



Shri Shivaji Shikshan Prasarak Mandal's
College of Education, Barshi
Transparent Mechanism - 2017-2022

5.1.3

DOCUMENTS UPLOAD

Anti-Ragging & Anti – Sexual Harassment Committee

As per the order of Supreme Court of India and subsequent Notification from University Grants Commission (UGC), ragging constitutes one or more of any intention by any student or group of students on :

1. Any act of Indiscipline, Teasing or Handling with Rudeness.
2. Any act that Prevents, Disrupts the Regular Academic Activity.
3. Any activity which is likely to cause Annoyance, hardship, Psychological Harm or creates Fear or Apprehension.
4. Any act of Financial Extortion or Forceful Expenditure.
5. Any act of Physical Abuse causing Assault, Harm or danger to Health.
6. Any Act of abuse by spoken words, emails, SMS, or public insult etc.
7. Any act of injury or infringement of the fundamental right to the human dignity.
8. Any act of Wrongful Confinement, Kidnapping, Molesting or committing unnatural offences, use of criminal forces, trespass or intimidation.
9. Any unlawful assembly or conspiracy to ragging.

Punishment to those found guilty:

Any student or group of student found guilty of ragging in the campus or even outside the campus shall be liable to one or more of the following punishments

1. Debarring from appearing in any sessional test/University Examination
2. Suspension from attending classes and academic privileges
3. Withdrawing all College benefits
4. Suspension from the college for a period of one month

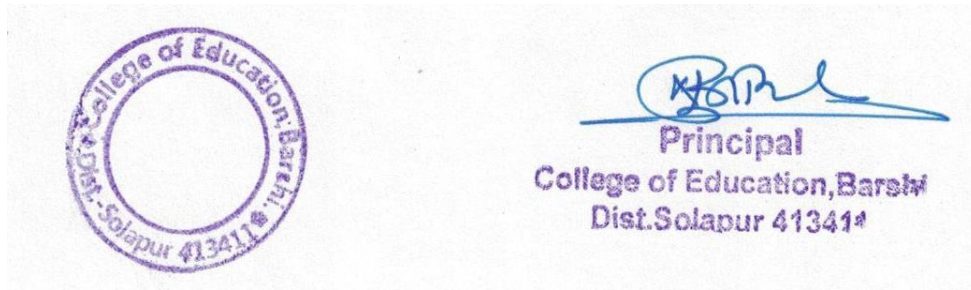
Committee Members:

**Shri Shivaji Shikshan Prasark Madal Barshi
College of Education, Barshi.
Anti- Ragging Committee**

Sr.No.	Name of Members	Designation
1	Prin. Dr. S.S. Gore	Chairman
2	Prof.S.S.Survase	Coordinator
3	Dr. L.I.Rathod	Representative of Faculty
4	Prof.P.P.Narale	Representative of Faculty(Backward Class)
5	Mr.S.V.Waghmare	Representative of Non Teaching Staff
6	Mr.Somnath Patil	Student Representative One from Each Class
7	Ms.Nikita Kadam	
8	Ms.Sheetal Londhe	
9	Ms. Dhanshree Sul	

Objectives of the Committee:

- To keep a vigil and stop the incidences of Ragging, if any happening /reported in the places of students aggregation including, Classroom, Canteens, Buses and Common Areas.
- To educate the students at large by adopting various means about the menace of Ragging and related Punishment there to.
- To ensure positive and threat free environment for students to mould their personality.



We have different committees in our institution for grievance redressal of the students as well as for the Staff members. These committees are

1. Grievance Redressal Cell :

This committee is functioning in our institution since 2001. It is formed according to the guidelines laid down by the Higher and Technical Education Department, Government of Maharashtra.

2. Internal Complaint Committee:

This committee is functioning in our institution in 2017. The committee is established according to the guidelines laid down by the Maharashtra State Commission for Women, Mumbai. This committee is formed for the prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of sexual harassment of women at Workplace College). Any female student as well as female staff member can register their complain regarding sexual harassment.

3. Anti-ragging Committee and Squad:

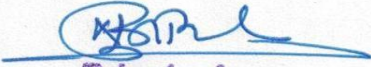
Anti-ragging Committee is functioning in this college since 2010. The committee is established according the guidelines laid down by the Higher and Technical Education Department, Mumbai. It is formed on the basis of Maharashtra Prohibition of Ragging Act, 1999 and UGC Regulations on Curbing the Menace of Ragging in Higher Educational Institutions, 2009. The committee looks after the issues related to ragging within or outside of the institution.



Shri Shivaji Shikshan Prasark Madal Barshi
College of Education Barshi
Grievance and Redressl Committee

Sr.No.	Name of Members	Designation
1	Prin. Dr. S.S. Gore	Chairman
2	Prof.S.S.Survase	Coordinator
3	Dr. M.S. Disale	Member

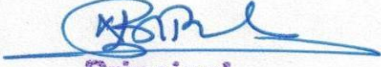



Principal
College of Education, Barshi
Dist. Solapur 413411

Shri Shivaji Shikshan Prasark Madal Barshi
College of Education Barshi
Internal Complaint Committee

Sr.No.	Name of Members	Designation
1	Prin. Dr. U.V Ghavane	Preceding Officer
2	Prof.Dr.S.M. Landage	Faculty Member
3	Prof. S.S.Survase	Faculty Member
4	Shri. R.G Bute	Representative of Non Teaching Staff
5	Smt. S.D. Raut	Representative of Non Teaching Staff
6	Miss. D.H. Patil (B. Ed.)	Student Representative -UG
7	Miss. S.G . Hiremath (M.P.Ed.)	Student Representative -PG
8	Smt. S.S. Dudhbhate	Ph.D.Student Member
9	Sou. V.S. Patil	N.G.O Member

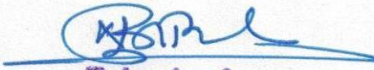



Principal
College of Education, Barshi
Dist. Solapur 413414

**Shri Shivaji Shikshan Prasark Madal Barshi
College of Education Barshi
Anti-ragging Committee**

Sr.No.	Name of Members	Designation
1	Prin. Dr. S.S. Gore	Chairman
2	Prof.S.S.Survase	Coordinator
3	Dr. L.I.Rathod	Representative of Faculty
4	Prof.P.P.Narale	Representative of Faculty(Backward Class)
5	Mr.S.V.Waghmare	Representative of Non Teaching Staff
6	Mr.Somnath Patil	Student Representative One from Each Class
7	Ms.Nikita Kadam	
8	Ms.Sheetal Londhe	
9	Ms. Dhanshree Sul	




Principal
College of Education, Barshi
Dist.Solapur 413411



SHREE SHIVAJI SHIKSHAN PRASARAK MANDAL, BARSHI
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, BARSHI
GRIEVANCE AND
REDRESSAL COMMITTEE



GRIEVANCE AND REDRESSAL COMMITTEE

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, BARSHI

While this platform allows all student-teachers to voice their concerns in an open manner. It is imperative that the complainant exercises due diligence and care in deciding what he/she would qualify as a grievance that is serious enough to deserve the attention of this committee comprising of the Principal faculty and student representatives.

sdisale4@gmail.com [Switch account](#)



* Required

Email *

Your email

Name of the Student *

Your answer

Contact Number *

Your answer

Gender *

- Female
- Male
- Transgender

Faculty

- B.Ed
- B.P.Ed
- M.Ed
- M.P.Ed
- Research Scholar



Mention the batch *

- 2017-19
- 2018-20
- 2019-21
- 2020-22
- 2021-23
- 2022-24

Area of Grievance *

- Academic
- Non-Academic
- Discrimination
- Harassment
- Any other

Date of Problem/Incident/Duration of the Problem *



Area of Grievance *

- Academic
- Non-Academic
- Discrimination
- Harassment
- Any other

Date of Problem/Incident/Duration of the Problem *

Your answer

Description of the Problem *

Your answer

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Shri Shivaji Shikashan Prasarak Mandal, Barshi

College Of Education, Barshi

Internal Complaint Committee

STUDENT GRIEVANCE REPORT FORM

Date:		
Name of Grievance:		
Worksite:		
Home Ph.	Mob No.	Other Ph.
Statement of Grievance:		
Relief Sought:		

Request Meeting yes No **If yes, meeting date scheduled:**.....

Grievent's Signature:.....**Date:**.....

Received by:.....**Date:**.....





HANDBOOK

On

Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace

(Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013

for Employers / Institutions / Organisations/
Internal Complaints Committee / Local Complaints Committee



Towards a new dawn

Government of India
Ministry of Women and Child Development

NOVEMBER 2015



HANDBOOK

on

Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013

for Employers / Institutions / Organisations/
Internal Complaints Committee / Local Complaints Committee



Towards a new dawn

Government of India
Ministry of Women and Child Development

November 2015

Contents

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 THE MANDATE	3
1.2 THE GENESIS	3
1.3 THE ACT	4
1.4 PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK	5
1.5 WHO IS THIS HANDBOOK FOR?	5
1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE HANDBOOK	5
SECTION 2: WORKPLACE SEXUAL HARASSMENT- WHAT IS IT?	7
2.1 WHO IS AN AGGRIEVED WOMAN	7
2.2 WHAT IS A WORKPLACE?	8
2.3 WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT WORKPLACE?	9
2.4 KEY ELEMENTS OF WORKPLACE SEXUAL HARASSMENT	9
2.5 EXAMPLES OF BEHAVIOURS AND SCENARIOS THAT CONSTITUTE SEXUAL HARASSMENT	12
2.6 FORMS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT	14
2.7 SCENARIOS	14
SECTION 3: PREVENTION & PROHIBITION	18
3.1 PREVENTIVE AUTHORITIES	18
3.2 WHO IS A DISTRICT OFFICER (DO)?	19
3.3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AFOREMENTIONED AUTHORITIES	19
SECTION 4 : REDRESS	23
4.1 WHO CAN COMPLAIN AND WHERE?	23
4.2 WHAT SHOULD THE COMPLAINT CONTAIN?	24
4.3 WHAT CAN AN EMPLOYEE/WORKER EXPECT?	24
4.4 KEY RESPONSIBILITIES	25
4.5 KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, TRAINING	25
4.6 DO'S AND DON'TS FOR COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE	26
4.7 NON-NEGOTIABLES DURING THE INQUIRY PROCESS	27
4.8 THE SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT PROCESS	27
4.9 AT A GLANCE	34
SECTION 5: MONITORING	37
SECTION 6: GLOBAL NORMS AND GOOD PRACTICES	39



सत्यमेव जयते

मेनका संजय गांधी
Maneka Sanjay Gandhi



मंत्री
महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्रालय
भारत सरकार
नई दिल्ली-110001

MINISTER
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI-110001

MESSAGE

With improved access to education and employment, millions of Indian women are entering the country's workforce today. Many working women face sexual harassment at the workplace on a daily basis. It is crucial therefore that as a country, we strive to eliminate work-place sexual harassment since women have the right to work in safe and secure environment. It is the responsibility of every employer to ensure safety of women in a work environment and improve their participation. This will contribute to realization of their right to gender equality and result in economic empowerment and inclusive growth and benefit the nation as a whole.

I am pleased to present this Handbook on Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. It provides key information about the provisions of the Act in an easy-to-use and practical manner. The Handbook has been developed with the aim to ensure that the citizens of India are aware of their rights and obligations in terms of creating safe workplace environment for women.

Government of India is committed to promote gender equality and women's empowerment across every sector. This Handbook reflects our commitment to empower women as economic agents and improve their ability to access markets on competitive and equitable terms. I am confident that this Handbook which advocates and enforces the rules as laid out in the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, will be beneficial to everyone. The practical and user-friendly procedures outlined in the Handbook will be useful for actual implementation of the Act.


(Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi)

V. Somasundaran



सचिव
भारत सरकार
महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्रालय
शास्त्री भवन, नई दिल्ली - 110001

Secretary
Government of India
Ministry of Women & Child Development
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi-110001
Website : <http://www.wcd.nic.in>

18th November 2015

FOREWORD

I am pleased to share with you this Handbook on Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. This Handbook is of immense importance because combating sexual harassment involves developing deeper understanding of what is sexual harassment and change of attitudes in all - be it employer, employees, colleagues, friends, or the policy makers.

Sexual Harassment at workplace is an extension of violence in everyday life and is discriminatory and exploitative, as it affects women's right to life and livelihood. In India, for the first time in 1997, a petition was filed in the Supreme Court to enforce the fundamental rights of working women, after the brutal gang rape of Bhanwari Devi a social worker from Rajasthan. As an outcome of the landmark judgment of the Vishaka and Others v State of Rajasthan the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, was enacted wherein it was made mandatory for every employer to provide a mechanism to redress grievances pertaining to workplace sexual harassment and enforce the right to gender equality of working women. The Act is also unique for its wide ambit as it is applicable to the organized sector as well as the unorganized sector.

The legislation, however, requires the support and commitment of all stakeholders for its effective and successful implementation in preventing workplace sexual harassment. It casts an obligation upon the employer to address the grievances in respect of sexual harassment at workplace in a time bound manner. It is in this context that this Handbook would be very useful as it provides clear definition of what constitutes sexual harassment and explains how the complaint process works.

I am sure that the Handbook will be extremely useful to all agencies concerned and help them in taking pro-active measures to eradicate the problem/menace of workplace sexual harassment in the country.


(V. Somasundaran)

प्रीति सूदन
PREETI SUDAN
अपर सचिव
Additional Secretary
Tel : 011-23383823
Fax : 011-23070480



भारत सरकार
महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्रालय
शास्त्री भवन, नई दिल्ली – 110001
Government of India
Ministry of Women & Child Development
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi-110001
Website : <http://www.wcd.nic.in>
Email id : sudanp@nic.in

Dated: 17th November, 2015

PREFACE

The Government of India is committed to ending all forms of violence against women that negatively impact society, hamper gender equality and constricts the social and economic development of the country.

Since, sexual harassment results in violation of the fundamental rights of a woman to equality as per Articles 14 and 15 and her right to live with dignity as mentioned under Article 21 of the Constitution, the Government of India enacted the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. The Act is an extension of the Vishaka Guidelines issued by the Supreme Court in 1997. The Supreme Court of India, for the first time in the Vishaka Guidelines, acknowledged Sexual Harassment at the workplace as a human rights violation. Further, the Act also reflects the commitment of the Government to the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) on July 09, 1993. This new legislation makes every effort to be a user friendly tool in the hands of the employers and employees, to create safe and secure workplaces for all women.

With the enactment of the Act, India is now a part of a select group of countries to have prohibited sexual harassment at workplace through national legislation. The Act is unique in its broad coverage which includes all working women from organised and unorganised sectors alike, as also public and private sectors, regardless of hierarchy. Effective implementation of the Act is a challenge. The Handbook is designed to be a Ready Reckoner for organisations vested with responsibility to enforce the law.

