

ahoy consulting

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ahoy consulting Policy on Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) of Women at Workplace

Introduction

This policy has been framed in accordance with the provisions of **"The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013"** and rules framed thereunder (hereinafter referred to as "the Act"). Accordingly, while the policy covers all the key aspects of the Act, for any further clarification reference shall always be made to the Act and the provisions of the Act shall prevail.

At ahoy consulting, we believe that our success is built on our people. We treat each other with **respect and dignity** and expect every employee to uphold this culture of inclusivity and fairness. We recruit competent and motivated people who respect our values, provide equal opportunities for their growth, protect their privacy, and **do not tolerate any form of harassment or discrimination**.

The **'Policy on Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace'** at ahoy consulting intends to provide protection against sexual harassment of women at workplace and to ensure prevention and effective redressal of complaints.

Definitions

1. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment may occur not only where a person uses sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, salary, or job of another person, but also between co-workers. It may also occur between an ahoy consulting employee and someone that employee deals with in the course of his/her work who is not employed by the Company.

"Sexual Harassment" includes any one or more of the following unwelcome acts or behavior (whether directly or by implication):

- A. a) Any unwelcome sexually determined behavior, or pattern of conduct, that would cause discomfort and/or humiliate a person at whom the behavior or conduct was directed, namely:
 - a. Physical contact and advances;
 - b. Demand or request for sexual favors;
 - c. Sexually colored remarks or remarks of a sexual nature about a person's clothing or body;
 - d. Showing pornography, making or posting sexual pranks, sexual teasing, sexual jokes, sexually demeaning or offensive pictures, cartoons or other materials through email, SMS, MMS etc.;
 - e. Repeatedly asking to socialize during off-duty hours or continued expressions of sexual interest against a person's wishes;
 - f. Giving gifts or leaving objects that are sexually suggestive;
 - g. Eve teasing, innuendos and taunts, physical confinement against one's will or any such act likely to intrude upon one's privacy;
 - h. Persistent watching, following, or contacting of a person; and
 - i. Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature.
- B. The following circumstances, if present in relation to any sexually determined act or behavior, amount to sexual harassment:
 - a. Implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment in employment;
 - b. Implied or explicit threat of detrimental treatment in employment;
 - c. Implied or explicit threat about the present or future employment status;
 - d. Interference with the person's work or creating an intimidating or offensive or hostile work environment; or
 - e. Humiliating treatment likely to affect her health or safety.

The **reasonable person standard** is used to determine whether the conduct was offensive. Importantly, harassment is judged not on the intent of the harasser but on the **experience of the aggrieved woman**.

2. Aggrieved Woman: A woman of any age, whether employed or not, who alleges to have been subjected to any act of sexual harassment, including contractual staff, temporary staff, interns, or visitors.

3. Respondent: A person against whom a complaint of sexual harassment has been made.

4. Employee: Any person employed at the workplace, whether on regular, temporary, contractual, ad-hoc, voluntary, or internship basis.

5. Workplace: Includes office premises, client locations, offsite meetings, virtual workplaces (emails, calls, chats), and transport provided by the company.

6. Employer: The person responsible for management, supervision, and control of the workplace.

Roles & Responsibilities

Responsibilities of Individuals:

- Refuse to participate in any activity which constitutes harassment.
- Support individuals in rejecting unwelcome behavior.
- Act as a witness if required.
- Respectfully inform others if their behavior is inappropriate.

Responsibilities of Managers:

- Ensure no employee is subjected to harassment.
- Foster awareness that harassment will not be tolerated.
- Ensure complaints are taken seriously.
- Ensure no victimization of complainant, respondent, or witnesses.

ahoy consulting management will ensure awareness, conduct regular workshops, display this policy at conspicuous places, and file the annual report as per law.

Redressal Mechanism – Formal Intervention

ahoy consulting has constituted an **Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)** at each location as per the Act.

Composition of ICC:

- Presiding Officer: A senior woman employee.
- At least 2 members from amongst employees, committed to women's causes and/or having legal knowledge.
- 1 external member familiar with sexual harassment issues.
- At least 50% women members.

Functions of ICC:

- Receive complaints.
- Conduct fair and unbiased inquiry.
- Submit findings and recommendations.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- File annual compliance reports.

Lodging a Complaint

- Complaints must be made in writing to the ICC or at ahoyconsulting.in@gmail.com
- Must be filed within **3 months** of the incident (extendable by another 3 months if justified).
- In case of incapacity, complaints can be made by relatives, friends, co-workers, or others with consent.
- Verbal complaints will be recorded in writing by ICC members.

Inquiry Process

- Copy of the complaint sent to the respondent within **7 days**.
- Respondent to reply within **10 days**.
- No legal practitioner allowed.
- Both parties were given the opportunity to present evidence and cross-examine.
- Inquiry to be completed within **90 days**.
- Final report with recommendations to be submitted within **10 days** of inquiry completion.
- Employers to act on recommendations within **60 days**.

Possible Actions if Complaint is Substantiated

- Written apology
- Warning or reprimand
- Counselling
- Withholding promotion/increment
- Suspension
- Termination
- Any other action deemed appropriate

Malicious Allegations

False or malicious complaints will attract appropriate disciplinary action. However, inability to prove a complaint will not be considered malicious.

Confidentiality

Identity of complainant, respondent, and proceedings shall remain confidential. Any breach will result in disciplinary action.

Appeal

Either party may appeal within **90 days** to the appellate authority as per the Act.

Appeal may be made to the Local Complaints Committee (LCC) constituted by the District Officer under the Act.