



**SHARE MICRO FIN
LIMITED**

**“INTERNAL COMPLAINTS
COMMITTEE TO PREVENT
SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT THE
WORKPLACE.”**



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1. INTRODUCTION

Share Microfin Limited is committed to provide a place of work, free from sexual harassment, intimidation or exploitation. Company will operate a zero tolerance policy for any form of sexual harassment in the workplace, treat all incidents seriously and promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment. It is expected that all members and officials will treat one another and visitors to the company with respect. All members of the company, including those who are present for short term positions, are subject to this policy.

All complaints of sexual harassment will be taken seriously and treated with respect and in confidence. No one will be victimised for making such a complaint

2. WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT-?

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated. It includes situations where a person is asked to engage in sexual activity as a condition of that person's employment, as well as situations which create an environment which is hostile, intimidating or humiliating for the recipient.

Sexual harassment can involve one or more incidents and actions constituting harassment may be physical, verbal and non-verbal. Examples of conduct or behaviour which constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical conduct

- Unwelcome physical contact including patting, pinching, stroking, kissing, hugging, fondling, or inappropriate touching
- Physical violence, including sexual assault
- Physical contact, e.g. touching, pinching
- The use of job-related threats or rewards to solicit sexual favours

2. Verbal conduct

- Comments on a worker's appearance, age, private life, etc.
- Sexual comments, stories and jokes
- Sexual advances
- Repeated and unwanted social invitations for dates or physical intimacy
- Insults based on the sex of the worker
- Condescending or paternalistic remarks
- Sending sexually explicit messages (by phone or by email)

3. Non-verbal conduct

- Display of sexually explicit or suggestive material

- Sexually-suggestive gestures
- Whistling
- Leering

3. WHY SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMMITTEE

Sexual Harassment at workplace is a violation of women's/men's right to gender equality, life and liberty. It creates an insecure and hostile work environment, which discourages women's/men's participation in work, thereby adversely affecting their economic empowerment and their goals.

The following is also sexual harassment and is covered by the committee

- Eve-teasing.
- Jokes causing or likely to cause awkwardness or embarrassment.
- Any taunts.
- Gender based insults or sexist remarks.
- Unwelcome sexual overtone in any manner such as over telephone (telephone calls)
- Touching or brushing against any part of the body and the like.
- Displaying of pornographic or other offensive or derogatory pictures, cartoons, pamphlets or sayings.
- Forcible physical touch or molestation.
- Physical confinement against one's will and any other act likely to violate one's privacy.

4. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMITTEE IS:

- To prevent sexual harassment against women/men by promoting gender amity among employees.
- To make recommendations to the management for changes or elaboration in the rules, and to lay down procedures for the prohibition and prosecution of acts of discrimination and sexual harassment against women/men by the employees.
- To deal with cases of sexual harassment against women/men, in a time-bound manner.
- To recommend to the management the appropriate punitive action to be taken against the guilty party.

5. PREVENTIVE STEPS

All employers or persons in charge of work place whether in public or private sector should take appropriate steps to prevent sexual harassment. Without prejudice to the generality of this obligation they should take the following steps:

- (a) Express prohibition of sexual harassment as defined above at the work place should be notified, published and circulated in appropriate ways.

- (b) The Rules/Regulations of Government and Public Sector bodies relating to conduct and discipline should include rules/regulations prohibiting sexual harassment and provide for appropriate penalties in such rules against the offender.
- (c) Appropriate work conditions should be provided in respect of work, leisure, health and hygiene to further ensure that there is no hostile environment towards women at work places and no employee woman should have reasonable grounds to believe that she is disadvantaged in connection with her employment.