The Handbook is structured into six sections. The first section is an introduction and detail regarding the genesis of the Act, the second sets the context by defining the workplace and sexual harassment and impact of such behaviour, the third focuses on the key individuals and institutions involved in prohibition and prevention processes and their responsibilities, section four discusses the redressal mechanism followed by monitoring requirement in section five and important international frameworks and best practices on sexual harassment at the workplace in the concluding section.

It is the hope of the Ministry that this Handbook will be of considerable value for employers, employees and complaint committees alike, as it provides guidance with regard to the steps to be taken and the processes to be followed, in line with the requirements of the law. It will prove useful to all women workers particularly and be a step forward in promoting their independence as well as the right to work with dignity as equal partners in an environment that is free from violence.


(Preeti Sudan)



लोपामुद्रा मोहंती
Lopamudra Mohanty

Tel. : 23367573
Fax : 23362946
Telegrams : WOMEN CHILD

भारत सरकार
महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्रालय
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT
जीवन विहार, नई दिल्ली-110 001, दिनांक
Jeevan Vihar, New Delhi-110 001, Dated

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In our journey towards preparing this Handbook, which required a lot of guidance and assistance from many people, whose names may not be enumerated, I am thankful to all of them for their contributions towards the completion of the task.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the UN Women (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women) for their valuable contributions with their experience in women's movement and expertise in gender rights in supporting the Ministry to prepare the Handbook with key information on the Act in an easy-to-use practical manner and designing with appropriate illustrations.

I would like acknowledge the important contributions made by Ms. Risha Syed, Legal Consultant for the hardwork put by her coupled with her experience and expertise as a legal professional and commitment to gender issues in bringing out the Handbook.

I am also thankful to Dr. Paramita Majumdar, Senior Consultant, Gender Budgeting for reviewing the manuscript with meticulous scrutiny and scholarly advice. I would like to mention with appreciation for Shri Samuel Paul, Assistant Secretary for showing not only his keen interest on the subject, but assisting us in the review work.

We hope that this Handbook will be a guide and inspiration to all of us in creating an enabling environment of women in the workplaces.


(Lopamudra Mohanty)

“The meaning and content of the fundamental rights guaranteed in the Constitution of India are of sufficient amplitudes to encompass all facets of gender equality...”

Late Chief Justice J.S. Verma, Supreme Court of India, Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan

Introduction

“Whereas sexual harassment results in violation of the fundamental rights of a Woman to equality....”

[Preamble, Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition & Redressal) Act]

As enshrined in the Preamble to the Constitution of India, “equality of status and opportunity” must be secured for all its citizens; equality of every person under the law is guaranteed by Article 14 of the Constitution.

A safe workplace is therefore a woman’s legal right. Indeed, the Constitutional doctrine of equality and personal liberty is contained in Articles 14, 15 and 21 of the Indian Constitution. These articles ensure a person’s right to equal protection under the law, to live a life free from discrimination on any ground and to protection of life and personal liberty. This is further reinforced by the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979 and which is ratified by India. Often described as an international bill of rights for women, it calls for the equality of women and men in terms of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural and civil spheres. It underlines that discrimination and attacks on women’s dignity violate the principle of equality of rights.

Sexual harassment constitutes a gross violation of women’s right to equality and dignity. It has its roots in patriarchy and its attendant perception that men are superior to women and that some forms of violence against women are acceptable. One of these is workplace sexual harassment, which views various forms of such harassment, as harmless and trivial. Often, it is excused as ‘natural’ male behaviour or ‘harmless flirtation’ which women enjoy. Contrary to these perceptions, it causes serious harm and is also a strong manifestation of sex discrimination at the workplace. Not only is it an infringement of the fundamental rights of a woman, under Article 19 (1) (g) of the Constitution of India “to practice any profession or to carry out any occupation, trade or business”; it erodes equality and puts the dignity and the physical and psychological well-being of workers at risk. This leads to poor productivity and a negative impact on lives and livelihoods. To further compound the matter, deep-rooted socio-cultural behavioural patterns, which create a gender hierarchy, tend to place responsibility on the victim, thereby increasing inequality in the workplace and in the society at large.



Though sexual harassment at the workplace has assumed serious proportions, women do not report the matter to the concerned authorities in most cases due to fear of reprisal from the harasser, losing one's livelihood, being stigmatized, or losing professional standing and personal reputation.

Across the globe today, workplace sexual harassment is increasingly understood as a violation of women's rights and a form of violence against women. Indeed, the social construct of male privileges in society continues to be used to justify violence against women in the private and public sphere. In essence, sexual harassment is a mirror reflecting male power over women that sustains patriarchal relations. In a society where violence against women, both subtle and direct, is borne out of the patriarchal values, women are forced to conform to traditional gender roles. These patriarchal values and attitudes of both women and men pose the greatest challenge in resolution and prevention of sexual harassment. Workplace sexual harassment, like other forms of violence, is not harmless. It involves serious health, human, economic and social costs, which manifests themselves in the overall development indices of a nation.

The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 was enacted to ensure safe working spaces for women and to build enabling work environments that respect women's right to equality of status and opportunity. An effective implementation of the Act will contribute to the realization of their right to gender equality, life and liberty, equality in working conditions everywhere. The sense of security at the workplace will improve women's participation in work, resulting in their economic empowerment and inclusive growth.

The full scale of the problem is not known given the difficulties in documenting the experience of those who have experienced workplace sexual harassment. However, available studies on sexual harassment show that it is certainly prevalent in India today. This is why the legislation is an important step forward within the larger architecture of women's rights, as it tackles this issue to secure the rights of women workers across the country.

While the official figures for women's work participation are low, much of the work that women do is not captured in official data accounts. It is argued¹ that where this is to be captured, women's overall work participation would be 86.2 per cent. While the official data² shows that women's work participation rate is around 25.3 per cent in rural areas and 14.7 per cent in the urban areas, estimates indicate that there is a huge workforce of women, therefore there is a need to secure their workplace and entitlements. Given, that 93 per cent of women workers are employed in the informal sector, they remain unprotected by laws. With no laws or mechanisms to protect them, proactive measures are required to make their workplaces safe.

¹ Professor Jayati Ghosh, Paper on 'What Exactly is Work?' http://www.macrosan.org/cur/oct14/pdf/Exactly_Work.pdf

² NSSO 2011-12

It is well established that ensuring safe working conditions for women leads to a positive impact on their participation in the workforce and increases their productivity, which in turn benefits the nation as a whole. Economically, empowered women are key to the nation's overall development and this can only be achieved if it is ensured that women's workspaces across all sectors and all over the country have a safe and secure environment for work.

It is important as well to ensure that the emphasis is on prevention rather than punitive action. This calls for widespread awareness on the Act among employers, managers and the workers themselves. Frequently, women workers may face sexual harassment but may not be aware that it is a breach of their rights and that there is something they can do about it. They need to know that they can do something about it. Then there are others, who may believe that it is a personal matter that needs to be resolved by the people involved. In order to change this order of things, it is urgent that measures are taken to change mind-sets and attitudes by creating awareness about what constitutes sexual harassment and the steps that can be taken to address it.

This handbook will serve as an important tool to make workplaces safe and benefit both workers and employers alike, leading to mutual gains.

1.1 THE MANDATE

Today, all workplaces in India are mandated by law to provide a safe and secure working environment free from sexual harassment for all women.

1.2 THE GENESIS

In 1992, a rural level change agent, Bhanwari Devi, was engaged by the state of Rajasthan as a *Sathin*³ to work towards the prevention of the practice of child marriages. During the course of her work, she prevented the marriage of a one-year old girl in the community. Her work was met with resentment and attracted harassment from men of that community. Bhanwari Devi reported this to the local authority but no action was taken. That omission came at great cost – Bhanwari was subsequently gang raped by those very men.

The Bhanwari Devi case revealed the ever-present sexual harm to which millions of working women are exposed across the country, everywhere and everyday irrespective of their location. It also shows the extent to which that harm can escalate if nothing is done to check sexually offensive behaviour in the workplace.

Based on the facts of Bhanwari Devi's case, a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) was filed by Vishaka and other women groups against the State of Rajasthan and Union of India before the Supreme Court of India. It proposed that sexual harassment be recognized as a violation of women's fundamental right to equality and that all workplaces/establishments/institutions be made accountable and responsible to uphold these rights.

³ *Sathin*³ means a friend

In a landmark judgment, *Vishaka vs. State of Rajasthan (1997)*⁴, the Supreme Court of India created legally binding guidelines basing it on the right to equality and dignity accorded under the Indian Constitution as well as by the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

It included:

- ◆ A definition of sexual harassment
- ◆ Shifting accountability from individuals to institutions
- ◆ Prioritizing prevention
- ◆ Provision of an innovative redress mechanism

The Supreme Court defined sexual harassment as any unwelcome, sexually determined physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct. Examples included sexually suggestive remarks about women, demands for sexual favours, and sexually offensive visuals in the workplace. The definition also covered situations where a woman could be disadvantaged in her workplace as a result of threats relating to employment decisions that could negatively affect her working life.

It placed responsibility on employers to ensure that women did not face a hostile environment, and prohibited intimidation or victimization of those cooperating with an inquiry, including the affected complainant as well as witnesses.

It directed for the establishment of redressal mechanism in the form of Complaints Committee, which will look into the matters of sexual harassment of women at workplace. The Complaints Committees were mandated to be headed by a woman employee, with not less than half of its members being women and provided for the involvement of a third party person/NGO expert on the issue, to prevent any undue pressure on the complainant. The guidelines extended to all kinds of employment, from paid to voluntary, across the public and private sectors.

Vishaka established that international standards/law could serve to expand the scope of India's Constitutional guarantees and fill in the gaps wherever they exist. India's innovative history in tackling workplace sexual harassment beginning with the *Vishaka* Guidelines and subsequent legislation has given critical visibility to the issue. Workplaces must now own their responsibility within this context and ensure that women can work in safe and secure spaces.

1.3 THE ACT

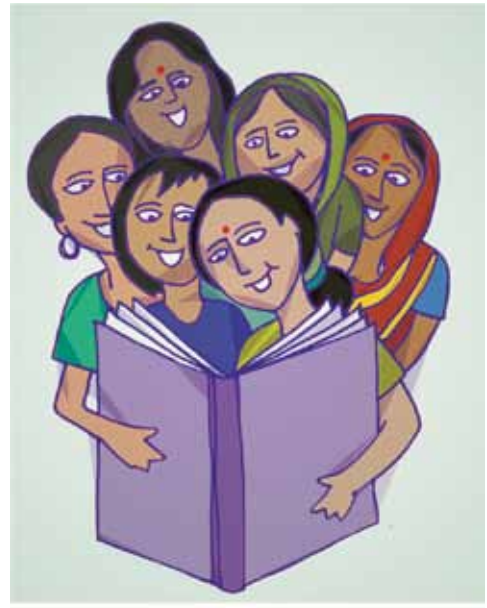
Having raised the bar of responsibility and accountability in the *Vishaka* Guidelines, the Supreme Court placed an obligation on workplaces, institutions and those in positions of responsibility, to uphold working women's fundamental right to equality and dignity at the workplace. Three key obligations were imposed on institutions to meet that standard, namely:

⁴(AIR 1997 Supreme Court 3011)

- ◆ Prohibition
- ◆ Prevention
- ◆ Redress

In 2013, the Government of India notified the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act (referred to as Act hereinafter). Consistent with the Vishaka judgment, the Act aspires to ensure women's right to workplace equality, free from sexual harassment through compliance with the above mentioned three elements.

It is important to note that the Act provides a civil remedy to women and is in addition to other laws that are currently in force. Consequently, any woman who wishes to report instances of sexual harassment at the workplace has the right to take recourse of both civil and criminal proceedings.



1.4 PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is meant for all workplaces/institutions/organizations to provide a basic understanding of sexual harassment at places of work. Additionally, it is designed to offer Internal Complaints Committee/s and Local Complaints Committee/s (Complaints Committee/s) established under the Act, with simple, user friendly information on sexual harassment; what is expected of Complaints Committee/s to redress a complaint; and what the inquiry process and outcome should include.

1.5 WHO IS THIS HANDBOOK FOR

This handbook informs the end user (an employee/worker) about workplace sexual harassment and their right to an informed complaint process in seeking redress as provided under the Act and Rules framed thereunder.

1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE HANDBOOK

This Handbook has 6 sections, with each containing information for women, male co-workers as well as their employers, on how to deal with sexual harassment at the workplace in the context of the Act.

Section 1 serves as an introduction, as it details the genesis of the Act and the history behind it, as well as provides a brief description of the Act itself. This section also describes the purpose of this handbook and who it is designed for.



Section 2 sets the context by defining a workplace and sexual harassment. It provides the reader with key elements, such as examples of sexual harassment as well as scenarios and the impact of such behaviour.

Section 3 focuses on the key individuals and institutions involved in the prohibition and prevention processes and their responsibilities.

Section 4 is about redress. This section identifies and defines the key players involved in the complaint mechanism (including the complainant and the respondent). It details the stages of the complaint process. Particular attention is paid to the complaints committee which plays a very important role in this process.

Section 5 describes the monitoring requirements as per the Act.

Section 6 lists the important international frameworks and select best practices on sexual harassment at the workplace.

Workplace Sexual Harassment- What Is It?

“No woman shall be subjected to sexual harassment at any workplace.”

Section 3(1) of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013

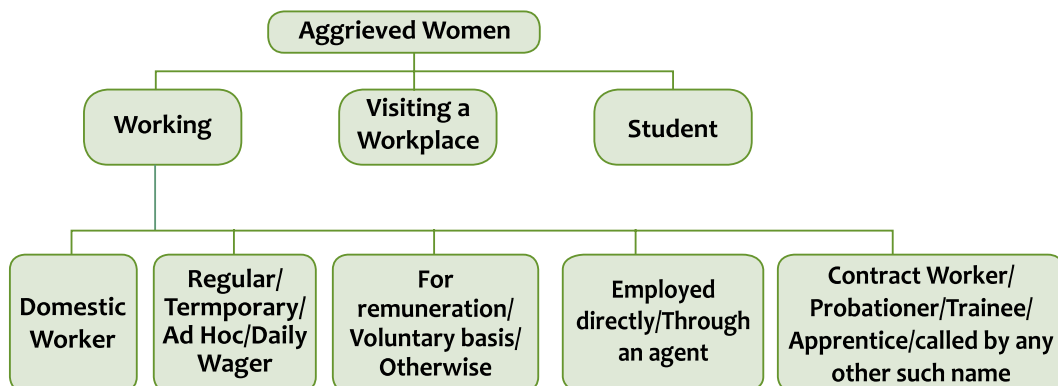
This section defines the aggrieved woman, workplace and sexual harassment as well as highlights key elements of workplace sexual harassment. It provides examples of behaviours through which a woman can experience possible professional and personal harm. It presents the user with scenarios from across-section of work contexts to build clarity on different forms of sexual harassment as identified under the Act.

