

HARASSMENT AT WORKPLACE

1. INTRODUCTION

Harassment constitutes a prohibited personnel practice including but not limited to intimidation, oppression, exploitation, and discrimination, which serves to undermine the integrity of employee relations, debilitates and damages morale, creates an unsafe or stressed work environment and interferes with productivity of the organization. PSW is committed to providing a workplace safe of any harassment based on sex, age, caste, ethnic background, religious beliefs, sect, disability, medical condition, marital status caring and job responsibilities.

This policy applies to all employees of PSW at all levels of all genders and provides all employees who are affected by harassment in any form a means of redress. PSW has a zero-tolerance policy against all sorts of harassment and gender inequality and fully endorses all terms stipulated in "**The Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010**". Those who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, which can include dismissal or termination from PSW employment as well as subsequent court proceedings under the aforementioned Act.

2. POLICY

2.1. WORKPLACE HARASSMENT

- a) Harassment is any improper and unwelcome conduct that has, or that might be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another.
- b) Workplace harassment is a prohibited form of discrimination under this policy and can include harassment based on an individual's sex, race, religion/sect, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, etc.
- c) Such harassment can take many forms and includes unwelcome verbal or physical conduct directed against a fellow employee or third party, hate literature, making fun of or defaming a member of a particular religion, race, sex, status etc.
- d) This can be done through use of inappropriate stereotypes, telling offensive jokes, use of ethnic slurs or taking other actions which have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.
- e) Workplace harassment, if of a trivial nature, will follow the same procedure as with regular grievances and complaints that is, formal or informal. However, if they are of a serious nature, involving physical harm, extortion, or extreme mental duress they will undergo proceedings under procedure followed by sexual harassment cases.
- f) In all instances, the harassment will be reported to Human Resource Department which will determine seriousness of the case and recommend further action accordingly. The matter may be discussed in confidence with the other members of Sexual Harassment Committee.

- g) However, the mere expression of disagreement, admonishment, criticism, or similar action regarding work performance, conduct or related issues within a supervisory relationship shall not normally be considered harassment within the meaning of this policy.

2.2. ABUSE OF AUTHORITY

- a) The abuse of authority is the improper use of a position of influence, power, or authority by an employee against another person or a group thereof.
- b) This is particularly serious when the person in question uses his or her influence, power, or authority to arbitrarily influence the career or employment conditions (including, but not limited to, appointment, assignment, contract renewal, performance evaluation or promotion) of another staff member or non-staff personnel.
- c) Abuse of authority can include a one-time incident or a series of incidents. It may also consist of conduct that creates a hostile or offensive work environment, which includes, but is not limited to, the use of intimidation, threats, extortion or coercion.

2.3. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

- a) Sexual harassment is an attempt to make advances, requests and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature aimed at securing sexual favours against the will of the opposite or similar sex at the work place. The following facts, conditions and circumstances constitute, but not limited to sexual harassment:
- b) Sexual harassment is a specific form of workplace harassment which includes unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors where submission or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual.
- c) Sexual Harassment is understood as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favor, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behavior of a sexual nature (including pornography, sexually colored remarks) that has or that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offense or humiliation to another.
- d) Sexual harassment may occur when it interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or when it creates an intimidating, /,mnb vhostile or offensive environment.
- e) Sexual harassment normally implies a series of incidents. However, a one-time incident could fall within the definition of sexual harassment if it has an unambiguously offensive sexual character. Both male and female staff members can be either the injured party or the offender.

3. EVIDENCE & INVESTIGATION

- a) Any employee who believes themselves to be subject to any form of harassment, bullying or witnesses others being subjected to such harassment/bullying are encouraged to report the incident verbally or through writing to their immediate supervisor, Head of Department, Human Resource Department or directly to the Chief Executive Officer

(CEO). All employees are expected to cooperate in subsequent investigation. Failure to cooperate may result in disciplinary action including termination from service.

- b) Detailed account of the complainant and the accused form a part of the evidence.
- c) Witness statements including any explanation are considered part of the evidence.
- d) Statements of persons with whom the complainant might have discussed the incident, statements of persons from whom advice may have informally been sought, should be considered as evidence.
- e) Any other document, audio or video records can be submitted. Expert technical advice can be sought for such submissions.
- f) Evidence for sexual harassment is often difficult to produce however PSW takes all such incidents seriously and encourages all employees to report offensive behavior immediately to someone they trust and to launch a formal complaint with the Human Resource Department as soon as possible. Delay in filing of a formal complaint, however, will not affect the merits of the case or the subsequent procedure.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1. DEALING WITH SEXUAL HARASSMENT

- a) For sexual harassment issues, employees have the right to confidentiality which means they need not approach their supervisor and should report the issue straight to the HOD HR.
- b) A four (4) member committee shall be constituted by the CEO, PSW to deal with sexual harassment complaints. Keeping in view the gender-neutral practice it is preferred to have two (2) female members in the committee, however presence of at least one (1) female member is mandatory. The Committee will report to CEO, PSW.
- c) In cases where the accused are CEO or others members at C-level, the BOD and the chairman of the Board will assess the case and a decision will be made.
- d) On receipt of the complaint, The HOD HR will inquire into the merits of the case by conducting a fact finding exercise in a strictly confidential manner. In such cases, the integrity and reputation of an employee is most important.
- e) If there is a misunderstanding and the act was in fact not sexual in nature, an informal mediation will be carried out there and then by mutual consent, the issue will be resolved. The process will be carried out by HOD HR and one senior member of the Management nominated by the CEO.
- f) However, if the affected person persists with their version of events and brief inquiry into matters yields the same, the formal procedure will be initiated and a written complaint will be filed to HOD HR in order to take up the matter to the Committee.
- g) Upon receiving a formal complaint, the Committee shall ask the complainant to prepare a detailed statement of incidents in case the written complaint is not detailed. A statement of allegations will be drawn by the Committee and sent to the accused.

- h) The accused will be asked to prepare a response to the statement of allegations and submit to the Committee within a specified time.
- i) The statements and other evidence(s) acquired in the inquiry process will be treated as confidential materials.
- j) The Committee will organize verbal hearings with the complainant and the accused and statements will be recorded.
- k) Upon conclusion of the inquiry the report would be submitted to the CEO or the BoD as the case maybe with recommendations for further necessary action(s).
- l) The members of the committee shall sign a declaration stating that the proceedings and assessments of the committee shall be completely un-biased and that no external influence can hamper their assessment and decisions.

5. Responsibility of the Supervisors

All supervisors and Heads of Departments must make every effort to create and promote a safe and healthy environment for all employees and visitors. Supervisors are expected to take all allegations of harassment, including sexual harassment, seriously and report the matter to the appropriate authority.

DECLARATION BY THE MEMBERS OF HARRASMENT COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE

DECLARATION BY THE MEMBERS OF HARRASMENT COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE THAT THE PROCEEDINGS AND ASSESMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE SHALL BE COMPLETELY UN-BIASED AND THAT NO EXTERNAL INFLUENCE CAN HAMPER THEIR ASSESMENT AND DECISIONS

I, _____ being a member of the Harassment Complaints Committee of PAKISTAN SINGLE WINDOW, do hereby declare that I shall not be biased in the proceedings and assessments that I undertake and shall abide by all the applicable laws and the Harassment at Workplace Policy of PSW. I will not let any external pressure hamper my assessment or decision.

Furthermore, I shall support and encourage to take every step against Harassment at the workplace.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

