

INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE (ICC)
Women Cell

Guidelines for Sexual Harassment of women at workplace under Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal Act, 2013.

Code of conduct for work place

Sexual harassment is a serious criminal offence, which can destroy human dignity and freedom. In an effort to promote the well being of all women employees at the work place the following code of conduct has been prescribed:-

1. It shall be the duty of the employer to prevent or deter the commission of any act of sexual harassment at the work place.
2. Sexual harassment will include such unwelcome sexually determined behavior by any person either individually or in association with other persons or by any person in authority whether directly or by implication such as:
 - i. Eve-teasing
 - ii. Unsavory remark
 - iii. Jokes causing or likely to cause awkwardness or embarrassment
 - iv. Innuendos and taunts
 - v. Gender based insults or sexist remark
 - vi. Unwelcome sexual overtone in any manner such as over telephone (obnoxious telephone calls) and the like
 - vii. Touching or brushing against any part of the body and the like
 - viii. Displaying pornographic or other offensive or derogatory pictures, cartoons, pamphlets or sayings.
 - ix. Forcible physical touch or molestation.
 - x. Physical confinement against one's will and any other act likely to violate one's privacy.

And also includes any act or conduct by a person in authority and belonging to one sex which denies or would deny equal opportunity in pursuit of career development or otherwise making the environment at the work place. Hostile or intimidating to a person belonging to the other sex, only on the ground of sex.

The mechanism for redressal of complaints and further Procedure to be followed for conducting enquiry by the Complaints Committee is as follows:

(1) Any aggrieved woman may make, in writing, a complaint of sexual harassment at Work place to the Internal Committee if so constituted, or the Local Committee, in case it is not so constituted.

(Provided that where such complaint cannot be made in writing, the Presiding Officer or any Member of the Internal Committee or the Chairperson or any Member of the Local Committee, as the case may be, shall render all reasonable assistance to the woman for making the complaint in writing.)

(2) Where the aggrieved woman is unable to make a complaint on account of her physical or mental incapacity or death or otherwise, her legal heir or such other person as may be prescribed may make a complaint under this section.

(3) If the complainant feels that she cannot disclose her identity for any particular reason the complainant shall address the complaint to the head of the organization and hand over the same in person or in a sealed cover. Upon receipt of such complaint the head of the organization shall retain the original complaint with himself and send to the complaints committee as gist of the complaint containing all material and relevant details other than the name of the complainant and other details which might disclose the identity of the complaint.

(4) The Internal Committee or, as the case may be, may before Initiating inquiry under section 11 and at the request of the aggrieved woman take steps to settle the matter between her and the respondent through conciliation.

(5) Where a settlement has been arrived at under sub-section (1), the Internal Committee, as the case may be, shall record the settlement so arrived and forward the same to the employer and a copy to the Local committee regarding action taken as specified in the recommendation.

(6) The Internal Committee or the Local Committee, as the case may be, shall provide the copies of the settlement as recorded under sub-section (2) to the aggrieved woman and the respondent.

***Punishment for false or malicious complaint and False Evidence**

Where the Internal Committee of the Campus arrives at a 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 Competent authority, to take action against the woman or the person who has made the complaint under, sub-section (2) of section 9, in accordance with the provisions of the service rules applicable to her or him or where no such service rules exist, **in such manner as may be prescribed.**

Disciplinary Action:

Where the conduct of an employee amounts to misconduct in employment as defined in the relevant service rules the employer should initiate appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the relevant rules.

Third Party Harassment:

Where sexual harassment occurs as a result of an act or omission by any third party or outsider the employer and the persons incharge shall take all steps necessary and reasonable to assist the affected person in terms of support and preventive action.

Submission of Report's by Internal Complaint Committee:

(1) The Internal Committee shall in each calendar year prepare, in Prescribed form and prescribed time as may be prescribed, an annual report and submit the same to the employer and the District Officer.

(2) The Institute shall include in its report the number of cases filed, if any, and their disposal under this Act in the annual report of the Institute or where no such report is required to be prepared, intimate such number of cases, if any, to the District Officer

Constitution of Internal Complaints committees under Sexual Harassment of women at work place under (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal Act, 2013).

Women's Cell was constituted in DDU with an objective of looking after the welfare of the women employees and students, to facilitate redressal of their grievances, to help maintain a harmonious atmosphere at campus and to enable women to pursue their work with dignity and reassurance

On 13th August 1997, the Supreme Court of India held that sexual harassment of women is a violation of the fundamental right of women to work in a safe environment. The Supreme Court has defined 'sexual harassment' to include: Any one or more of the following acts or behaviour (whether directly or by implication), namely:

- physical contact and advances;
- demand or request for sexual favours;
- Sexually oriented remarks
- Showing pornography
- Use of electronic media (phone, internet, intranet) for perpetrating any of the above
- Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature

The following circumstances, among other circumstances, if it occurs or is present in relation to or connected with any act or behaviour of sexual harassment may amount to sexual harassment:

- implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment in employment;
- implied or explicit threat of detrimental treatment in employment;
- implied or explicit threat about her present or future employment status;
- interference with her work or creating an intimidating or offensive or hostile work environment for her;
- humiliating treatment likely to affect her health or safety.

