

What Is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment is any unwanted comment or conduct of a sexual nature in the workplace. It includes discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender.

Some examples of sexual harassment are:

- Unwanted touching (hugs, stroking your hair)
- Making sex-related comments about your appearance or actions
- Derogatory names
- Homophobic or transphobic comments or jokes
- Sending/sharing pornography or sexual images
- Making or sharing sexual jokes
- Spreading sexual rumours
- Demanding dates or sexual favours

What Should I Do If I Am Being Sexually Harassed At Work?

You should make notes on what is happening including:

- When and where the incident happened
- Who did the harassing
- Whether anyone saw or heard what happened
- How you responded
- If you told your employer, who you spoke to and how they responded

Should I Report Sexual Harassment To My Employer?

Yes, you have you right to work in a safe and respectful environment free from sexual harassment. Your employer has a legal duty to take steps to prevent and respond to sexual harassment at work. The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* requires employers to have procedures for workers to report incidents of harassment. You should use these internal procedures. If you are part of a union, you should contact them for help.

Legal Remedies/Options:

You should get legal advice to help you decide which remedy is right for you.

You can make a complaint at the Ministry of Labour. The Ministry can send an investigator to your workplace to determine whether your employer is following the law.

You can file a complaint to the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario. The Tribunal can order the person who sexually harassed you or your employer to pay you money and order your employer to get human rights training

You can sue your employer in court if you can prove that the harassment made it unbearable for you to continue working for your employer.

You can file a Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) claim if you suffered physical or psychological injuries that prevent you from working.

You can call the police if you have been a victim of assault, sexual assault, or criminal harassment/stalking. Contact a sexual assault centre for support.

For more information:

- Call us at: 613-966-8686 or 1-877-966-8686
Visit our website: <http://communitylegalcentre.ca/legal-info/sexual-harassment-at-work/>
- Visit the Ontario Human Rights Commission website at:
www.ohrc.on.ca/en/sexual-harassment-employment-fact-sheet
- Call the Human Rights Legal Support Centre or 1-866-625-5179 Visit their website at:
<https://www.hrlsc.on.ca/en/how-guides-and-faqs/your-right-accommodation>
- Visit the Steps to Justice website at:
<https://stepstojustice.ca/common-question-plus/employment-and-work/what-can-i-do-if-i-am-being-harassed-work>

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