2.1 WHO IS AN AGGRIEVED WOMAN?

The Act recognizes the right of every woman to a safe and secure workplace environment irrespective of her age or employment/work status. Hence, the right of all women working or visiting any workplace whether in the capacity of regular, temporary, adhoc, or daily wages basis is protected under the Act.

It includes all women whether engaged directly or through an agent including a contractor, with or without the knowledge of the principal employer. They may be working for remuneration, on a voluntary basis or otherwise. Their terms of employment can be express or implied.

Further, she could be a co-worker, a contract worker, probationer, trainee, apprentice, or called by any other such name. The Act also covers a woman, who is working in a dwelling place or house.



2.2 WHAT IS A WORKPLACE?

A workplace is defined as “any place visited by the employee arising out of or during the course of employment, including transportation provided by the employer for undertaking such a journey.” As per this definition, a workplace covers both the organised and un-organised sectors.

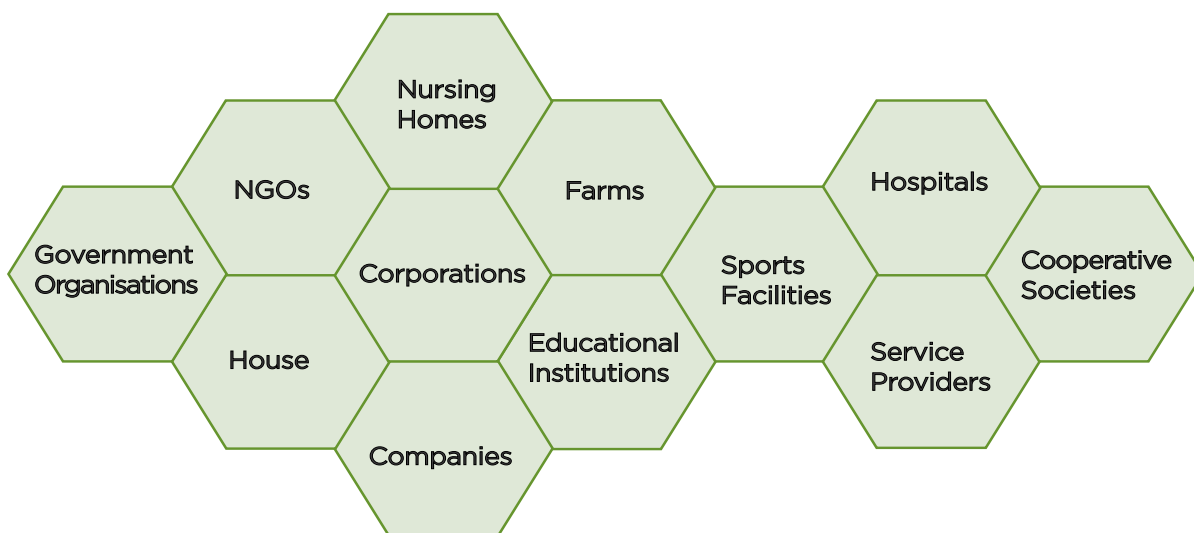
It also includes all workplaces whether owned by Indian or foreign company having a place of work in India. As per the Act, workplace includes:

- Government organizations, including Government company, corporations and cooperative societies;
- Private sector organisations, venture, society, trust, NGO or service providers etc. providing services which are commercial, vocational, educational, sports, professional, entertainment, industrial, health related or financial activities, including production, supply, sale, distribution or service;
- Hospitals/Nursing Homes;
- Sports Institutes/Facilities;
- Places visited by the employee (including while on travel) including transportation provided by employer;
- A dwelling place or house.

The Act defines the Unorganised Sector as:

- Any enterprise owned by an individual or self-employed workers engaged in the production or sale of goods or providing services of any kind;
- Any enterprise which employs less than 10 workers.

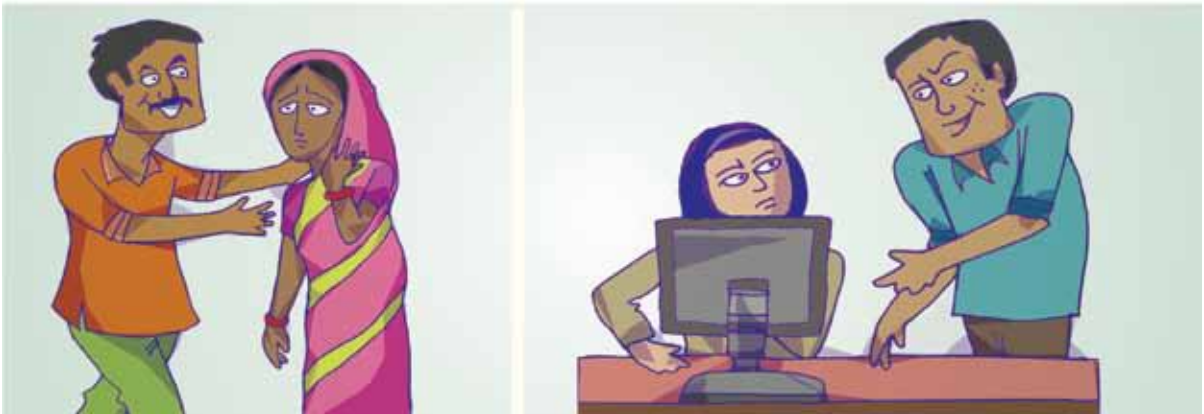
All women working or visiting workplaces, for example:



2.3 WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT THE WORKPLACE?

“Sexual Harassment” includes anyone or more of the following unwelcome acts or behaviour (whether directly or by implication), namely:

1. Physical contact or advances;
2. A demand or request for sexual favours;
3. Making sexually coloured remarks;
4. Showing pornography;
5. Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature



2.4 KEY ELEMENTS OF WORKPLACE SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Very often situations that start off innocently end up in inappropriate and unprofessional behaviours. It is important to remember that **workplace sexual harassment is sexual, unwelcome** and the experience is **subjective**. It is the **impact** and not the intent that matters and it almost always occurs in a matrix of **power**. It is possible that a woman may experience a single instance of sexual harassment or a series of incidents over a period of time. It is important also to remember that each case is unique and should be examined in its own context and according to the surrounding circumstances as a whole.

The following table highlights the subjective nature of the experience and the impact it may have on the person involved, irrespective of the intent of such behaviour.

To enable prevention of sexual harassment at the workplace, it is critical to recognize and differentiate between welcome and unwelcome sexual behaviour. Listed are some examples of how “unwelcome” and “welcome” behaviour is experienced.

THE FIRST STEP TO PREVENTION IS RECOGNITION

Workplace Sexual Harassment is behaviour that is

UNWELCOME

SEXUAL in nature

A **SUBJECTIVE** experience

IMPACT not intent is what matters

Often occurs in a matrix of **POWER**

UNWELCOME	WELCOME
Feels bad	Feels good
One-sided	Reciprocal
Feels powerless	In-control
Power-based	Equality
Unwanted	Wanted
Illegal	Legal
Invading	Open
Demeaning	Appreciative
Causes anger/sadness	Happy
Causes negative self-esteem	Positive self-esteem

Impact of inappropriate behaviour

The impact of sexual harassment at the workplace is far-reaching and is an injury to the equal right of women. Not only does it impact her, it has a direct bearing on the workplace productivity as well as the development of the society. Below is a list of select examples of such negative impacts.



Professional	Personal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased work performance • Increased absenteeism, loss of pay • Loss of promotional opportunities • Retaliation from the respondent, or colleagues/ friends of the respondent • Subjected to gossip and scrutiny at work • Being objectified • Becoming publicly sexualized • Defamation • Being ostracized • Having to relocate • Job and career consequences • Weakened support network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression • Anxiety, panic attacks • Traumatic stress • Sleeplessness • Shame, guilt, self-blame • Difficulty in concentrating • Headaches • Fatigue, loss of motivation • Personal Difficulties with time • Eating disorders (weight loss or gain) • Feeling betrayed and/or violated • Feeling angry or violent towards the respondent • Feeling powerless • Loss of confidence and self esteem • Over all loss of trust in people • Problems with intimacy • Withdrawal and isolation

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IS A SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE

In 2010, the High Court of Delhi endorsed the view that sexual harassment is a subjective experience and for that reason held “We therefore prefer to analyze harassment from the [complainant’s] perspective. A complete understanding of the [complainant’s] view requires... an analysis of the different perspectives of men and women. Conduct that many men consider unobjectionable may offend many women... Men tend to view some forms of sexual harassment as “harmless social interactions to which only overly-sensitive women would object. The characteristically male view depicts sexual harassment as comparatively harmless amusement. ... Men, who are rarely victims of sexual assault, may view sexual conduct in a vacuum without a full appreciation of the social setting or the underlying threat of violence that a woman may perceive.”

Dr. Punita K. Sodhi v. Union of India & Ors. W.P. (C) 367/2009 & CMS 828, 11426/2009
On 9 September, 2010, in the High Court of Delhi

2.5 EXAMPLES OF BEHAVIOURS AND SCENARIOS THAT CONSTITUTE SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Below are examples of behaviour that may or may not constitute workplace sexual harassment in isolation. At the same time, it is important to remember that more often than not, such behaviour occurs in cluster. Distinguishing between these different possibilities is not an easy task and requires essential training and skill building.



Some examples of behaviour that constitute sexual harassment at the workplace:

1. Making sexually suggestive remarks or innuendos.
2. Serious or repeated offensive remarks, such as teasing related to a person's body or appearance.
3. Offensive comments or jokes.
4. Inappropriate questions, suggestions or remarks about a person's sex life.
5. Displaying sexist or other offensive pictures, posters, mms, sms, whatsapp, or e-mails.
6. Intimidation, threats, blackmail around sexual favours.
7. Threats, intimidation or retaliation against an employee who speaks up about unwelcome behaviour with sexual overtones.
8. Unwelcome social invitations, with sexual overtones commonly understood as flirting.
9. Unwelcome sexual advances which may or may not be accompanied by promises or threats, explicit or implicit.



10. Physical contact such as touching or pinching.
11. Caressing, kissing or fondling someone against her will (could be considered assault).
12. Invasion of personal space (getting too close for no reason, brushing against or cornering someone).
13. Persistently asking someone out, despite being turned down.
14. Stalking an individual.
15. Abuse of authority or power to threaten a person's job or undermine her performance against sexual favours.
16. Falsely accusing and undermining a person behind closed doors for sexual favours.
17. Controlling a person's reputation by rumour-mongering about her private life.

Some examples of behaviour that may indicate underlying workplace sexual harassment and merit inquiry:

1. Criticizing, insulting, blaming, reprimanding or condemning an employee in public.
2. Exclusion from group activities or assignments without a valid reason.
3. Statements damaging a person's reputation or career.
4. Removing areas of responsibility, unjustifiably.
5. Inappropriately giving too little or too much work.
6. Constantly overruling authority without just cause.
7. Unjustifiably monitoring everything that is done.
8. Blaming an individual constantly for errors without just cause.
9. Repeatedly singling out an employee by assigning her with demeaning and belittling jobs that are not part of her regular duties.
10. Insults or humiliations, repeated attempts to exclude or isolate a person.
11. Systematically interfering with normal work conditions, sabotaging places or instruments of work.
12. Humiliating a person in front of colleagues, engaging in smear campaigns.
13. Arbitrarily taking disciplinary action against an employee.
14. Controlling the person by withholding resources (time, budget, autonomy, and training) necessary to succeed.

Some examples of workplace behaviours that may not constitute sexual harassment:

1. Following-up on work absences.
2. Requiring performance to job standards.

3. The normal exercise of management rights.
4. Work-related stress e.g. meeting deadlines or quality standards.
5. Conditions of works.
6. Constructive feedback about the work mistake and not the person.

2.6 FORMS OF WORKPLACE SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Generally workplace sexual harassment refers to two common forms of ***inappropriate behaviour***:

- Quid Pro Quo (literally ‘this for that’)
 - Implied or explicit promise of preferential/detrimental treatment in employment
 - Implied or express threat about her present or future employment status
- Hostile Work Environment
 - Creating a hostile, intimidating or an offensive work environment
 - Humiliating treatment likely to affect her health or safety

2.7 SCENARIOS

The following scenarios have been constructed as examples based on real life experiences of women at workplaces. The scenarios attempt to build an understanding of the two types of workplace sexual harassment as prescribed by the Act i.e. quid pro quo and hostile environment.

The names in the following examples are fictional and in no way refer to any individual alive or dead.

A. Examples of scenarios that constitute quid pro quo or ‘this for that’ type of sexual harassment at the workplace:

SCENARIO EXAMPLE 1

Kamini is a bright young team leader working in a call centre. Known to be forthright, she is dedicated, hardworking and is a perfectionist.

Kamini stays back at work late one evening with her colleague Ravi to complete work for an important presentation. Ravi offers to buy Kamini dinner and later drop her home since it’s been a long day. After dinner, Ravi proposes to Kamini that he would like her to spend the night with him. Kamini refuses politely but firmly and goes home. Next evening, Ravi repeats his request and on Kamini’s refusal, threatens her that ***if she doesn’t give-in, he will tell everyone*** that she made a pass at him.

What is Workplace ‘this for that’ Sexual Harassment?

In the above example, Ravi’s threat to Kamini that if she does not agree to his ‘request’ for a sexual favour, he will in return smear her character at the workplace as a person who wants to use sexual

favours to her advantage constitutes quid pro quo form of sexual harassment. Ravi's behaviour is unwelcome, sexual, and has a negative impact on Kamini.

SCENARIO EXAMPLE 2

Renuka is employed as a domestic worker where she is expected to take care of all the household activities, other than cooking. Most of the days, the lady of the house leaves early. Renuka is therefore left alone in the house with a male member of the household.

Renuka finds the male member constantly leering at her when he is at home and often walks around the house wrapped in nothing but a towel which makes her very uncomfortable. On one occasion, while she was sweeping, he pinched her bottom. When she protested that she will complain to the lady of the house, he **threatened to accuse** her of stealing, and that he will ensure that she **loses** her job.



What is Workplace Sexual Harassment?

In the above example, the male member by threatening Renuka to keep quiet about the unwelcome physical contact if she wants to continue with her employment commits quid pro quo form of sexual harassment. His behaviour occurring in a matrix of power, is unwelcome, sexual and has a negative impact on Renuka.