Often such behaviour goes unpunished because of hesitation on the part of women to report such behaviour out of a sense of shame or fear or both. It is important for women to protest against any behaviour that they feel is unwanted and unacceptable. The ICC of DDU will shoulder the responsibility with the aim of providing women an appropriate complaint mechanism against unwelcome sexually determined behaviour whether directly or by implication.

The action can be taken against the offender by ICC_DDU is as per the CCS (Conduct) Rules, 1964 and the Inquiry Report under the rules. In case, it has been proved that the offender has indulged in sexual harassment at the work place, appropriate disciplinary action would be taken against him. Where such conduct amounts to a specific offense under the Indian Penal Code or under any other law, a complaint shall be filed with the appropriate authority for action to be taken in accordance with the law.

The Role of the Committee

- To act as Inquiry Authority on a complaint of sexual harassment.
- To ensure that complainant and witnesses are not victimized or discriminated because of their complaint. To take proactive measures towards sensitization of all those.

- The New Act of Parliament 'The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013' [SHWW (PPR) Act] has received the assent of the President of India and promulgated on 22nd April, 2013.
- 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 notified Rules on 09th December, 2013.
- Office Memorandum was circulated by Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions (Department of Personnel and Training) dtd 27th November 2014 on 'The Alignment of Service Rules with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013'.

The Bill defines sexual harassment at the work place and creates a mechanism for redressal of complaints. It also provides safeguards against false or malicious charges. Every employer is required to constitute an Internal Complaints Committee at each office or branch with 10 or more employees.

- The Complaints Committees have the powers of civil courts for gathering evidence.
- The Complaints Committees are required to provide for conciliation before initiating an inquiry, if requested by the complainant.

Working Rules for Internal Complaints Committee

In pursuance of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013 and the Rules framed there under, the Institute hereby adopts the following procedure for determining complaints filed to the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) constituted under the Act. The procedure complies with the basic principles of natural justice and fair play and has to be adhered to in all complaints, though, in individual complaints, for reasons to be stated in writing, the ICC reserves the right to make exceptions to the procedure stated hereunder.

1. Any aggrieved woman may make, in writing, a complaint of sexual harassment at work place to the ICC, within a period of three months from the date of incident and in case of a series of incidents, within a period of three months from the date of last incident. 6 copies of a written complaint should be submitted to the Committee or any of its members along with list of witnesses and supporting documents. Additional documents and list of witnesses can be submitted to ICC at a later stage during the proceeding.

Provided that where such complaint cannot be made in writing, the Presiding Officer or any other member of the ICC shall render all reasonable assistance to the woman for making the complaint in writing.

Provided further that the ICC for the reasons to be recorded in writing, can extend the time limit not exceeding three months, if it is satisfied that the circumstances were such which prevented the woman from filing a complaint within the said period.

2. Any complaint received by the members should be immediately forwarded to the Presiding Officer, and this must be notified to other committee members at the earliest and not later than 3 days and a meeting should be called for discussing the matter.
3. The Committee shall discuss and decide on its jurisdiction to deal with the case or reject the complaint prima facie and recommend to the Institute that no action is required to be taken in the matter.
4. Notice shall be issued to the respondent within 7 working days of receipt of the complaint and 10 working days shall be given for submission of reply (along with the list of witnesses and documents.)

5. The Committee will provide assistance to the aggrieved woman, if she so chooses, to file a police complaint in relation to an offence under Indian Penal Code.
6. The Committee may, before initiating an inquiry, at the request of the aggrieved woman, take steps to settle the matter between her and the respondent through conciliation.
7. No monetary settlement shall be made as the basis of conciliation. Where a settlement has been arrived at, the ICC shall record the settlement so arrived and forward the same to the employer for necessary compliance.
8. The Committee shall provide the copies of the settlement as recorded under (7) to the aggrieved woman and the respondent. Where a settlement is arrived at, no further inquiry shall be conducted by the ICC.
9. If conciliation is found to be not feasible, notice will be issued to both parties for hearing.
10. The Committee may direct the Registrar to ensure the safety and protection of the aggrieved woman if and when required.
11. As an interim measure, ICC may recommend
 - a) the transfer of the aggrieved woman or the respondent to another section or Department as deemed fit by the Committee.
 - b) grant leave to the aggrieved woman upto a period of three months or :
 - c) restrain the respondent from exercising any administrative authority or supervision or academic evaluation of the aggrieved woman.
 - d) grant such other relief to the aggrieved woman as the case may require.
12. The Committee shall proceed to make inquiry into the complaint in accordance with the provisions of the service rules applicable to the respondent considering sexual harassment as misconduct.
13. The Presiding Officer shall convene the first hearing of the enquiry. The respondent, the aggrieved woman, and the witnesses shall be intimated at least 7 working days in advance in writing of the date, time and venue of the enquiry proceedings. The subsequent proceedings may be on a day to day basis, to be decided by ICC.
14. The Committee shall provide reasonable opportunity to the aggrieved woman and the respondent for presenting and defending her/his case.
15. The Committee may at any time during the enquiry proceedings, preclude the face-to-face examination of the respondent and the aggrieved woman and/or their witnesses

