

Sexual Harassment Policy for Peepal Foundation, Pune

Peepal Foundation, Pune.

Policy against Sexual Harassment at Workplace

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1. Purpose: Peepal Foundation is committed to providing a safe, dignified, and equitable work environment free from sexual harassment, exploitation, and violence. This policy aims to:

- Prevent and redress sexual harassment at the workplace.

- Promote a secure and stress-free environment for all employees, especially women.
- Ensure equal opportunities and a healthy work culture where all genders can thrive.
- Comply with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.

2. Principles:

- Sexual harassment is unlawful and will not be tolerated. It is a serious disciplinary and legal offense.
- Complaints will be addressed with speed, confidentiality, and fairness.
- Retaliation against complainants or witnesses is strictly prohibited.
- False or malicious complaints will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

3. Internal Complaints Committee (ICC):

- The ICC will consist of 5 members.
- Presiding Officer: A senior woman employee of Peepal Foundation.
- Three internal members (at least one male).
- One external member committed to women's rights.
- A quorum of at least 3 members including the external member is required for meetings.
- Members serve for a maximum of 3 years, except during ongoing investigations.
- The ICC reports to the CEO. If the CEO is the respondent, the Board Chair will act as Management.

4. Complaint Mechanism:

- Complaints must be made in writing within 3 months of the incident or last incident in a series. ICC may extend this by 3 months in exceptional cases.
- Complaints can be made by the aggrieved employee or legal heir if the employee is incapacitated.
- ICC provides assistance if complainant is unable to write the complaint.

5. Procedure for ICC:

- ICC cannot act without a formal complaint.
- At complainant's request, ICC may attempt conciliation (excluding monetary settlement).
- ICC conducts a fair inquiry hearing both parties, with powers similar to a civil court.

- Inquiry to be completed within 90 days.
- ICC submits recommendations to Management within 10 days of inquiry completion.
- Management must implement recommendations and report back to ICC.

6. Malicious Complaints:

- If complaints are found to be malicious or false, ICC will recommend disciplinary action against the complainant.
- Unsuccessful complaints are not necessarily malicious.

7. Determination of Compensation:

Compensation will consider:

- Mental trauma and emotional distress.
- Loss of career opportunity.
- Medical expenses (physical/psychiatric).
- Respondent's financial status.
- Feasibility of lump sum or installments.

8. Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure:

- The identity of complainants, respondents, witnesses, and details of proceedings will be strictly confidential.
- No information will be disclosed to media or public.

9. Appeal Process:

- Any party dissatisfied with ICC's recommendations may appeal to a court of law within 90 days.

10. Scope of Policy:

- Applies to all employees, volunteers, interns, consultants, and partner organization women staff interacting with Peepal Foundation.
- Covers harassment by employees and third parties related to work.
- Peepal Foundation will assist complainants facing harassment from third parties.

11. Definitions:

- ****Sexual Harassment**** includes unwelcome physical contact, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually colored remarks, showing pornography, or any other unwelcome sexual conduct that creates a hostile or offensive work environment.
- Workplace includes office premises, work-related travel, fieldwork, and any location related to work activities.

12. Penalties:

- Minor penalties: Written reprimand, probation up to 6 months.
- Major penalties: Salary reduction, suspension, transfer, dismissal.
- Penalties for false accusations include disciplinary action up to termination.

13. Other Provisions:








- ICC will conduct awareness and training programs on gender sensitization regularly.
- Management will provide necessary support for policy implementation and victim protection.

14. Criminal Proceedings:

- ICC will refer cases to police if prima facie evidence of criminal offense exists.
- Peepal Foundation will assist complainants in legal proceedings.

15. Conclusion: Peepal Foundation maintains zero tolerance for sexual harassment and is committed to a safe workplace where all employees can work with dignity and respect.

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