SCENARIO EXAMPLE 3

Shamima is a lawyer who works as a researcher at an NGO in Delhi since 2013. Dr. Bhavan is the director of the organisation and has always advocated for the cause of human rights.

During an official field visit to Shimla for 2 days, Dr. Bhavan finds an opportunity to be alone with Shamima and makes a physical advance. Despite her protests, he forces himself on her while giving lurid and sexually explicit details of his relationships, both past and present, with women. When she chastises him and threatens to make his behaviour public, he **threatens to destroy her career**.

What is Workplace Sexual Harassment?

In the above example, by threatening Shamima with the destruction of her career, Dr. Bhavan commits quid pro quo sexual harassment. His physical advances and sexual conversation are unwelcome for Shamima and occur in a matrix of power.

B. Examples of scenarios that constitute a 'hostile work environment' type of sexual harassment at the workplace:

SCENARIO EXAMPLE 1

Jayanthi works in a garment factory in Bangalore.

Varghese, Jayanthi's supervisor, often tries to touch her on one or the other pretext. For example, he adjusts her *dupatta* while she is sewing at her workstation on the pretext of covering her back. Jayanthi is very uncomfortable with his behaviour. Her colleagues at the workplace ridicule Jayanthi and mock her for the 'special treatment' by her supervisor. They often gossip about her and Varghese.

What is a Hostile Workplace Environment Sexual Harassment?

In the above example, the physical touching by Varghese is unwelcome and sexual in nature. The gossip, which is based on Varghese's behaviour towards Jayanthi at the workplace, is creating a hostile work environment for Jayanthi.



SCENARIO EXAMPLE 2

Sukhi is a daily wage labourer working at a construction site. Every day at lunch time, Sukhi sits under the shade of the tree to feed her 16-month old baby. She finds Jaswinder, a worker, staring at her from the distance. Sukhi feels uncomfortable and asks Jaswinder to stay away from her while she's feeding the baby. However, Jaswinder persists and always finds a place near her. The group of fellow construction workers now **constantly catcall and whistle** at Sukhi every time she walks their way to refill the cement or mortar. When she questions them, they tell her they are only joking amongst themselves.

What is a Hostile Workplace Environment Sexual Harassment?

Ogling, stalking and gossiping against Sukhi in the above example constitute a hostile work environment, a form of workplace sexual harassment.

SCENARIO EXAMPLE 3

Sumedha is a Captain with the Indian Army. She has refused an offer made by a Senior Officer for a relationship. Sumedha has kept quiet about this experience, but thanks to the rumour-mongering by the Senior Officer, she has acquired a reputation of being a woman of 'easy virtue'. Now she is being *subjected to repeated advances* by three of her senior officer colleagues. When she turns around and protests, *she is singled out for additional physical training*.

What is a Hostile Workplace Environment Sexual Harassment?

In the above example, Sumedha's refusal to the sexual advances of her Senior Officer, leads to her being subjected to rumours, gossip, character assassination, unwelcome sexual advances by other officers, and arbitrary disciplinary action. This constitutes Hostile Work Environment form of workplace Sexual Harassment.

SCENARIO EXAMPLE 4

Asha is a researcher at a media agency led by Dr. Purshottam, a well-known journalist.

In the first few months of Asha's employment, Dr. Purshottam is very pleased with her work and publicly appreciates her. Soon after, Dr. Purshottam frequently summons Asha to his office on the pretext of work and makes verbal sexual advances and sexually coloured remarks to her. He brushes aside her protests by saying that they would not be able to work as a team unless she interacted closely with him and they both got to know each other well. However, once she categorically rebuffed his sexual advances, he has stopped. Now he **ridicules her work** and **humiliates** her in the presence of colleagues and the staff. He **discriminates** against her by allotting projects to her and then arbitrarily withdrawing the work.

What is a Hostile Workplace Environment Sexual Harassment?

In the above example, the workplace actions are a result of Asha rebuffing the unwelcome, sexual advances of Dr. Purshottam and this constitutes hostile work environment form of workplace sexual harassment.

This section has listed and illustrated some of the behaviours that constitute the five parameters of workplace sexual harassment, viz., sexual, subjective, unwelcome, impact and power. This becomes the basis of the key elements of the Act, Prevention, Prohibition and Redress.

Prevention and Prohibition

“The meaning and content of fundamental rights guaranteed in the Constitution of India are of sufficient amplitudes to encompass all facets of gender equality...”

Late Justice J.S. Verma

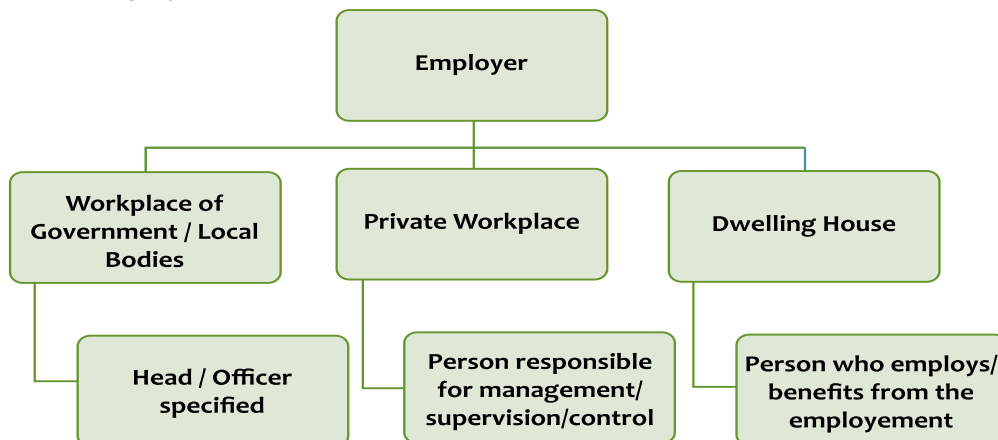
This section describes those who are both responsible and accountable to prevent workplace sexual harassment in compliance with the Act. It also highlights the role of workplaces in prohibiting workplace sexual harassment through an effectively communicated policy.

3.1 PREVENTIVE AUTHORITIES

3.1.1 WHO IS AN EMPLOYER?

An employer refers to:

1. The head of the department, organisation, undertaking, establishment, enterprise, institution, office, branch or unit of the Appropriate Government or local authority or such officer specified in this behalf.
2. Any person (whether contractual or not) responsible for the management, supervision and control of a designated workplace not covered under clause (i).
3. A person or a household who employs or benefits from the employment of domestic worker or women employees.



3.1.2 WHO IS AN APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENT?

As per the Act, Appropriate Government means:

- i. In relation to a workplace which is established, owned, controlled or wholly or substantially financed by funds provided directly or indirectly—
 - a. By the Central Government or the Union Territory administration, the Central Government;
 - b. By the State Government, the State Government;
- ii. In relation to any workplace not covered under sub-clause (i) and falling within its territory, the State Government.

3.2 WHO IS A DISTRICT OFFICER (DO)?

State Governments will notify a District Magistrate/Additional District Magistrate/ Collector/ Deputy Collector as a District Officer at the local level. The District Officer will be responsible for carrying out the powers and functions under the Act at the district levels (including every block, taluka, tehsil, ward, and municipality).

3.3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AFOREMENTIONED AUTHORITIES

Under the law the employer/DO is obliged to create a workplace free of sexual harassment. It is the responsibility of the Employer/District Officer in general to:

1. Create and communicate a detailed policy;
2. Ensure awareness and orientation on the issue;
3. Constitute Complaints Committee/s in every workplace and district so that every working woman is provided with a mechanism for redress of her complaint(s);
4. Ensure Complaints Committees are trained in both skill and capacity;
5. Prepare an annual report and report to the respective state government;
6. District Officer will also appoint a nodal officer to receive complaints at the local level.

3.2.1 Complaints Committee/s

The Act provides for two kinds of complaints mechanisms: Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) and Local Complaints Committee (LCC). All Complaints Committees must have 50 per cent representation of women. ICC or LCC members will hold their position not exceeding three years from the date of their nomination or appointment.

1) Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)

Every employer is obliged to constitute an ICC through a written order. The ICC will be composed of the following members:

No	Member	Eligibility
1.	Chairperson	Women working at senior level as employee; if not available then nominated from other office/units/ department/ workplace of the same employer
2.	2 Members (minimum)	From amongst employees committed to the cause of women/ having legal knowledge/experience in social work
3.	Member	From amongst NGO/associations committed to the cause of women or a person familiar with the issue of Sexual Harassment

Where the office or administrative units of a workplace are located in different places, division or sub-division, an ICC has to be set up at every administrative unit and office.

ICC/LCC ARE MANDATORY

The employee who had a fundamental right to a workplace free of sexual harassment, had complained about sexual harassment. According to the Court, had the organisation complied with the Vishaka Guidelines and set up such a Complaints Committee, the preventative benefit would have been three-fold:

1. Ensured a place where women employees could seek redress;
2. Sent a clear message to the workplace that such complaints would be enquired into by a specially designated committee with external expertise;
3. Prevented a series of litigation that followed.

Hence, the Madras High Court awarded Rs. 1.68 crores in damages to an employee for the non-constitution of a Complaints Committee by the employer, as per the Vishaka Guidelines (at the time of the complaint, the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2013 had not been enacted).

Ms. G v. ISG Novasoft Technologies Ltd. Madras High Court (CrI.R.C.No.370 of 2014 order dated 02.09. 2014. Original Petition No.463 of 2012

2) Local Complaints Committee (LCC)

The District Officer will constitute an LCC in every district so as to enable women in the unorganised sector or small establishments to work in an environment free of sexual harassment. The LCC will receive complaints:

1. From women working in an organisation having less than 10 workers;
2. When the complaint is against the employer himself;
3. From domestic workers.

No	Member	Eligibility
1.	Chairperson	Nominated from amongst the eminent women in the field of social work and committed to the cause of women
2.	Member	Nominated from amongst the women working in the block, taluka or tehsil or ward or municipality in the district
3.	2 Members	Nominated from amongst such NGO/associations/persons committed to the cause of women or familiar with the issues relating to sexual harassment, provided that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one must be a woman • At least one must have a background of law or legal knowledge
4.	Ex Officio member	The concerned officer dealing with social welfare or women and child development in the district

*One of the nominees shall be a woman belonging to the SC/ST/OBC/Minority community notified by the Central Government.

3) External Members on the Complaints Committee/s

The Act refers to external members, which generally means persons who have expertise with the issue of sexual harassment. Given the largely intangible nature of workplace sexual harassment, there are a range of complexities involved in responding effectively to workplace sexual harassment complaints. For this reason, external third party/ members on the Complaints Committee/s (from civil society or legal background) should possess the following attributes:

1. Demonstrated knowledge, skill and capacity in dealing with workplace sexual harassment issues/complaints;
2. Sound grasp and practice of the legal aspects/implications.

Such expertise will greatly benefit Complaints Committees in terms of fair and informed handling of complaints to lead to sound outcomes. These external third party members shall be paid for their services on the Complaints Committees as prescribed.

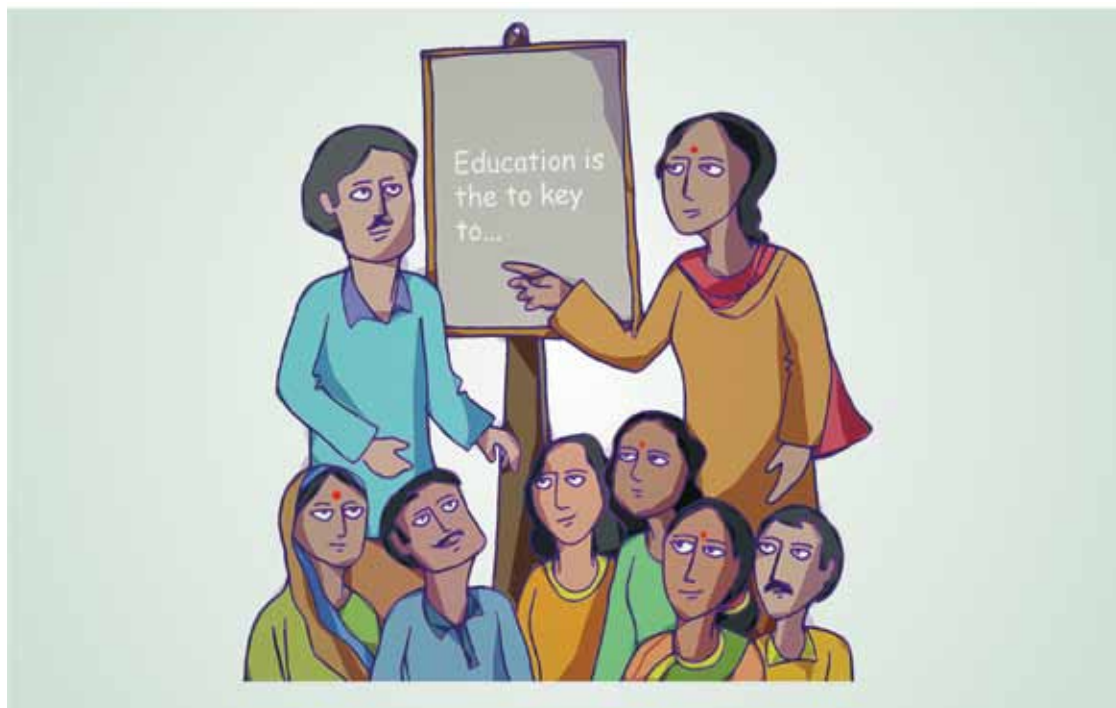
Criteria for the External Member

A 'person familiar with issues relating to women' would mean such persons who have expertise in issues related to sexual harassment and may include any of the following:

- At least 5 years of experience as a social worker, working towards women's empowerment and in particular, addressing workplace sexual harassment;
- Familiarity with labour, service, civil or criminal law.

3.2.2 Sexual Harassment at Workplace Policy

Employers/District Officers are responsible for complying with prohibition, prevention and redress of workplace sexual harassment. In practice, this means having a policy that: (1) prohibits unwelcome behaviour that constitutes workplace sexual harassment; (2) champions prevention of workplace sexual harassment through orientation, awareness and sensitization sessions; and (3) provides a detailed framework for redress.



3.2.3 Dissemination of Information and Awareness Generation

Employers/ District Officers have a legal responsibility to:

1. Effectively communicate a policy that prohibits unwelcome behaviour that constitutes workplace sexual harassment, and provides a detailed framework for prevention, and redress processes.
2. Carry out awareness and orientation for all employees.
3. Create forums for dialogue i.e. Panchayati Raj Institutions, Gram Sabhas, Women's Groups, Urban Local Bodies or like bodies, as appropriate.
4. Ensure capacity and skill building of Complaints Committees.
5. Widely publicize names and contact details of Complaints Committee members.

