

WOMEN HARASSMENT POLICY



National Productivity Organization
Ministry of Industries & Production, Government of Pakistan

Women Harassment Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to communicate NPO special emphasis on women protection throughout the organization so that harassment incidents can be prevented and compliance with “Protection against Harassment of Women at the

Work Place Act, 2010” can be achieved. This policy applies to and is mandatory for NPO and its projects employees’ also includes daily wagers /interns/third party etc.) affiliated with NPO or any of its projects. This policy provides an overview and explains the basic requirements that NPO employees shall follow to avoid the Harassment issues.

2. Introduction

NPO will not tolerate sexual harassment of any employee of NPO and its projects and is firmly committed to provide an environment free from such behaviors leading to sexual harassment. This Policy shall supersede all other terms, conditions, agreements and arrangements at NPO with respect to sexual harassment. The aim of this policy and its procedures is to prevent sexual harassment from taking place, and, where necessary, to act upon complaints of sexual harassment promptly, fairly, judiciously, and with due regard to confidentiality for all parties concerned.

3. Definition

Harassment is defined by section 2(h) of 2010 Act as “any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors or other verbal or written communication or physical conduct of a sexual nature or sexually demeaning attitudes, causing interference with work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, or the attempt to punish the complainant for refusal to comply to such a request or is made a condition for employment”.

4. Objective

NPO aims to prevent sexual harassment from taking place, and, where necessary, to act upon complaints of sexual harassment promptly, fairly, judiciously, and with due regard to confidentiality for all parties concerned.

5. Explanation

There are three significant manifestations of harassment in the work environment:

a. Abuse of authority

A demand by a person in authority, such as a supervisor, for sexual favors in order for the complainant to keep or obtain certain job benefits, be it a wage increase, a promotion, training opportunity, a transfer or the job itself.

b. Creating a hostile environment

Any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, abusive or offensive work environment.

The typical "hostile environment" claim, in general, requires finding of a pattern of offensive conduct, however, in cases where the harassment is particularly severe, such as in cases involving physical contact, a single offensive incident will constitute a violation.

c. Retaliation

The refusal to grant a sexual favor can result in retaliation, which may include limiting the employee's options for future promotions or training, distorting the evaluation reports, generating gossip against the employee or other ways of limiting access to his/her rights. Such behavior is also a part of the harassment.

6. Application of the Policy

1. Inquiry Committee

The inquiry committee comprising of the following officials will inquire the complaints on sexual harassments:

- Mr. Zahid Nawaz (Head Administration)
- Mrs. Noshaba Iftikhar (Assistant Manager, Special Initiatives Deptt:)
- Miss. Tahira Younis (Management Associate, Administration Deptt:)

In case a complaint is made against one of the members of the Inquiry Committee that member should be replaced by another for that particular case. The CEO may also alter the composition of the Inquiry Committee on a case to case basis to address the valid objections of any of the parties involved in the inquiry.

2. Powers of the Inquiry Committee

The inquiry committee will have the authority to:

- a) Summon and enforce attendance of any person and inquire him regarding the matter
- b) Require the discovery and production of any document/evidence relevant to the complaint
- c) The Inquiry Committee may issue interim no-contact or other orders between the complainant and the alleged accused. The committee can also decide to send the accused on leave, or suspend the accused in accordance with the applicable procedures for dealing with the cases of misconduct, if required

- d) The Inquiry Committee may recommend for appropriate action against the complainant if allegations level led against the accused are found to be false and made with mala fide intentions.
- e) Decisions of the Competent Authority on the recommendations of the inquiry committee shall be binding and cannot be appealed with in NPO.
- f) The Inquiry Committee has the right to acquire any relevant evidence to further their understanding of the case and the relevant parties, witnesses, and administration are required to provide them with this documentation and/or evidence to facilitate the investigation.

3. Complaint Proceedings

The complaints related to sexual harassment are required to be filed to the inquiry committee.

- a) The complaint should be made to the Inquiry Committee within fifteen (15) days of the alleged harassment.
- b) The complaint of sexual harassment can be filed against any employee of NPO and its projects.
- c) The complainant can be anyone who is aggrieved by the conduct of any NPO when harassment takes place on NPO premises or in the context of NPO/projects related activities on any other premises.
- d) The Inquiry Committee will hear statements from the complainant, accused and the witnesses (as required) and examine any other documents and/or evidence as presented by the relevant parties.
- e) The statements and other evidence acquired in the inquiry process shall be considered as confidential.
- f) Both parties, the complainant and the accused, shall have the right to be accompanied by a colleague within NPO.
- g) The Inquiry Committee shall ensure that the accused shall in no case create any hostile environment for the complainant to pressurize/influence the complainant from freely pursuing the complaint.
- h) The Inquiry Committee shall submit its findings, recommendations and final decisions to the Competent Authority within thirty (30) days of the initiation of the inquiry. If the Inquiry Committee finds accused to be guilty it shall recommend to the Competent Authority for imposing one or more of the following penalties:

a. Minor penalties:

- i. censure;
- ii. withholding, for a specific period, promotion or increment;
- iii. stoppage, for a specific period, at an efficiency bar in the time-scale, otherwise than for unfitness to cross such bar;
- iv. recovery of the compensation payable to the complainant from pay or any other source of the accused;

b. Major penalties:

- i. reduction to a lower post or time-scale, or to a lower stage in a time-scale;
 - ii. compulsory retirement;
 - iii. removal from service; dismissal from service and
 - iv. Fine. A part of the fine can be used as compensation for the complainant. In case of the owner, the fine shall be payable to the complainant.
- i) To ensure the fair implementation of the policy; the competent authority/inquiry committee or relevant officials may seek further guidance from Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act-2010.

4. Proceedings on False Complaint

In case the allegation of harassment found to be false by the inquiry committee through its thorough findings; the competent authority shall impose penalty on the complainant which may lead to termination of services depending upon the severity of the allegation.

5. Appeal against Complaint Proceedings

Any of the party, who is not satisfied from the decision of the competent authority or from the proceedings on the complaint, has the right to appeal the same to HR Committee of the BOD.