)

**Setting:** Break room at the office

**Scene:** Sarah is sitting alone at a table, eating lunch. Mark walks in and sits down across from her.

**Mark:** Hey Sarah, nice outfit! You look especially curvy today.  
(Sarah looks uncomfortable and avoids eye contact)

**Mark (cont.):** Come on, lighten up! Just making a friendly observation.

### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

**Practice the Direct Approach:** As the bystander, directly confront Mark's behaviour.

**Example:** "Mark, those comments are inappropriate. Sarah doesn't need to hear them. Please leave her alone."

**Switch roles:** after each scenario, have everyone switch roles so they can experience different perspectives.

**Debrief:** after each role-play, discuss what worked well and how the intervention could be improved.

**Focus on Safety:** remember, the safety of the target of harassment is the most important thing. If intervening directly feels unsafe, choose another approach, or delegate the responsibility.





## ROLE-PLAY SCENARIO 2: Unwanted Physical Touch

**Characters:** You (the Bystander), David (Target of Harassment), Lisa (Perpetrator)

**Setting:** Office hallway

**Scene:** David is walking down the hallway when Lisa, a coworker he barely knows, walks by and brushes her hand against his arm unnecessarily close. She winks at him and keeps walking. David looks flustered.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

**Practice the Distract Approach:** As the bystander, you see David looking uncomfortable. You can use distraction to allow him to move on.

**Example:** "Hey David, perfect timing! I need your help with a quick question about that report."

## ROLE-PLAY SCENARIO 3: Unwelcome Advances from a Superior

**Characters:** You (the Bystander), Emily (Target of Harassment), Mr. Jones (Perpetrator - Emily's Supervisor)

**Setting:** Office doorway (You overhear a conversation)

**Scene:** You're walking by Mr. Jones' office door and hear him say to Emily in a low voice, "You know that promotion depends on more than just your skills, right?"

### INSTRUCTIONS:

**Practice the Delegate Approach:** You can't intervene directly, but you can delegate the responsibility.

**Example:** (Later) "Emily, I overheard a bit of a strange conversation between you and Mr. Jones earlier. Is everything okay? If you ever need someone to talk to about work stuff, my door is always open."

**Example:** "Hey David, perfect timing! I need your help with a quick question about that report."





# Resources

- 1. About Workplace Harassment**  
<https://www.tal.sg/tafep/employment-practices/workplace-harassment/about>
- 2. Be an Active Bystander: Breaking the Silence**  
<https://www.breakingthesilence.cam.ac.uk/prevention-support/be-active-bystander>
- 3. Eye-Opening Sexual Harassment Statistics for 2023,**  
<https://training.safetyculture.com/statistics/sexual-harassment-statistics/>
- 4. How to Handle Workplace Harassment as a Manager: We Go Beyond HR**  
<https://wegobeyondhr.com/how-to-handle-workplace-harassment-as-a-manager/#:~:text=Here%20are%20some%20significant%20implications,Increased%20staff%20turnover>
- 5. Part III.0.1: Workplace Violence and Workplace Harassment: Government of Ontario**  
<https://www.ontario.ca/document/guide-occupational-health-and-safety-act/part-iii0i-workplace-violence-and-workplace-harassment#:~:text=Workplace%20harassment%20can%20include%20unwelcome,worker%20or%20group%20of%20workers.>
- 6. Sexual Harassment at Work: Legal Voice** <https://legalvoice.org/sexual-harassment-at-work/>
- 7. Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Statistics: Pasternak Law**  
<https://pasternaklaw.com/sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace-statistics/>
- 8. Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Statistics:**  
[https://pasternaklaw.com/sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace-statistics/#:~:text=In%20fact%2C%20between%2054%25%20and,%25%20than%20women%20\(13%25\).](https://pasternaklaw.com/sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace-statistics/#:~:text=In%20fact%2C%20between%2054%25%20and,%25%20than%20women%20(13%25).)
- 9. The 5Ds of Bystander Intervention: Right To Be**  
<https://righttobe.org/guides/bystander-intervention-training/>
- 10. The 6 Steps For Employers or Managers to Take After Receiving a Harassment Complaint: Knibbs Consulting**  
<https://www.knibbs.ca/investigations/the-6-steps-for-employers-or-managers-to-take-after-receiving-a-harassment-complaint>



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