



Empowering survivors of

Gender-Based Violence

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AWARENESS & ACTION GUIDE

Everyone deserves to feel safe, respected, and valued, whether at work, school, online, or in public spaces. Sexual harassment is a form of abuse that violates a person's dignity, boundaries, and rights. It can affect people of any age, gender, background, or profession. Sexual harassment is never the fault of the person experiencing it.

This guide will help you:

- Understand what sexual harassment is
- Recognise common warning signs
- Know how to respond safely
- Support someone experiencing harassment
- Keep records and report incidents
- Understand your rights

What Is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual behaviour, attention, comments, advances, or conduct that makes someone feel uncomfortable, intimidated, humiliated, unsafe, or threatened.

The behaviour may occur:

- In person
- Online
- At work
- At school
- In public spaces
- Within relationships or social settings

The key factor is that the behaviour is unwanted or non-consensual.

Types of Sexual Harassment

Workplace Harassment

Sexual harassment in the workplace occurs when unwelcome sexual behaviour affects a person's work environment or employment opportunities.

Examples

- ✓ Sexual jokes or comments
- ✓ Inappropriate touching
- ✓ Requests for sexual favours
- ✓ Suggestive emails or messages
- ✓ Comments about a person's appearance

- ✓ Offensive sexual images
- ✓ Threats relating to promotion, employment, or opportunities

Possible Impact

- Loss of confidence
- Anxiety and stress
- Reduced work performance
- Mental health challenges
- Career setbacks

School Harassment

Sexual harassment can occur between learners, teachers, staff members, or visitors.

Examples

- ✓ Sexual comments
- ✓ Inappropriate touching
- ✓ Sexual rumours
- ✓ Pressuring someone to send images
- ✓ Harassment through social media
- ✓ Repeated unwanted advances

Possible Impact

- Poor concentration
- Lower academic performance
- Increased absenteeism
- Depression or anxiety
- Reduced self-esteem

Street Harassment

Street harassment involves unwanted sexualised behaviour in public spaces.

Examples

- ✓ Catcalling
- ✓ Sexual comments
- ✓ Following someone
- ✓ Whistling
- ✓ Sexual gestures
- ✓ Public intimidation

Possible Impact

Many survivors change their routes, routines, clothing choices, or daily activities to avoid harassment.

Online Harassment

Online harassment takes place through digital platforms and communication tools.

Examples

- ✓ Sexual messages
- ✓ Cyberstalking
- ✓ Sexual threats
- ✓ Unwanted explicit content
- ✓ Sharing intimate content without permission
- ✓ Online intimidation

Possible Impact

- Emotional distress
- Fear and anxiety
- Damage to reputation
- Social withdrawal
- Concerns about personal safety

Unwanted Sexual Advances

Unwanted sexual advances occur when someone continues seeking sexual or romantic attention after being told "no" or after boundaries have been made clear.

Examples

- ✓ Repeated requests for dates
- ✓ Persistent flirting
- ✓ Pressuring someone for intimacy
- ✓ Sexual messages after being asked to stop
- ✓ Using gifts, favours, or influence to pressure someone

Remember

A person has the right to:

- Say no
- Change their mind
- Set boundaries
- End a conversation
- Withdraw consent at any time

Warning Signs Checklist

Ask yourself:

- ☐ Does someone's behaviour make me feel uncomfortable or unsafe?
 - ☐ Have I clearly indicated that the attention is unwanted?
 - ☐ Is someone ignoring my boundaries?
 - ☐ Am I receiving repeated sexual comments or messages?
 - ☐ Is someone using their position of authority to pressure me?
 - ☐ Am I changing my behaviour to avoid a particular person?
- If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you may be experiencing harassment.

What To Do If It Happens To You

1. Trust Your Feelings

If something feels wrong, uncomfortable, or unsafe, take your concerns seriously.

2. Set Boundaries

If it is safe to do so, clearly communicate that the behaviour is unwanted.

Examples:

- "Please stop."
- "That comment is inappropriate."
- "I am not comfortable with this."
- "Do not contact me again."

3. Keep Evidence

Save:

- Screenshots
- Emails
- Messages
- Photos
- Voice notes
- Social media posts

Evidence can assist if you choose to report the behaviour.

4. Keep a Record

Write down:

- Dates
- Times
- Locations
- What happened
- Witnesses present
- How the incident affected you

5. Report the Behaviour

Depending on the situation, this may include:

- A manager or supervisor
- Human Resources
- School authorities
- Community leaders
- Platform administrators
- Law enforcement

6. Seek Support

You do not have to deal with harassment alone.

Speak to:

- Trusted friends
- Family members
- Counsellors
- Teachers
- Community support services
- Mental health professionals

Supporting Someone Who Experiences Harassment

If someone tells you they are being harassed:

Do

- ✓ Listen carefully
- ✓ Believe them
- ✓ Respect their privacy
- ✓ Ask how you can support them
- ✓ Encourage professional help if needed
- ✓ Assist with documenting incidents

Don't

- X Blame them
- X Question their clothing or behaviour
- X Minimise their experience
- X Pressure them into reporting
- X Share their information without permission

Personal Safety Planning

Online Safety

- ☐ Review privacy settings regularly
- ☐ Block and report abusive users
- ☐ Use strong passwords
- ☐ Enable two-factor authentication
- ☐ Avoid sharing personal location information publicly

Workplace Safety

- ☐ Keep records of inappropriate behaviour
- ☐ Report concerns through official channels
- ☐ Request meetings in professional settings
- ☐ Seek support from trusted colleagues when necessary

School Safety

- ☐ Report incidents to designated staff
- ☐ Save evidence of online harassment
- ☐ Seek support from parents, guardians, or counsellors
- ☐ Stay connected with trusted friends and adults

Know Your Rights

Every person has the right to:

- ✓ Safety
 - ✓ Dignity
 - ✓ Respect
 - ✓ Privacy
 - ✓ Equal treatment
 - ✓ Freedom from harassment and abuse
 - ✓ Access to support and protection
- No one deserves harassment, intimidation, or abuse.

Incident Record Template

Personal Incident Log

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Person(s) Involved: _____

Description of Incident:

Witnesses:

Evidence Available:

- ☐ Screenshots
- ☐ Emails
- ☐ Messages
- ☐ Photos
- ☐ Videos
- ☐ Other: _____

Reported To:

Action Taken:

Personal Boundaries Reflection

Consider the following:

My Personal Boundaries Include:

Behaviours I Am Not Comfortable With:

People I Can Contact For Support:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Final Message

Sexual harassment is never acceptable.

Everyone deserves to live, learn, work, and participate in their community without fear of intimidation, abuse, or unwanted sexual behaviour.

By recognising harassment, speaking out, supporting survivors, and promoting respect and healthy boundaries, we can help create safer schools, workplaces, online spaces, and communities for everyone.

You deserve to be heard. You deserve to be respected. You deserve to be safe.