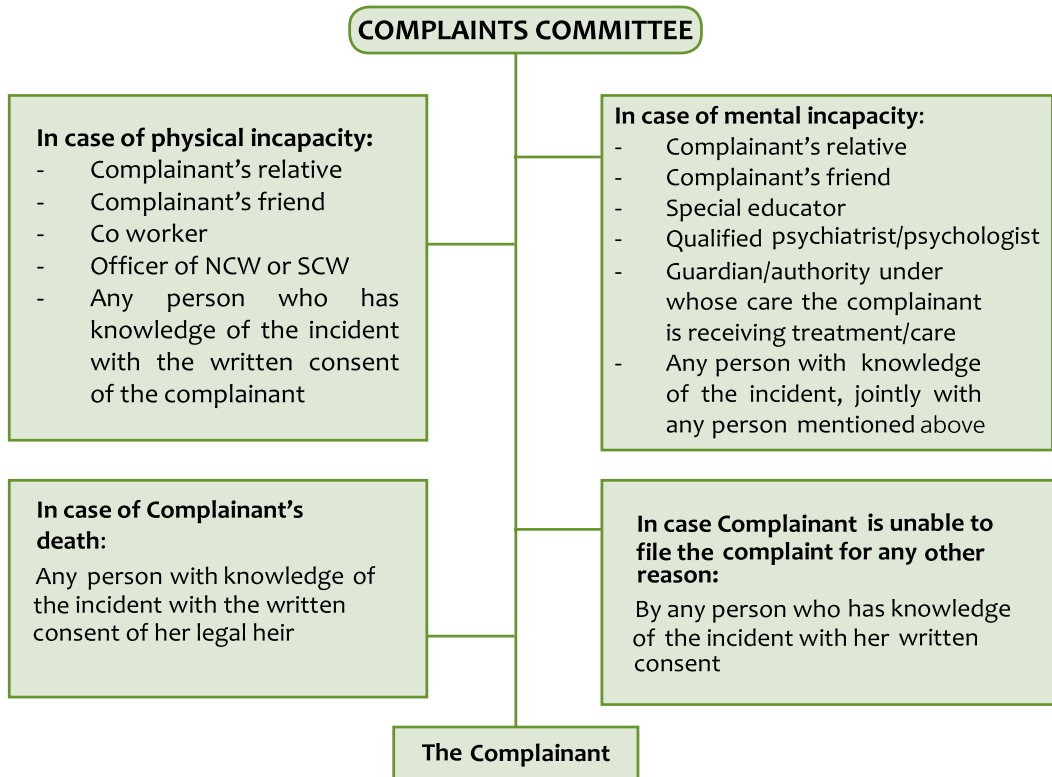
Redress

“...the time has come when women must be able to feel liberated and emancipated from what could be fundamentally oppressive conditions against which an autonomous choice of freedom can be exercised and made available by women. This is sexual autonomy in the fullest degree”

Late Chief Justice J.S. Verma, Justice Verma Committee Report, 2013

This section is about Redress. It provides helpful information on who can complain, to whom, and what a complaint should contain. It also gives information and lays out the steps involved when a complaint has reached the Complaints Committee, in terms of the process, findings and recommendations.

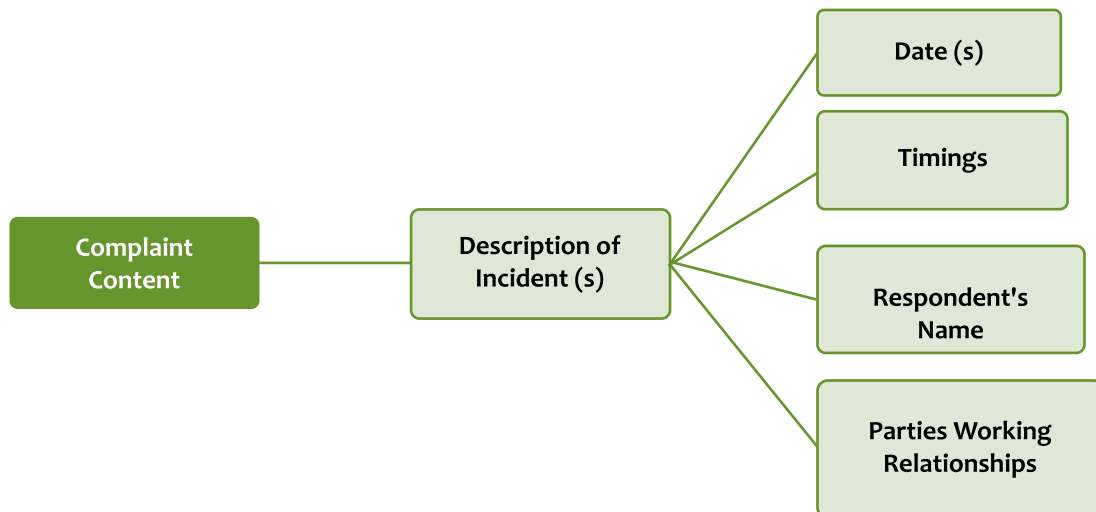
4.1 WHO CAN COMPLAIN AND WHERE?



Generally, where there are less than ten workers, any woman employee can complain to the Local Complaints Committee with the support of the Nodal Officer, when required. It is the responsibility of the District Officer to designate a person as the Nodal Officer in every block, taluka and tehsil in rural or tribal areas and wards or municipalities in the urban areas, to receive the complaints of workplace sexual harassment from women. The Nodal Officer will forward all such complaints within seven days of its receipt to the concerned Complaints Committee for appropriate action. In most other workplaces, a woman employee can make a complaint to the Internal Complaints Committee.

4.2 WHAT SHOULD THE COMPLAINT CONTAIN?

The written complaint should contain a description of each incident(s). It should include relevant dates, timings and locations; name of the respondent(s); and the working relationship between the parties. A person designated to manage the workplace sexual harassment complaint is required to provide assistance in writing of the complaint if the complainant seeks it for any reason.



4.3 WHAT CAN AN EMPLOYEE/WORKER EXPECT?

When it comes to redress for workplace sexual harassment, employee/worker has a right to expect -a **trained, skilled** and **competent** Complaints Committee, a time bound process, information confidentiality, assurance of non-retaliation, counselling or other enabling support where needed and assistance if the complainant opts for criminal proceedings.

4.3 A. RIGHTS OF THE COMPLAINANT

- An empathetic attitude from the Complaints Committee so that she can state her grievance in a fearless environment
- A copy of the statement along with all the evidence and a list of witnesses submitted by the respondent

- Keeping her identity confidential throughout the process
- Support, in lodging FIR in case she chooses to lodge criminal proceedings
- In case of fear of intimidation from the respondent, her statement can be recorded in absence of the respondent
- Right to appeal, in case, not satisfied with the recommendations/findings of the Complaints Committee

4.3 B. RIGHTS OF THE RESPONDENT

- A patient hearing to present his case in a non-biased manner
- A copy of the statement along with all the evidence and a list of witnesses submitted by the complainant
- Keeping his identity confidential throughout the process
- Right to appeal in case not satisfied with the recommendations/findings of the Complaints Committee

4.4 KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

To effectively address workplace sexual harassment complaints, a Complaints Committees must first be aware of their key responsibilities, some of which are highlighted below:

1. Be thoroughly prepared
2. Know the Act, Policy and/or relevant Service Rules
3. Gather and record all relevant information
4. Determine the main issues in the complaint
5. Prepare relevant interview questions
6. Conduct necessary interviews
7. Ensure parties are made aware of the process and their rights/responsibilities within it
8. Analyse information gathered
9. Prepare the report with findings/recommendations

4.5 KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, TRAINING

Dealing with workplace sexual harassment complaints is often complex. Hence Complaints Committee/s must possess critical skills/capacity to effectively carry out their role. That includes a sound grasp of the Act, Vishaka Guidelines, applicable Service Rules, relevant laws and an understanding of workplace sexual harassment and related issues. Complaints Committee skills must include an ability to synthesise information i.e. relevant documents, the law and interviews. They should also be able to communicate effectively, write clearly, listen actively and conduct interviews. They should be competent at showing empathy, being impartial and being thorough. They should be able to identify sexual harassment and its impact.

A Complaints Committee/s is required to be trained in both **skill** and **capacity** to carry out a fair and informed inquiry into a complaint of workplace sexual harassment. An absence of such training will lead to unequal and unfair results, which can cost employers, employees, complainants as well as respondents.

FAIR AND INFORMED INQUIRY

Within 6 months of joining The Statesman newspaper, Rina Mukerhjee lost her job. While the company alleged that her work was “tardy” and “lacking in quality” it suppressed Rina’s complaint of sexual harassment against the news coordinator, Ishan Joshi. Within her first month of work, Rina had taken her complaint directly to the Managing Director, Ravinder Kumar. Time passed, nothing happened and Rina was fired. In a rare display of social context insight and clarity, the Industrial Tribunal (West Bengal) rejected the Statesman’s claim that Rina only referred to “professional” harassment in her complaint to Mr. Kumar. In the Tribunal’s view, Mr. Kumar’s failure to dig deeper was clearly suspect- “... it becomes clear that there was no Committee on Sexual Harassment, as per the Hon’ble Supreme Court’s direction in Vishaka vs State of Rajasthan, existing in The Statesman, at that relevant time. ...to expect-the lady workman to file a written complaint and not to believe the same, when it has been filed ‘at a later date’ is sheer bias.” The Statesman was ordered to reinstate Rina and grant her full back wages.

M/s The Statesmen Ltd. and Smt. Rina Mukherjee. Order of K.K. Kumai, Judge, dated 06.02.2013, Fourth Industrial Labour Tribunal (West Bengal)

4.6 DO’S AND DON’TS FOR COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE

DO’S

1. Create an enabling meeting environment.
2. Use body language that communicates complete attention to the parties.
3. Treat the complainant with respect.
4. Discard pre-determined ideas.
5. Determine the harm.

DON’TS

1. Get aggressive.
2. Insist on a graphic description of the sexual harassment.
3. Interrupt.
4. Discuss the complaint in the presence of the complainant or the respondent.

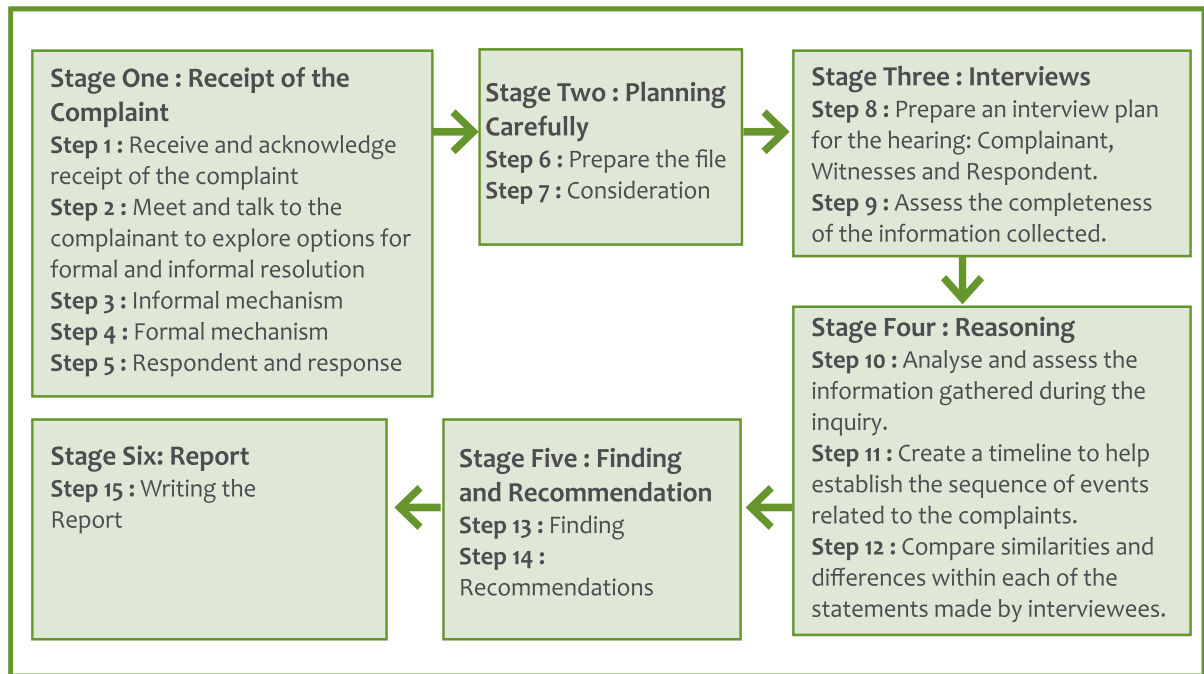


4.7 NON-NEGOTIABLES DURING THE INQUIRY PROCESS

During a redress process the Complaints Committee/s are required to assure confidentiality, non-retaliation and recommend interim measures as needed to conduct a fair inquiry.

4.8 THE SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT PROCESS

The Complaints Committee/s needs to have information on the six stages (including fifteen steps), detailed below, for addressing a complaint of workplace sexual harassment.



STAGE ONE: RECEIPT OF THE COMPLAINT

A fair, prompt, and impartial inquiry process starts with a Complaints Committee capable of creating an environment of trust and confidence throughout the inquiry.

Step 1 : Receive and Acknowledge Receipt of the Complaint

The complainant submits a sexual harassment complaint in writing within three months of the last alleged incident to the Complaints Committee or any other person designated by the organization/ District Officer (i.e. Nodal Officer) to receive and manage complaints of sexual harassment.

Training and Skill Building : An Institutional Responsibility

It is important that both the Committee and any other person designated by the organization/ District Officer to receive or otherwise handle a sexual harassment complaint has there quired competency and skill building training formanaging a complaint and/or any concern related to workplace sexual harassment.

Upon receipt, the complaint should be reviewed for:

1. In the context of workplace that the sexual harassment complaint is to be met with under the Act, such as, Service Rules, Workplace Policy, Vishaka Guidelines and related laws.
2. Clarity in the complaint.
3. Additional information needed from the complainant.

The complainant will be notified in writing to acknowledge receipt.

Elements of the Behaviour

The complaint needs to satisfy the following elements:

- 1** The respondent displayed a potentially improper and/or offensive conduct which may come within workplace sexual harassment;
- 2** The behaviour was directed at the complainant;
- 3** The complainant experienced harm.
- 4** The behavior occurred in the workplace or at any location/any event related to work

Step 2: Meet and Talk to the Complainant to Explore Options for Formal and Informal Resolution

The complainant needs to be informed about the ensuing process and the informal or formal options available for the redress.