- keeping in view the need to protect the aggrieved woman or the witnesses from facing any serious health and/or safety problems.
16. The Committee may call any person to appear as a witness if it is of the opinion that it shall be in the interest of justice. The aggrieved woman/respondent has to submit the written reply before the committee within the specified time given.
 17. The Committee shall have the right to summon, as many times as required, the respondent, aggrieved woman and/or any witnesses for the purpose of supplementary testimony and/or clarifications.
 18. The Committee shall have the power to summon any official papers or documents pertaining to the aggrieved woman as well as the respondent.
 19. The past sexual history of the aggrieved woman shall not be probed into as such information shall be deemed irrelevant to a complaint of sexual harassment.
 20. The Committee shall have the right to terminate the enquiry proceedings and to give an ex party decision on the complaint, should the respondent fail, without valid ground, to be present for three consecutive hearings convened by the Presiding Officer.
 21. The aggrieved woman and the respondent, or any one person on her/his behalf, shall have the right to examine written transcripts of the recordings with the exclusion of witnesses' names and identities. Any person nominated by the aggrieved woman and/or the respondent on her/his behalf shall be (only) either a student, or a member of the academic or non-teaching staff. No person who has been found guilty of sexual harassment shall be accepted as a nominee. The aggrieved woman/respondent should inform the Presiding Officer specifically if they wish to exercise this right. The Presiding Officer shall allow access to such documents on a specific date to be intimated at least two days in advance to each of the parties concerned. At no point in time, however, can the concerned parties take these documents outside the office.
 22. The aggrieved woman and the respondent shall be responsible for presenting their witnesses before the Committee. However, if the Committee is convinced that the absence of either of the parties to the disputes is on valid grounds, the Committee shall adjourn that particular meeting of the Committee for a period not exceeding five days. The meeting so adjourned shall be conducted thereafter, even if the person concerned fails to appear for the said adjourned meeting without prior intimation/valid ground.

23. All proceedings of the ICC shall be recorded in writing. The record of the proceedings and the statement of witnesses shall be endorsed by the persons concerned as well as the committee members present in token of authenticity thereof. In case the minutes cannot be reduced in writing the same day, as audio recording of the proceedings may be made, and the written proceedings will be authenticated on a next available opportunity.
24. If the aggrieved woman desires to tender any documents by way of evidence, the Committee can supply true copies of such documents to the respondent. Similarly, if the respondent desires to tender any documents in evidence, the Committee shall supply true copies of such documents to the aggrieved woman.
25. In the event the Committee thinks that supplementary testimony is required, the Presiding Officer shall forward to the persons concerned a summary of the proceedings and allow for a time period of seven days to submit such testimony, in person or in writing, to the Committee.
26. The aggrieved woman and the respondent shall have the right of cross-examination of all witnesses. However such cross-examination shall be conducted in the form of written questions and responses via the Committee only. **The respondent shall have no right to directly cross-examine the aggrieved woman or her witnesses.**
27. The respondent/aggrieved woman may submit to the Committee, a written list of questions that he/she desires to pose to the aggrieved woman/witness. The Committee (ICC) shall retain the right to disallow any questions that it has reason to believe to be irrelevant, mischievous, slanderous, derogatory or gender-insensitive.
28. Amicus Curie can be called for helping the committee if and when required.
29. After concluding its investigation, the Committee shall submit a detailed reasoned report to the Institute.
30. If the Committee finds no merit in the allegations, it shall report to the Institute.
31. In the event the Committee finds that the allegation(s) against the respondent have been proved, it shall recommend the nature of action to be taken by the Institute. The following actions may be recommended:
 - a. A written apology

- b. Warning
- c. Reprimand or censure
- d. Withholding of promotion
- e. Withholding of pay rise or increments
- f. Undergoing a counseling session
- g. Carrying out of community service
- h. Terminating the respondent from service
- i. Any other punishment according to the service rules applicable to the respondent

32. When the 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 Institute to take action against such falsification.

33. Nothing precludes the Institute authority from taking cognizance of any new fact or evidence which may arise or be brought before it during the pendency of the inquiry proceedings or even after the communication of the findings to appropriate Institute authorities.

34. If the allegation(s) is/are proved against the respondent, the Committee may direct the Institute to ensure the payment of compensation to the aggrieved woman by the respondent. The determination of compensation to the aggrieved woman shall be decided based on the following facts:

- i. The mental trauma, pain, suffering and emotional distress caused to the aggrieved woman.
- ii. The loss of career opportunity due to the incident of sexual harassment.
- iii. Medical expenses incurred by the victim for physical or psychiatric treatment
- iv. The income and financial status of the respondent
- v. Feasibility of such payment in lumpsum or in installments

35. The Institute authorities will file a compliance report to the Committee within 30 days of issuance of such recommendation.