6. REDRESSAL PROCESS/FORMAL COMPLAINTS MECHANISM

- Any employee who feels and is being sexually harassed directly or indirectly may submit a complaint of the alleged incident to any member of the Committee in writing with his/her signature within 1 week from the date of occurrence of incident.
- The Committee will maintain a register to endorse the complaint received by it and keep the content confidential, if it is so desired, except to use the same for discreet investigation.
- The Committee will hold a meeting with the Complainant within 7 days of the receipt of the complaint.
- At the first meeting, the Committee members shall hear the Complainant and record his/her allegations. The Complainant can also submit any corroborative material with a documentary proof, oral or written material etc., to substantiate his/her complaint. If the Complainant does not wish to depose personally due to embarrassment of narration of event, a chosen committee member shall meet the concerned employee and record the statement.
- Thereafter, the person against whom complaint is made may be called for a deposition before the Committee and an opportunity will be given to him/her to give an explanation, where after, an “Enquiry” shall be conducted and concluded.
- In the event, the complaint does not fall under the purview of Sexual Harassment or the complaint does not mean an offence of Sexual Harassment, the same would be dropped after recording the reasons thereof.
- In case the complaint is found to be false, the Complainant shall, if deemed fit, be liable for appropriate disciplinary action by the Management.

7. INFORMAL COMPLAINTS MECHANISM

If the victim wishes to deal with the matter informally, the designated person will:

- give an opportunity to the alleged harasser to respond to the complaint
- ensure that the alleged harasser understands the complaints mechanism
- facilitate discussion between both parties to achieve an informal resolution which is acceptable to the complainant, or refer the matter to a designated Committee Member within the company to resolve the matter
- ensure that a confidential record is kept of what happens
- follow up after the outcome of the complaints mechanism to ensure that the behaviour has stopped
- ensure that the above is done speedily and within 7 days of the complaint being made

8. ENQUIRY PROCESS

- The Committee shall immediately proceed with the Enquiry and communicate the same to the Complainant and person against whom complaint is made.
- The Committee shall prepare and hand over the Statement of Allegation to the person against whom complaint is made and give him / her an opportunity to submit a written explanation if she / he so desires within 7 days of receipt of the same
- The Complainant shall be provided with a copy of the written explanation submitted by the person against whom complaint is made.
- If the Complainant or the person against whom complaint is made desires any witness/es to be called, they shall communicate in writing to the Committee the names of witness/es that they propose to call.
- If the Complainant desires to tender any documents by way of evidence before the Committee, she / he shall supply original copies of such documents. Similarly, if the person against whom complaint is made desires to tender any documents in evidence before the Committee he /she shall supply original copies of such documents. Both shall affix his /her signature on the respective documents to certify these to be original copies.
- The Committee shall call upon all witnesses mentioned by both the parties. The Committee shall complete the “Enquiry” within reasonable period but not beyond a month and communicate its findings and its recommendations for action to the Management. The report of the committee shall be treated as an enquiry report on the basis of which action will be taken against the employee

9. SANCTIONS AND DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

Anyone who has been found to have sexually harassed another person under the terms of this policy is liable to any of the following sanctions:

- verbal or written warning
- adverse performance evaluation
- reduction in wages
- transfer
- demotion
- suspension
- dismissal

The nature of the sanctions will depend on the gravity and extent of the harassment. Suitable deterrent sanctions will be applied to ensure that incidents of sexual harassment are not treated as trivial. Certain serious cases, including physical violence, will result in the immediate dismissal of the harasser.

10. IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POLICY

Share Microfin Limited will ensure that this policy is widely applicable to all relevant persons. It will be included in the staff handbook. All new employees must be trained on the content of this policy as part of their induction into the company. Every year, Share Microfin

Limited will require all employees to attend a refresher training course on the content of this policy. It is the responsibility of every head of the department to ensure that all his/her employees are aware of the policy.

11. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Share Microfin Limited recognises the importance of monitoring this sexual harassment policy and will ensure that it anonymously collects statistics and data as to how it is used and whether or not it is effective.

Supervisors, managers and those responsible for dealing with sexual harassment cases will report on compliance with this policy, including the number of incidents, how they were dealt with, and any recommendations made. This will be done on a yearly basis. As a result of this report, the company will evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and make any changes needed.

Intimidation, harassment and violence have no place in a democracy.