Step 3: Informal Mechanism

If the complainant chooses to adopt the informal process to resolve her complaint/experience of workplace sexual harassment, then it is the responsibility of the person designated to receive and manage the Complaints Committee to explore enabling ways to address the complaint. This can include counselling, educating, orienting, or warning the respondent to promptly stop the unwelcome behaviour or appointing a neutral person to act as a conciliator between the parties to resolve the complaint through conciliation.

However, before recommending conciliation, the Committee must assess the severity of the situation and if necessary, advise and enable the complainant to opt for the formal route. At no point, the Complaints Committee will advise the complainant to resolve the matter directly with the respondent. Where such an informal process is successful, such resolution is to be recorded by the conciliator and forwarded to the ICC/LCC who in turn will forward the same to the employer/District Officer for further action based on the resolution. Employers/District Officers are responsible for taking steps to ensure that the complainant is not subject to any backlash.

The choice of a formal process rests with the complainant even if the person responsible for managing the complaint believes that this can be resolved through an informal process.

Step 4: Formal Mechanism

1. If the complainant opts for formal redress, or the nature of the complaint is serious which calls for formal redress, then the Complaints Committee responds to the complaint.

2. Complaints Committee/s members must be free of any conflict of interest with either the concerned parties or with the outcome.
3. Ensure that the independent third party member has sound knowledge, skill, and experience in dealing with workplace sexual harassment complaints.

Step 5: Respondent and Response

1. As per the procedure provided in the Service Rule; or in absence of the same
2. Within seven days of receiving a complaint, the Complaints Committee will inform the respondent in writing that a complaint has been received.
3. The respondent will have an opportunity to respond to the complaint in writing within ten days thereafter.

STAGE TWO: PLANNING CAREFULLY

Step 6: Prepare the File

A sound inquiry relies on sound preparation. This includes taking into account the following steps:

1. Documentation

Create an independent confidential file of the complaint and all subsequent related documentation.

2. Review Law & Policy

Have a clear knowledge and understanding of the Act/Rules as well as the relevant Service Rules, Workplace Policy, Vishaka Guidelines, existing practices and related laws.

3. Make a List

Make a list of all the dates and events relating to the written complaint as well as the names of witnesses, where applicable.

Relevant Witnesses

The complaint may include the names of people believed to have witnessed the alleged incidents or those who may have been aware of other information directly related to the complaint. The respondent may also include the names of witnesses. In addition, the Complaints Committee also has the discretion to call any person as a witness, who it believes, has something to contribute to the inquiry process.

4. Supporting Documents

Obtain and review all supporting documents relevant to the complaint, including those presented by the complainant and the respondent.

5. Act Quickly

Create a plan. This can be used as an initial checklist to ensure that all of the critical elements are covered. It includes:

- a. The names of the parties and witnesses to be interviewed
- b. Any documentary support that needs to be examined
- c. Timeline

Preparing the Plan - Key Elements to Consider

1. Defining the Issues

What is the complaint

Questions or points that require clarification

2. Determining a violation of the Policy/Act

What information is needed to determine that there has been a violation

3. Logistics

Venue for conducting the interviews. Are special logistics required

Creating timelines for each

4. Critical Information

What documents need to be looked at

Witnesses to be questioned and in what order

5. Areas of Questioning

Questions for each specific incident and party/witness

Questions for each particular issue

Issues likely to require follow-up

Step 7: Consideration

1. Interim Measures

While a complaint is pending inquiry, a complainant can make a written request for her transfer or the transfer of the respondent, or for leave (upto 3 months). She can also request the Complaints Committee to restrain the respondent from reporting on her work performance or writing her confidential report or supervising her academic activities (in case she is in educational institution). Even in the absence of such a request, the Complaints Committee must take corrective action. It is essential to take these actions in order to prevent potential *ongoing sexual harassment*.

2. Support

Maintain clear, timely communication with the parties throughout the process. Provide complainants with any specific assistance they may require, such as counselling, addressing health-related concerns or sanctioning of leave.

STAGE THREE: INTERVIEWS

Step 8: Prepare an Interview Plan for the Hearing: Complainant, Witnesses, Respondent

1. Based on the results of the previous steps and before conducting interviews, the Complaints Committee should decide which issues need to be pursued for questioning.
2. Interviews are meant to obtain information that is relevant to the complaint from individuals.
3. Interviews should be conducted with each person *separately and in confidence*. *The complainant and the respondent should not be brought face to face with each other.*

Interviewing Tips

1. Introduction

Questioning the parties and witnesses in a situation of workplace sexual harassment is a sensitive task. The Complaints Committee must therefore proceed with empathy, while appreciating at times, a different version of the facts.

2. Questioning

Determine beforehand the following:

- Date, time, place and order of interviews
- Questions and their order
- Time for each interview

Generally rely on questions related to **who, what, where, when and how**. Remember:

- Questions ought to be clear and focused.
- Obtain as much information as possible through the interview.
- Do not share information gathered from other sources.

3. Choose an Appropriate Location

To create trust, comfort and openness

4. Explain the Interview Process

Explain how the interview will be conducted and what is expected

5. Records of the Interview

Take notes and explain the need for a proper record

6. Manage the Interview

The Chairperson of the Complaints Committee is responsible for ensuring the interviews are correctly carried out and due process followed

7. Sign Statements

At the conclusion of the interview, have those interviewed, sign and date statements made and recorded before the Complaints Committee

Step 9: Assess the Completeness of the Information Collected

At this stage, the Complaints Committee should review the information gathered and their factual relevance to each aspect of the complaint. This will help determine whether there is enough information to make a finding on the complaint.

STAGE FOUR: REASONING

Step 10: Once the information and review is complete, the Complaints Committee will make its reasoned finding(s), which involves having to:-

- Identify the substance of each aspect of the complaint.
- Determine, whether or not, on a **balance of probability**, the unwelcome sexual harassment took place.
- Check that such behaviour/conduct falls within the definition of sexual harassment set out in the relevant Act/Rules, Policy, Service Rules or law.
- Comment on any underlying factor(s) that may have contributed to the incident.

Step 11: Create a timeline to help establish the sequence of events related to the complaint.

Step 12: Compare similarities and differences within each of the statements made by the interviewees.

STAGE FIVE: FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Step 13: Finding

Based on the above, the Complaints Committee must arrive at a finding of whether the complaint is upheld, not upheld or inconclusive.

Provided, where both the parties are employees, before finalising the findings, the ICC/LCC shall share its finding with both the parties and provide them an opportunity to make representation against it before the Committee.

Step 14: Recommendations

Based on its findings, the Complaints Committee shall then make appropriate recommendations which may include:

1. Where the Complaints Committee is unable to uphold the complaint, it shall recommend no action.
2. Where the Complaints Committee upholds the Complaint, it may recommend such action as stated within the relevant Policy or Service Rules, which may include a warning to terminate.

In case service rules do not exist, recommended action may include:

- Disciplinary action, including a written apology, reprimand, warning, censure;
- Withholding promotion/ pay raise/ increment;
- Termination;
- Counselling;
- Community service.

3. The Complaints Committee may also recommend financial damages to the complainant, while deciding the amount they shall take into consideration:

- Mental trauma, pain, suffering and emotional distress caused;
- Medical expenses incurred;
- Loss of career opportunity;
- Income and financial status of the respondent.

If the amount is not paid it can be recovered as an arrear of land revenue.

4. The Complaints Committee can also give additional recommendations to address the underlying factors contributing to sexual harassment at the workplace.

STAGE SIX: REPORT**Step 15: Writing the Report**

The Complaints Committee will prepare a final report that contains the following elements:

- A description of the different aspects of the complaint;
- A description of the process followed;
- A description of the background information and documents that support or refute each aspect of the complaint;
- An analysis of the information obtained;
- Findings as stated above;
- Recommendations.

An inquiry must be completed within 90 days and a final report submitted to the Employer or District Officer (as the case may be) within ten days thereafter. Such report will also be made available to the concerned parties. The Employer or District Officer is obliged to act on the recommendations within 60 days. Any person not satisfied with the findings or recommendations of the Complaints Committee or non-implementation of the recommendations, may appeal in an appropriate court or tribunal, as prescribed under the Service Rules or where no such service rules exist, in such manner as may be prescribed.

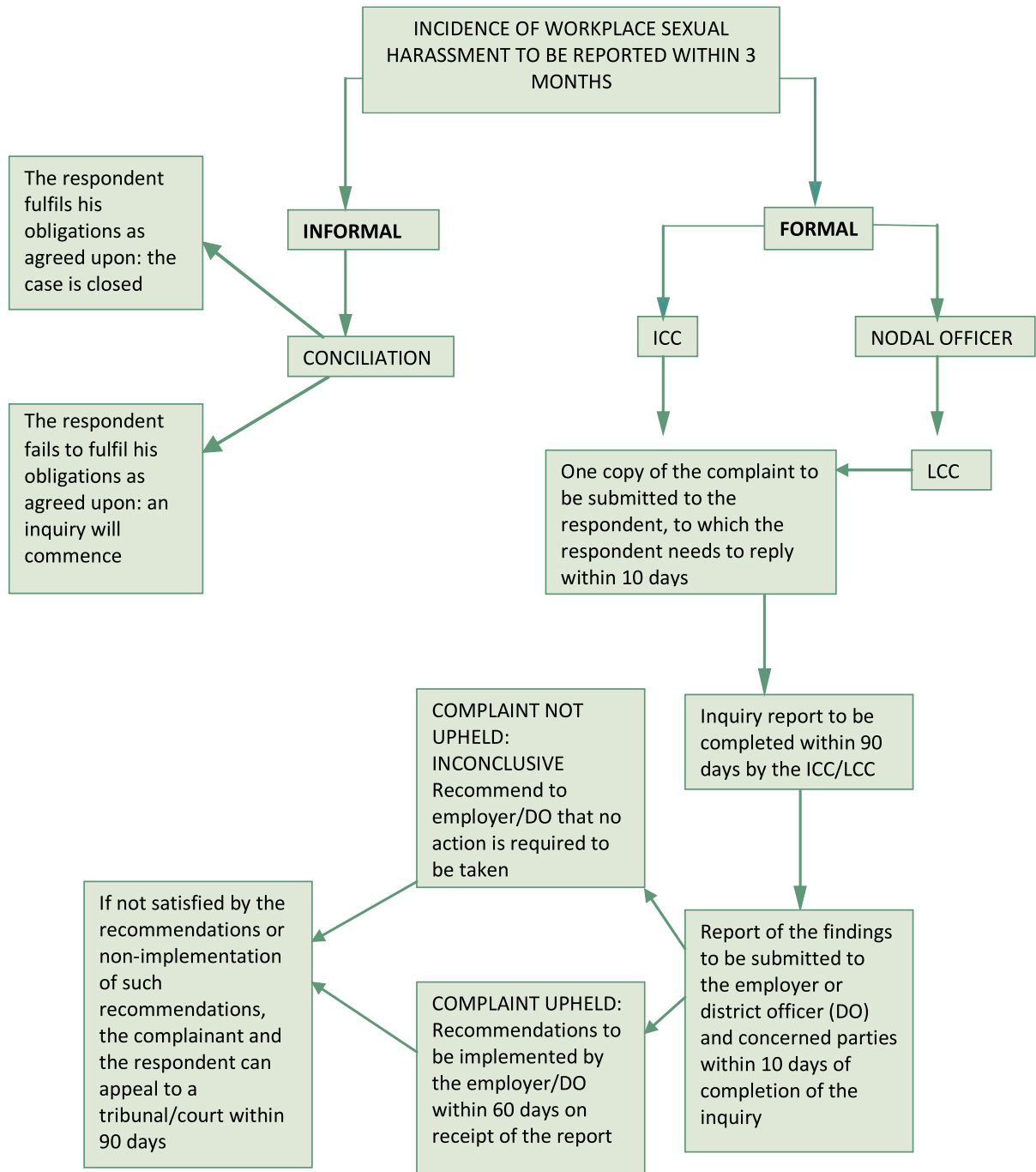
Given that most workspaces today are gender unequal and male-dominated, it is important that complaints by women be treated fairly and not dismissed. The mere inability to substantiate a complaint or provide adequate proof will not attract legal action against the complainant. However, making a false or malicious complaint or producing a forged or misleading document is an offence.

4.9 AT A GLANCE

1) Complaints Committee's Checklist

- Review the written complaints and response to complaints
- Review the applicable policy, the Act/Rules, Vishaka Guidelines and other relevant laws
- Develop a plan
- Meet with the complainant
- Meet with the respondent
- Meet with the witnesses
- Record statements and have them dated and signed
- Review and adapt the plan, as needed
- Proceed with further interviews, as needed
- Analyze all the facts to develop reasoning
- Arrive at the findings
- Give recommendations
- Prepare the report
- Submit the file to the organization or District Officer for implementation of the recommendations and for safe keeping.

INQUIRY PROCESS AT A GLANCE





2) Timelines as per the Act

Submission of Complaint	Within 3 months of the last incident
Notice to the Respondent	Within 7 days of receiving copy of the complaint
Completion of Inquiry	Within 90 days
Submission of Report by ICC/LCC to employer/DO	Within 10 days of completion of the inquiry
Implementation of Recommendations	Within 60 days
Appeal	Within 90 days of the recommendations

3) Confidentiality

The Act prohibits the publication or making known the contents of a complaint and the inquiry proceedings. Any breach of confidentiality will result in specific consequences.

The Act prohibits the disclosure of:

- Contents of the complaint;
- Identity and address of complainant, respondent and witnesses; Information pertaining to conciliatory/inquiry proceedings or recommendations of the ICC/LCC;
- Action taken by the employer/DO.

Accountability: Any person entrusted with the duty to handle or deal with the complaint, inquiry or any recommendations or action taken under the provisions of this Act.

Consequences: As per the Service Rules or Rs.5,000/ to be collected by the employer.

Exception: Dissemination of information regarding the justice secured without disclosure of name, address, identity and particulars of complainant or witnesses.

Section 4 completes the details of the Complaints Committee process in addressing formal complaints. It serves as a guideline to action in providing appropriate redress. The manner in which a complaint is addressed will make all the difference to the equal rights of working women as well as the kind of workplace culture being promoted.

Monitoring

“Vishaka was a victory for all women”
Bhanwari Devi

This section refers to ways in which application of the Act at all workplaces is monitored. Monitoring is a way to ensure compliance of the Act on the ground. As an additional means of monitoring, the Act mandates the submission of Annual Reports with specific information as well as specific consequences where compliance is lacking.

