



ZION CARE LIFE AND FAMILY IMPACT FOUNDATION

(ZIONCLIFF)

Sexual Harassment Policy

Policy Brief and Purpose

Our sexual harassment policy aims to protect men and women in our Organisation from unwanted sexual advances and give them guidelines to report incidents. We will also explain how we handle claims, punish sexual harassment and help victims recover.

We would not tolerate sexual harassment in our workplace in any shape or form. Our culture as Family Life Organisation is based on mutual respect and collaboration. Sexual harassment is a serious violation of those principles.

Scope

This policy applies to every person in our Organisation regardless of gender, sexual orientation, level, function, seniority, status or other protected characteristics. We are all obliged to comply with this policy.

Also, we will not tolerate sexual harassment from inside or outside of the Organisation. Staff, Board Members and Volunteers, Sponsors, participants and everyone interacting with our Organisation are covered by the present policy.

Policy Elements

What is sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment has many forms of variable seriousness. A person sexually harasses someone when they:

- Insinuate, propose or demand sexual favors of any kind.
- Invade another person's personal space (e.g. inappropriate touching.)
- Stalk, intimidate, coerce or threaten another person to get them to engage in sexual acts.
- Send or display sexually explicit objects or messages.

- Comment on someone's looks, dress, sexuality or gender in a derogatory or objectifying manner or a manner that makes them uncomfortable.
- Make obscene comments, jokes or gestures that humiliate or offend someone.
- Pursue or flirt with another person persistently without the other person's willing participation. Also, flirting with someone at an inappropriate time (e.g. in a team meeting) is considered sexual harassment, even when these advances would have been welcome in a different setting. This is because such actions can harm a person's professional reputation and expose them to further harassment.
- The most extreme form of sexual harassment is sexual assault. This is a serious crime and our Organisation will support members who want to press charges against offenders.

Zioncliff's Rules on Sexual Harassment

- **No one has the right to sexually harass our members.** Any person in within our Organisation, who is found guilty of sexual harassment will be terminated, whether they are Board of Directors or Advisers or even Donors. Also, if representatives of our partnering Organisation sexually harass our staff and volunteers, we will demand that the Organisation they represent takes disciplinary action and/or refuse to work with this person in the future.
- **Sexual harassment is never too minor to be dealt with.** Any kind of harassment can wear down staff and volunteers in a non profit such as ours and create a hostile workplace and slow down progress of the Organisation. We will hear every claim and punish offenders appropriately.
- **Sexual harassment is about how we make others feel.** Many do not consider behaviors like flirting or sexual comments to be sexual harassment, thinking they are too innocent to be labeled that way. But, if something you do makes your colleagues uncomfortable, or makes them feel unsafe, you must stop. We will organise enlightenment discussion on what constitute sexual harassment for our staff and other stakeholders from time to time.

- **We assume every sexual harassment claim is legitimate unless proven otherwise.** We listen to victims of sexual harassment and always conduct our investigations properly. Occasional false reports do not undermine this principle.
- **We will not allow further victimization of harassed staff.** We will fully support staff who were sexually harassed and will not take any adverse action against them. For example, we will not move them to positions with worse pay or benefits or allow others to retaliate against them.
- **Those who support or overlook sexual harassment are as much at fault as offenders.** Board of Trustees members especially are obliged to prevent sexual harassment and act when they have suspicions or receive reports. Letting this behavior go on or encouraging it will bring about disciplinary action. Anyone who witnesses an incident of sexual harassment or has other kinds of proof should report to the Chairman Board of Trustees.

How to Report Sexual Harassment

- Victims should document his or her experiences
- **Ask for an urgent meeting with your with Chairman of Board,** Once in the meeting, explain the situation in as much detail as possible. If you have any hard evidence (e.g. emails), forward it or bring it with you to the meeting.
- **Send your complaint via email.** If you address it to your Project Manager, please copy Chair, Board of Directors to the email and attach any evidence or information that can be used in the investigation. The Chair and your Project Manager will discuss the issue and contact you as soon as possible.

Inadvertent Harassment

Sometimes, people who harass others do not realize that their behavior is wrong. We understand this is possible, but that doesn't make the perpetrator any less responsible for their actions.

If you suspect that someone doesn't realize their behavior is sexual harassment under the definition of this policy, let them know and ask them to stop. Do so preferably via email so you can have records. Please do not use this approach when:

Disciplinary Action and Repeat Offenders

Employees who are found guilty of sexual assault will be terminated after the first complaint and investigation.

Employees who are found guilty of sexual harassment (but not assault) the first time may:

- Be reprimanded and fined.
- Get a "below expectations" performance review.
- See expected promotions and/or salary increases freeze for [*a year.*]

- We may also transfer harassers or take other appropriate action to protect their victims. We will terminate repeat offenders after the second claim against them if our investigation concludes they are indeed guilty.

We apply these disciplinary actions uniformly. Staff of any sexual orientation or other protected characteristics will be penalized the same way for the same offenses.

Chair, Board of Trustees' Responsibilities

First and foremost, try to prevent sexual harassment by building a culture of respect and trust. But, when sexual harassment occurs and an employee makes a complaint, must act immediately.

When Chair receives a complaint that an staff or volunteers is being harassed he or she do the following:

- Ask for as many details and information as possible from the person or people making the complaint.
- Keep copies of the report with dates, times and details of incidents and any possible evidence in a confidential file (separate from the personnel file.) Project Manager should update this file with all future actions and conversations regarding this complaint.

- Launch an investigation. If the matter is complex
- Check if there have been similar reports on the same person. If there are, Project Manager should contact the perpetrator's manager to let them know that their team member may get fired when the investigation is over.
- Inform the harassed staff and volunteers of our Organisation's procedures and their options to take legal action if appropriate.
- Take into account the wishes of the harassed employee. Some might want the matter to be resolved informally and discreetly, while others might expect more radical actions (e.g. transferring the perpetrator.) Project Manager should consider the circumstances and decide on appropriate action.
- Contact the harasser and set up a meeting to explain the complaint and explicitly ask for this behavior to stop, **or**,
- Arrange for mediation sessions with the two staff (harasser and perpetrator) to resolve the issue, if the harassed staff agrees **or**,
- Launch a disciplinary process depending on the severity of the harassment. In cases of sexual assault or coercing someone to sexual favors under threats, we will terminate the harasser immediately. We will terminate employees who are found guilty in a court of law of sexually assaulting another employee, even if Project Manager has not conducted its own investigation.

Project Manager or managers must not, under any circumstances, blame the victim, conceal a report or discourage employees from reporting sexual harassment.

We welcome any feedback or complaints about our procedures and how our employees handled each case.

Helping Harassment Victims

Apart from investigating claims and punishing perpetrators, we want to support the victims of sexual harassment. If you experience trauma, stress or other symptoms because of harassment, consider:

- Taking a few days of sick leave to restore your mental health.
- Asking your insurance provider whether they cover mental health services.
- Talking to our EAP (Employee Assistance Program) Officer to evaluate options.

- Speaking to our designated counselors.

Your job and benefits will not be jeopardized or altered if you choose any of those options or other means to recovery.

Speak up, We listen !

Sexual harassment can exhaust those who endure it. Speaking up about this issue is often tough for fear of not being heard, upsetting managers and challenging corporate culture.

Please don't let these fears deter you. Our Organisation will do everything possible to stop sexual harassment and any other kind of harassment from happening, while supporting harassed staff. We need to know what's going on so we can act on it. And by raising your voice on this issue, you help our Organisation create a happy workplace and thrive.

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