

Preventing Sexual Harassment: How to Minimize Organizational Risk

OVERVIEW

Sexual harassment is prohibited under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as a form of discrimination based on gender. It is illegal, and the cost is high should you or your organization be found guilty. This training course is designed to meet state-mandated training requirements and provides both employees and management with a clear understanding of what legally constitutes harassment, what to do if it occurs and how to swiftly investigate and manage the sexual harassment complaint.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Reduce organizational risk and mitigate the cost of lawsuits and fines from regulatory agencies
- Increase teamwork and productivity and improve morale
- Provide a safe and healthy work environment for all employees
- Protect your organization's reputation
- Improve communications to ensure productive employee relationships
- Minimize organizational and personal liability for unlawful sexual harassment actions

COURSE HIGHLIGHTS

Sexual harassment: Clarify the facts

- The startling facts surrounding sexual harassment in the workplace and how to avoid becoming another statistic
- Identify how the EEOC defines sexual harassment
- Apply state guidelines to the definition of sexual harassment in the workplace
- Recognize the impact of sexual harassment on the victim, the harasser and the organization
- Understand the financial and hard-to-measure costs of harassment in the workplace

Identify the problem

- Spot and minimize the types of harassment most likely to occur in the workplace
- Understand the legal definition of sexual harassment
- Define "quid pro quo" and "hostile work environment"
- Learn the difference between conduct that may be inappropriate and conduct which is harassing
- Understand and apply the reasonable person standard to determine whether a hostile work environment exists
- Develop sensitivity and avoid behaviors that could be construed as sexual harassment

- Avoid unintentional harassment
- Defuse disrespectful or harassing situations

Assertively take control

- Assume responsibility and learn how to assertively communicate your feelings and put sexual harassers on notice
- Practical jokes, games and innuendo that can lead to discrimination or sexual harassment
- File a sexual harassment complaint following organizational, state and federal guidelines
- Respond appropriately when a sexual harassment complaint has been filed against you
- What to do if you are witness to or become a victim of harassing behavior
- Identify how sexual advances and propositions can result in sexual harassment

Management update

- Understand employer responsibilities and employee rights regarding harassing behavior in the workplace
- Identify and eliminate harassment situations that can be considered severe and pervasive
- Recognize characteristics of the typical harassment victim and take steps to remedy the situation immediately
- Develop an internal complaint process that provides protection for both employees and the organization
- Handle sexual harassment complaints quietly and professionally

COURSE OVERVIEW

- Create anti-harassment policies and procedures that clearly spell out the organization's position and put would-be harassers on notice
- The dos and don'ts of conducting an internal sexual harassment complaint investigation
- Use role-plays, case studies and other training situations to increase employee awareness of gender, racial and religious diversity
- Understand and provide employee protection from retaliation for filing a harassment complaint
- Know the key steps that must be taken in every internal investigation
- Safely conduct an internal investigation without compromising employee privacy rights
- Why you can never promise confidentiality to an employee filing a sexual harassment complaint
- Questioning strategies to use when interviewing alleged victims, harassers and witnesses
- A Zero Tolerance policy is critical to minimizing your organization's legal liability
- When to discipline and when to terminate those found guilty of sexual harassment

TRAINING DELIVERY

- Pre-training: Tailoring and customization of content
- Delivery of training using presentation, small group exercises, case studies, role-plays, games, etc.
- Post-training: Follow-up within 30 days to review information, provide coaching, set goals, etc. (optional)
- This course can be delivered as a full day or half-day of employee-focused training and as a full day or half-day of management-focused training, meeting state-mandated training requirements for managers and supervisors in most states