The Act authorizes Appropriate Government to monitor the implementation of the Act. As per the Act, Appropriate Government means:

- i. In relation to a workplace which is established, owned, controlled or wholly or substantially financed by funds provided directly or indirectly-
 - a. By the Central Government or the Union Territory administration, the Central Government;
 - b. By the State Government, the State Government;
- ii. In relation to any workplace not covered under sub-clause (i) and falling within its territory, the State Government;

Thus to monitor the Act, the Appropriate Government has the authority to undertake any of the following measures:

5.1 Inspection

In relation to workplace sexual harassment, when it is in the public interest or in the interest of women employees, every employer/District Officer can be ordered by the Appropriate Government i.e. State and Central Government, to make available any information, record or document, including opening its workplace for inspection relating to the same.

5.2 Annual Report

The Appropriate Government is entrusted with the monitoring of the implementation of this Act and for maintaining the data on the number of cases filed and disposed of under it. In particular, the Act mandates submission of an Annual Report by the ICC/LCC to the employer/District Officer.



The District Officer will forward a brief report on the annual reports to the appropriate State Government. Such reports must include the following information:

- a. No. of complaints received;
- b. No. of complaints disposed of;
- c. No. of cases pending for more than 90 days;
- d. No. of workshops/awareness programmes carried out;
- e. Nature of action taken by the employer/DO;

The Report of ICC will be forwarded to the DO through the employer.

5.3 Penalties

An employer can be subjected to a penalty of up to INR 50,000 for:

- Failure to constitute Internal Complaints Committee
- Failure to act upon recommendations of the Complaints Committee; or
- Failure to file an annual report to the District Officer where required; or
- Contravening or attempting to contravene or abetting contravention of the Act or Rules.

Where an employer repeats a breach under the Act, they shall be subject to:

- Twice the punishment or higher punishment if prescribed under any other law for the same offence.
- Cancellation/Withdrawal/Non-renewal of registration/license required for carrying on business or activities.

Monitoring is a critical yardstick to measure success in terms of compliance with the Act. Additionally, it highlights those areas, in terms of law and practice, which may require improvement and/or additional information and guidance at both the State as well as the workplace levels.

Global Norms and Good Practices

Increasing awareness and compliance with international standards is a reminder that we must not lose sight of the goal. Over the years, the international community has developed benchmarks that provide guidance on what the laws around workplace sexual harassment should look like in practice. The key benchmarks are listed below:

1. Recognition that workplace sexual harassment is a form of human rights violation.ⁱ
2. Recognition that sexual harassment is a form of gender-specific violence.ⁱⁱ
3. Equality, dignity and worth of a human person must be emphasized.
4. Gender-based violence includes sexual harassment and impairs the enjoyment by women of several basic human rights and fundamental freedoms.ⁱⁱⁱ Some of these rights include:
 - The right to life, the right to liberty and security of the person.
 - The right to equal protection under the law.
 - The right to the highest standard attainable of physical and mental health.
 - The right to just and favourable conditions of work.^{iv}
5. Eliminating violence against women and advancing women's equality includes the right to be free from workplace sexual harassment.^v
6. Legislation on violence against women should define violence to include sexual harassment. Such legislation should also recognize sexual harassment as a form of discrimination and a violation of women's rights with health and safety consequences.^{vi}
7. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has also drawn specific attention to domestic workers, who have a right to “enjoy effective protection against all forms of abuse, harassment and violence.”^{vii}

In terms of practice, international law and policy frameworks have an important role to play in encouraging the adoption of an understanding of sexual harassment as a fundamental human right and equality issue, and not just a problem for labour/employment law to solve.

Converting these concepts into practice involves constant monitoring and adapting to changing circumstances. As a start, six simple steps to keep in mind and practice in any workplace should involve the following:

1. Make sure there is a policy that has been “effectively” communicated to all workers, irrespective of whether they are paid or volunteers.
2. Display details of both informal and formal ways available to a worker to address/complain about workplace sexual harassment.
3. Undertake orientation on workplace sexual harassment for all workers in respective organizations, establishments or institutions.
4. A Complaints Committee which is trained in terms of skill and capacity is critical for building trust.
5. Encourage senior persons/leaders/supervisors or any person who can influence employment-related decisions, to become role models.
6. Men and women should be included in building a culture which no longer tolerates workplace sexual harassment.

Legally, workplace sexual harassment can no longer be dismissed as some moral transgression. The Vishaka Guidelines raised that bar, when for the first time it recognized “each incident of sexual harassment” as a violation of the fundamental right to equality. That notion has found its way into the Act, which promotes the right of women as citizens to a workplace free of sexual harassment. Complaints Committees at all workplaces are now charged with the role to ensure that the right remains intact, through a fair, informed, user-friendly process of redress.

Prioritising prevention and establishing a redress mechanism, which comprises of 50 per cent women, a woman chair and an external third party expert, is India’s innovative model in responding to working women’s experience of sexual harassment. Assuming adequate changes follow, in both law and practice to meet global benchmarks, that model can evolve into an exemplary best practice. To get there, workplaces in India today, must rise to the requirement of promoting gender equality.

ⁱ General Recommendation 12 of 1989, Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

ⁱⁱ General Recommendation 19 of 1992, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Article 3, Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, 1993.

^v The Beijing Platform of Action drawn at the United Nations’ Women’s Conference in Beijing in 1995.

^{vi} United Nations UN Division for the Advancement of Women *Handbook for Legislation on Violence Against Women* (UN Handbook).

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/handbook/Handbook%20for%20legislation%20on%20violence%20against%20women.pdf>

^{vii} Article 5, ILO Decent Work for Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189).





Towards a new dawn

Government of India
Ministry of Women and Child Development



भारत का राजपत्र The Gazette of India

असाधारण

EXTRAORDINARY

भाग II—खण्ड 3—उप-खण्ड (i)

PART II—Section 3—Sub-section (i)

प्राधिकार से प्रकाशित

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महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्रालय

अधिसूचना

नई दिल्ली, 9 दिसम्बर, 2013

सा.का.नि. 769(अ).—केंद्रीय सरकार, महिलाओं का कार्यस्थल पर लैंगिक उत्पीड़न (निवारण, प्रतिषेध एवं प्रतितोष) अधिनियम, 2013 (2013 का 14) की धारा 29 द्वारा प्रदत्त शक्तियों का प्रयोग करते हुए, निम्नलिखित नियम बनाती है, अर्थात्:—

1. संक्षिप्त नाम और प्रारंभ.—(1) इन नियमों का संक्षिप्त महिलाओं का कार्यस्थल पर लैंगिक उत्पीड़न (निवारण, प्रतिषेध एवं प्रतितोष) नियम, 2013 है।

(2) ये राजपत्र में प्रकाशन की तारीख को प्रवृत्त होंगे।

2. परिभाषाएं.—इन नियमों में, जब तक संदर्भ में अन्यथा अपेक्षित न हो, —

(क) "अधिनियम" से कार्यस्थल पर महिलाओं का कार्यस्थल पर लैंगिक उत्पीड़न (निवारण, प्रतिषेध एवं प्रतितोष) अधिनियम, 2013 (2013 का 14) अभिप्रेत है;

(ख) "शिकायत" से धारा 9 के अधीन की गई शिकायत अभिप्रेत है;

(ग) "शिकायत समिति" से आंतरिक समिति अथवा स्थानीय समिति अभिप्रेत है;

(घ) "घटना" से धारा 2 के खंड (द) में यथा-परिभाषित लैंगिक उत्पीड़न की घटना अभिप्रेत है;

(ङ) "धारा" से अधिनियम की कोई धारा अभिप्रेत है;

(च) "विशेष शिक्षक" से कोई ऐसा व्यक्ति अभिप्रेत है जो विशेष जरूरतों वाले लोगों के साथ ऐसे ढंग से संचार करने के लिए प्रशिक्षित है, जिससे उनके व्यक्तिगत मतभेदों एवं आवश्यकताओं का समाधान होता है;

(छ) यहां शब्द और पद जो यहां प्रयुक्त हैं और परिभाषित नहीं किए गए हैं, किंतु अधिनियम में परिभाषित किए गए हैं, उनके अर्थ वही होंगे, जो अधिनियम में दिए गए हैं।

3. आंतरिक समिति के सदस्यों के लिए फीस या भत्ते :

(1) गैर-सरकारी संगठनों में नियुक्त सदस्य, आंतरिक समिति की कार्यवाहियों के आयोजन के लिए प्रतिदिन 200 रुपये के भत्ते के हकदार होंगे, और उक्त सदस्य रेलगाड़ी से थ्री टायर वातानुकूलन या वातानुकूलित बस से तथा आटोरिक्शा या टैक्सी से अथवा यात्रा पर उसके द्वारा खर्च की गई वास्तविक राशि, जो भी, कम हो प्रतिपूर्ति के भी हकदार होंगे।

(2) नियोक्ता उप-नियम (1) में निर्दिष्ट भत्तों के संदाय के लिए उत्तरदायी होगा।

4. लैंगिक उत्पीड़न से संबंधित मुद्दों से परिचित व्यक्ति : धारा 7 की उप-धारा (1) के खण्ड (ग) के प्रयोजन के लिए लैंगिक उत्पीड़न से संबंधित मुद्दों से परिचित व्यक्ति ऐसा व्यक्ति होगा जिसे लैंगिक उत्पीड़न से संबंधित मुद्दों पर विशेषज्ञता प्राप्त हो तथा इसमें निम्नलिखित में से कोई सम्मिलित हो सकेगा -

- (क) समाज कार्य के क्षेत्र में कम से कम 5 साल के अनुभव वाला कोई सामाजिक कार्यकर्ता जो महिलाओं के सशक्तीकरण तथा विशिष्टतया कार्यस्थल पर लैंगिक उत्पीड़न की समस्या को दूर करने के लिए अनुकूल सामाजिक स्थितियों का सृजन करने का मार्ग प्रशस्त करता है;
- (ख) ऐसा व्यक्ति जिसे श्रम, रोजगार, सिविल या दांडिक विधि में अर्हता प्राप्त है।

5. स्थानीय समिति के अध्यक्ष तथा सदस्यों के लिए फीस या भत्ता :

- (1) स्थानीय समिति के अध्यक्ष उक्त समिति की कार्यवाहियों के आयोजन के लिए प्रतिदिन 250 रुपये (दो सौ पचास रुपये) के भत्ते के लिए हकदार होंगे।
- (2) धारा 7 की उप-धारा (1) के खंड (ख) और खंड (घ) के अधीन नामनिर्दिष्ट सदस्यों से भिन्न स्थानीय समिति के सदस्य, उक्त समिति की कार्यवाहियों के आयोजन के लिए प्रतिदिन दो सौ रुपये के भत्ते के हकदार होंगे और रेलगाड़ी से श्री टायर वातानुकूलन, वातानुकूलित बस से तथा आटोरिक्षा या टैक्सी से अथवा यात्रा पर उसके द्वारा खर्च की गई वास्तविक लागत जो भी कम हो, की प्रतिपूर्ति के भी हकदार होंगे।
- (3) जिला अधिकारी, उपनियम (1) और उपनियम (2) में निर्दिष्ट भत्तों के संदाय के लिए उत्तरदायी होगा।

6. लैंगिक उत्पीड़न की शिकायत : धारा 9 की उप-धारा (2) के प्रयोजन के लिए,

- (i) जहां व्यथित महिला, अपनी शारीरिक असमर्थता के कारण शिकायत करने में असमर्थ है, वहां निम्नलिखित द्वारा शिकायत फाइल की जा सकती है -
- (क) उसका नातेदार या मित्र ; अथवा ;
- (ख) उसका सहकर्मी; या
- (ग) राष्ट्रीय महिला आयोग या राज्य महिला आयोग का कोई अधिकारी; या
- (घ) व्यथित महिला की लिखित सम्मति से कोई ऐसा व्यक्ति जिसे घटना की जानकारी है।
- (ii) जहां व्यथित महिला, अपनी मानसिक अक्षमता के कारण शिकायत करने में असमर्थ है, वहां निम्नलिखित द्वारा शिकायत फाइल की जा सकती है -
- (क) उसका नातेदार या मित्र; अथवा
- (ख) कोई विशेष शिक्षक; या
- (ग) कोई अर्हित मनोविकार विज्ञानी या मनोवैज्ञानिक; अथवा
- (घ) संरक्षक या प्राधिकारी जिसके अधीन वह उपचार या देखरेख प्राप्त कर रही है; अथवा
- (ङ) उसके नातेदार या दोस्त या विशेष शिक्षक या अर्हता-प्राप्त मनोविकार विज्ञानी या मनोवैज्ञानिक या संरक्षक अथवा प्राधिकारी जिसके अधीन वह उपचार या देखरेख प्राप्त कर रही है, के साथ संयुक्त रूप से कोई ऐसा व्यक्ति जिसे लैंगिक उत्पीड़न की जानकारी है।
- (iii) जहां व्यथित महिला, किसी कारण से शिकायत करने में असमर्थ है, वहां उसकी लिखित सम्मति से ऐसे व्यक्ति द्वारा शिकायत फाइल की जा सकती है, जिसे घटना की जानकारी है।
- (iv) जहां व्यथित महिला की मृत्यु हो जाती है वहां एक शिकायत, घटना के जानकार द्वारा उसके विधिक वारिस की सम्मति से लिखित रूप में फाइल की जा सकेगी।

7. शिकायत की जांच का ढंग -

- (1) शिकायत फाइल करते समय, धारा 11 के उपबंधों के अधीन शिकायतकर्ता समर्थक दस्तावेजों तथा साक्षियों के नाम एवं पता के साथ शिकायत की छह प्रतियां शिकायत समिति को प्रस्तुत करेगा।
- (2) शिकायत प्राप्त होने पर, शिकायत समिति उपनियम (1) के अधीन व्यथित महिला से प्राप्त प्रतियों में से एक प्रति सात कार्य दिवस की अवधि के भीतर प्रत्यर्थी को भेजेगी।
- (3) प्रत्यर्थी उपनियम (1) के अधीन विनिर्दिष्ट दस्तावेजों की प्राप्ति की तारीख से दस दिन से अधिक अवधि के भीतर दस्तावेजों की सूची तथा साक्षियों के नाम एवं पता के साथ शिकायत पर अपना उत्तर फाइल करेगा।
- (4) शिकायत समिति नैसर्गिक न्याय के सिद्धांतों के अनुसार, शिकायत की जांच करेगी।
- (5) शिकायत समिति को जांच की कार्यवाही समाप्त करने या शिकायत पर एक पक्षीय निर्णय देने का अधिकार होगा, यदि शिकायतकर्ता या प्रत्यर्थी पर्याप्त कारण के बिना यथास्थिति अध्यक्ष या पीठासीन अधिकारी द्वारा आयोजित लगातार तीन सुनवाईयों में अनुपस्थित रहता है या रहती है :

परंतु संबंधित पक्षकार को अग्रिम में लिखित रूप में पन्द्रह दिन का नोटिस दिए बिना ऐसी समाप्ति या एक पक्षीय आदेश पारित नहीं किया जा सकेगा।

- (6) पक्षकारों को शिकायत समिति के समक्ष कार्यवाही के किसी चरण में अपने मामले का प्रतिनिधित्व करने के लिए किसी विधिक व्यावसायी को लाने की अनुमति नहीं होगी।
- (7) जांच का संचालन करते समय, शिकायत समिति के कम से कम तीन सदस्य जिसमें यथास्थिति पीठासीन अधिकारी अथवा अध्यक्ष, हो, उपस्थित होंगे।

8. जांच लंबित रहने के दौरान शिकायतकर्ता को अन्य अनुतोष : व्यथित महिला के लिखित रूप में अनुरोध पर, शिकायत समिति नियोक्ता से निम्नलिखित की सिफारिश कर सकती है :

- (क) व्यथित महिला के कार्य निष्पादन या उसकी गोपनीय रिपोर्ट लिखने तथा इसे किसी अन्य अधिकारी को आबंटित करने से प्रत्यर्थी को अवरुध करना।
- (ख) शैक्षिक संस्था के मामले में व्यथित महिला की किसी शैक्षिक गतिविधि का पर्यवेक्षण करने से प्रत्यर्थी को अवरुध करना।

9. लैंगिक उत्पीड़न के लिए कार्रवाई करने की रीति : ऐसे मामलों को छोड़कर, जहां सेवा नियम विद्यमान हैं जहां शिकायत समिति इस निष्कर्ष पर पहुंचती है कि प्रत्यर्थी के विरुद्ध अभिकथन साबित हो गए हैं, यह यथास्थिति नियोक्ता या जिलाधिकारी से कार्रवाई करने की सिफारिश कर सकती है जिसमें लिखित रूप में क्षमा याचना करना, चेतावनी जारी करना, डांटना या निंदा करना, प्रोन्नति रोकना, वेतनबढ़ोत्तरी या वेतनवृद्धि रोकना, प्रत्यर्थी को सेवा समाप्ति करना या परामर्श सत्र में भाग लेने या सामुदायिक सेवा करने का आदेश देना शामिल है।

10. मिथ्या अथवा दुर्भावपूर्ण शिकायत अथवा मिथ्या साक्ष्य पर कार्रवाई : उन मामलों के सिवाय जहां सेवा नियम विद्यमान हैं, जहां शिकायत समिति इस निष्कर्ष पर पहुंचती है कि प्रत्यर्थी के विरुद्ध अभिकथन दुर्भावपूर्ण है अथवा व्यथित महिला अथवा शिकायत करने वाली अन्य किसी व्यक्ति ने यह जानते हुए कि यह मिथ्या है शिकायत की है अथवा व्यथित महिला या शिकायत करने वाले किसी व्यक्ति ने कूटरधित अथवा भ्रामक दस्तावेज प्रस्तुत किए हैं तो यह यथास्थिति नियोक्ता अथवा जिला अधिकारी को नियम 9 के उपबंधों के अनुसार कार्रवाई करने की सिफारिश कर सकेगी।

11. अपील : धारा 18 के उपबंधों के अधीन, धारा 13 की उप-धारा (2) के अधीन या धारा 13 की उप-धारा (3) के खण्ड (i) या खण्ड (ii) के अधीन अथवा धारा 14 की उपधारा (1) या उप-धारा (2) या धारा 17 के अधीन की गयी सिफारिशों या ऐसी सिफारिशों को कार्यान्वित न किए जाने से व्यथित कोई व्यक्ति औद्योगिक नियोजन (स्थायी आदेश) अधिनियम, 1946 (1946 का 20) की धारा 2 के खण्ड (क) के अधीन अधिसूचित अपीली प्राधिकारी को अपील कर सकेगा।

12. धारा 16 के उपबंधों के उल्लंघन के लिए दंड - धारा 17 के उपबंधों के अधीन, यदि कोई व्यक्ति धारा 16 के उपबंधों का उल्लंघन करता है, तो नियोक्ता ऐसे व्यक्ति से शरित के रूप में पांच हजार रुपये की राशि की वसूली करेगा।

13. कार्यशालाएं आदि आयोजित करने की रीति : धारा 19 के उपबंधों के अधीन, प्रत्येक नियोक्ता,-

- (क) कार्यस्थल पर लैंगिक उत्पीड़न के प्रतिशोध, निवारण एवं प्रतितोष के लिए एक आंतरिक नीति या चार्टर या संकल्प या घोषणा तैयार करेगा तथा उसका व्यापक प्रसार करेगा, जिसका आशय लिंग संवेदी सुरक्षित स्थानों को बढ़ावा देना तथा ऐसे अंतर्निहित कारकों का निवारण करना है, जो महिलाओं के विरुद्ध प्रतिकूल कार्य परिवेश में योगदान करते हैं;
- (ख) आंतरिक समिति के सदस्यों के लिए, प्रबोधन कार्यक्रमों एवं सेमिनारों का क्रियान्वयन करेगा;
- (ग) कर्मचारी जागरूकता कार्यक्रमों का क्रियान्वयन करेगा तथा संवादों के लिए मंच का सृजन करेगा जिसमें पंचायती राज संस्थाएं, ग्राम सभा, महिला समूह, मातृ समितियां, किशोर समूह, शहरी स्थानीय निकाय तथा कोई अन्य निकाय, जिसे आवश्यक समझा जाए, अंतर्बलित हो सकते हैं;
- (घ) आंतरिक समिति के सदस्यों के लिए क्षमता निर्माण एवं कौशल निर्माण कार्यक्रमों का संचालन करेगा;
- (ङ) आंतरिक समिति के सभी सदस्यों के नामों एवं संपर्क के ब्यौरों की घोषणा करेगा;
- (च) अधिनियम के उपबंधों के बारे में कर्मचारियों को संवेदनशील बनाने के लिए, कार्यशालाओं एवं जागरूकता कार्यक्रमों के आयोजन के लिए, राज्य सरकारों द्वारा विकसित मापदंडों का उपयोग करेगा।

14. वार्षिक रिपोर्टें तैयार करना : वार्षिक रिपोर्टें जिसे धारा 21 के अंतर्गत शिकायत समिति द्वारा तैयार किया जाएगा, में निम्नलिखित ब्यौरे होंगे :

- (क) वर्ष में प्राप्त लैंगिक उत्पीड़न की शिकायतों की संख्या;
- (ख) ऐसी शिकायतों की संख्या जिनका वर्ष के दौरान निस्तारण किया गया;
- (ग) ऐसे मामलों की संख्या जो नब्बे दिन से अधिक अवधि तक लंबित हैं;

- (घ) लैंगिक उत्पीड़न के विरुद्ध क्रियान्वित कार्यशालाओं या जागरूकता कार्यक्रमों की संख्या;
 (ङ) नियोक्ता या जिला अधिकारी द्वारा की गई कार्रवाई का स्वरूप।

[फा. सं. 19-5/2013-डब्ल्यूडब्ल्यू]

डॉ. श्रीरंजन, संयुक्त सचिव

MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

NOTIFICATION

New Delhi, the 9th December, 2013

G.S.R. 769(E).—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 29 of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (14 of 2013), the Central Government hereby makes the following rules, namely:—

1. Short title and commencement. – (1) These rules may be called the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Rules, 2013.

(2) They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.

2. Definitions. – In these rules, unless the context otherwise requires,–

- (a) "Act" means the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (14 of 2013);
 (b) "complaint" means the complaint made under section 9;
 (c) "Complaints Committee" means the Internal Committee or the Local Committee, as the case may be;
 (d) "incident" means an incident of sexual harassment as defined in clause (n) of section 2;
 (e) "section" means a section of the Act;
 (f) "special educator" means a person trained in communication with people with special needs in a way that addresses their individual differences and needs;
 (g) words and expressions used herein and not defined but defined in the Act shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in the Act.

3. Fees or allowances for Member of Internal Committee.– (1) The Member appointed from amongst non-government organisations shall be entitled to an allowance of two hundred rupees per day for holding the proceedings of the Internal Committee and also the reimbursement of travel cost incurred in travelling by train in three tier air condition or air conditioned bus and auto rickshaw or taxi, or the actual amount spent by him on travel, whichever is less.

The employer shall be responsible for the payment of allowances referred to in sub-rule (1).

4. Person familiar with issues relating to sexual harassment.– Person familiar with the issues relating to sexual harassment for the purpose of clause (c) of sub-section (1) of section 7 shall be a person who has expertise on issues relating to sexual harassment and may include any of the following:–

- (a) a social worker with at least five years' experience in the field of social work which leads to creation of societal conditions favourable towards empowerment of women and in particular in addressing workplace sexual harassment;
 (b) a person who is familiar with labour, service, civil or criminal law.

1. Fees or allowances for Chairperson and Members of Local Committee.– (1) The Chairperson of the Local Committee shall be entitled to an allowance of two hundred and fifty rupees per day for holding the proceedings of the said Committee.

(2) The Members of the Local Committee other than the Members nominated under clauses (b) and (d) of sub-section (1) of section 7 shall be entitled to an allowance of two hundred rupees per day for holding the proceedings of the said Committee and also the reimbursement of travel cost incurred in travelling by train in three tier air condition or air conditioned bus and auto rickshaw or taxi, or the actual amount spent by him on travel, whichever is less.

The District Officer shall be responsible for the payment of allowances referred to in sub-rules (1) and (2).

6. Complaint of sexual harassment. – For the purpose of sub-section (2) of Section 9,–

- (i) where the aggrieved woman is unable to make a complaint on account of her physical incapacity, a complaint may be filed by –

- (a) her relative or friend; or
 - (b) her co-worker; or
 - (c) an officer of the National Commission for Women or State Women's Commission; or
 - (d) any person who has knowledge of the incident, with the written consent of the aggrieved woman;
- (ii) where the aggrieved woman is unable to make a complaint on account of her mental incapacity, a complaint may be filed by-
- (a) her relative or friend; or
 - (b) a special educator; or
 - (c) a qualified psychiatrist or psychologist; or
 - (d) the guardian or authority under whose care she is receiving treatment or care; or
 - (e) any person who has knowledge of the incident jointly with her relative or friend or a special educator or qualified psychiatrist or psychologist, or guardian or authority under whose care she is receiving treatment or care;
- (iii) where the aggrieved woman for any other reason is unable to make a complaint, a complaint may be filed by any person who has knowledge of the incident, with her written consent;
- (iv) where the aggrieved woman is dead, a complaint may be filed by any person who has knowledge of the incident, with the written consent of her legal heir.

7. **Manner of inquiry into complaint.**- (1) Subject to the provisions of section 11, at the time of filing the complaint, the complainant shall submit to the Complaints Committee, six copies of the complaint along with supporting documents and the names and addresses of the witnesses.

(2) On receipt of the complaint, the Complaints Committee shall send one of the copies received from the aggrieved woman under sub-rule (1) to the respondent within a period of seven working days.

(3) The respondent shall file his reply to the complaint along with his list of documents, and names and addresses of witnesses, within a period not exceeding ten working days from the date of receipt of the documents specified under sub-rule (1).

(4) The Complaints Committee shall make inquiry into the complaint in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

(5) The Complaints Committee shall have the right to terminate the inquiry proceedings or to give an *ex-parte* decision on the complaint, if the complainant or respondent fails, without sufficient cause, to present herself or himself for three consecutive hearings convened by the Chairperson or Presiding Officer, as the case may be:

Provided that such termination or *ex-parte* order may not be passed without giving a notice in writing, fifteen days in advance, to the party concerned.

(6) The parties shall not be allowed to bring in any legal practitioner to represent them in their case at any stage of the proceedings before the Complaints Committee.

(7) In conducting the inquiry, a minimum of three Members of the Complaints Committee including the Presiding Officer or the Chairperson, as the case may be, shall be present.

8. **Other relief to complainant during pendency of inquiry.**-The Complaints Committee at the written request of the aggrieved woman may recommend to the employer to-

- (a) restrain the respondent from reporting on the work performance of the aggrieved woman or writing her confidential report, and assign the same to another officer;
- (b) restrain the respondent in case of an educational institution from supervising any academic activity of the aggrieved woman.

9. **Manner of taking action for sexual harassment.**- Except in cases where service rules exist, where the Complaints Committee arrives at the conclusion that the allegation against the respondent has been proved, it shall recommend to the employer or the District Officer, as the case may be, to take any action including a written apology, warning, reprimand or censure, withholding of promotion, withholding of pay rise or increments, terminating the respondent from service or undergoing a counselling session or carrying out community service.

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10. Action for false or malicious complaint or false evidence.- Except in cases where service rules exist, where the Complaints Committee arrives at the conclusion that the allegation against the respondent is malicious or the aggrieved woman or any other person making the complaint has made the complaint knowing it to be false or the aggrieved woman or any other person making the complaint has produced any forged or misleading document, it may recommend to the employer or District Officer, as the case may be, to take action in accordance with the provisions of rule 9.

11. Appeal.- Subject to the provisions of section 18, any person aggrieved from the recommendations made under sub-section (2) of section 13 or under clauses (i) or clause (ii) of sub-section (3) of section 13 or sub-section (1) or sub-section (2) of section 14 or section 17 or non-implementation of such recommendations may prefer an appeal to the appellate authority notified under clause (a) of section 2 of the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946 (20 of 1946).

12. Penalty for contravention of provisions of section 16.- Subject to the provisions of section 17, if any person contravenes the provisions of section 16, the employer shall recover a sum of five thousand rupees as penalty from such person.

13. Manner to organise workshops, etc.- Subject to the provisions of section 19, every employer shall-

- (a) formulate and widely disseminate an internal policy or charter or resolution or declaration for prohibition, prevention and redressal of sexual harassment at the workplace intended to promote gender sensitive safe spaces and remove underlying factors that contribute towards a hostile work environment against women;
- (b) carry out orientation programmes and seminars for the Members of the Internal Committee;
- (c) carry out employees awareness programmes and create forum for dialogues which may involve Panchayati Raj Institutions, Gram Sabha, women's groups, mothers' committee, adolescent groups, urban local bodies and any other body as may be considered necessary;
- (d) conduct capacity building and skill building programmes for the Members of the Internal Committee;
- (e) declare the names and contact details of all the Members of the Internal Committee;
- (f) use modules developed by the State Governments to conduct workshops and awareness programmes for sensitising the employees with the provisions of the Act.

14. Preparation of annual report.- The annual report which the Complaints Committee shall prepare under Section 21, shall have the following details:-

- (a) number of complaints of sexual harassment received in the year;
- (b) number of complaints disposed off during the year;
- (c) number of cases pending for more than ninety days;
- (d) number of workshops or awareness programme against sexual harassment carried out;
- (e) nature of action taken by the employer or District Officer.

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Dr. SHREERANJAN, Jt. Secy.