




## Information for employers

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## 02 INTRODUCTION

## 03 WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

## 04 LEGAL DUTIES

## 06 FACTS AND FIGURES

## 08 CONSEQUENCES FOR COMPANIES

## 09 CONSEQUENCES FOR VICTIMS

## 10 WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT

## 14 PRECONCEPTIONS

## 16 WHERE VICTIMS CAN GO FOR HELP

## 20 WHAT TO DO IF SEXUAL HARASSMENT OCCURS

## 21 INTERNAL OPTIONS

## 23 EXTERNAL PROCEDURES

## 24 USEFUL ADDRESSES AND PUBLICATIONS

## 26 CHECKLIST

Dear employer,

Sexual harassment in the workplace can poison the working atmosphere, impair a company's performance and demotivate employees who are affected, or even make them ill. This brochure shows you how you can prevent sexual harassment in the workplace and what you can do to achieve a healthy, non-discriminatory working atmosphere. In the pages that follow you will discover:

- > what sexual harassment is and what forms it can take,
- > what the legal position is and what responsibilities you as an employer have towards your staff,
- > what you can do to prevent sexual harassment occurring in your company,
- > what you must do if an act of sexual harassment does occur or is suspected.

You can use the checklist on page 26 to find out how well your company is acting to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace, and where you may need to improve.

There is a website you can visit ([www.sexuellebelaestigung.ch](http://www.sexuellebelaestigung.ch)) which contains proven materials in German, French and Italian that will help you take all the necessary steps in your company to protect employees against sexual harassment.

The term sexual harassment in the workplace covers any behaviour with a sexual aspect or based on gender that is unwanted by and humiliating to the recipient. Harassment can take place during working hours or at company events. It can be perpetrated by employees, people working for partner firms or by the company's customers.

Sexual harassment can take the form of words, gestures or deeds.

In concrete terms, this might mean:

- > Insinuating and suggestive remarks about the appearance of employees.
- > Sexist comments and jokes about sexual characteristics, sexual behaviour and the sexuality of women or men.
- > Showing or displaying pornographic material in the workplace.
- > Issuing unwanted invitations with unmistakable intent to colleagues.
- > Unwanted bodily contact.
- > Stalking employees at work or outside work.
- > Attempting to get close to an employee in a way which involves promises of advantage or threat of disadvantage.
- > Sexual assault, coercion or rape.

#### What is sexism?

**Sexism is defined as any form of discrimination based on gender. Mocking women or men because of their appearance, behaviour or sexual orientation, for example, or making insinuating remarks to them, is sexist behaviour.**

There is a simple rule which can be applied to decide whether an observed act is harmless flirtation, a developing relationship between colleagues or sexual harassment: the key point is not the intention of the person carrying out the act, but how their behaviour is received by the other party, i.e. whether it is wanted or unwanted.

As an employer, it is not merely in your interest to ensure that your employees can go about their duties in a good working atmosphere. You are also responsible for preserving their dignity and protecting them from discrimination at work. This obligation rests on a number of legal texts:

**> Article 328 paragraph 1 Swiss Code of Obligations**

“Within the employment relationship, employers must acknowledge and safeguard employees’ personality rights, have due regard for their health and ensure that proper moral standards are maintained. In particular, they must ensure that employees are not sexually harassed and that any victim of sexual harassment suffers no further adverse consequences.”

**> Article 6 paragraph 1 Employment Act**

“Employers are obliged to take all the measures required to protect the health of their employees that experience has shown to be necessary, that may be used in accordance with the state of the art and which are appropriate to the conditions in the workplace. They must also take all the measures required to protect the personal integrity of their employees.”

The guidance document covering ordinances 3 and 4 to the Employment Act deals specifically with whether a particular incident is a case of sexual harassment. It draws on article 2 of ordinance 3 to the Employment Act.



The provisions of the Code of Obligations and the Employment Act require you to protect the personality rights of employees. The Federal Act on Gender Equality focuses on prohibiting discrimination and classifies sexual harassment not only as an act that undermines human dignity but also as discriminatory conduct.

#### > Article 4 Gender Equality Act

“Any harassing behaviour of a sexual nature or other behaviour related to the person’s gender that adversely affects the dignity of women or men in the workplace is discriminatory. Such behaviour includes in particular threats, the promise of advantages, the use of coercion and the exertion of pressure in order to obtain favours of a sexual nature.”

#### > Article 5 paragraph 3 Gender Equality Act

“In the case of discrimination through sexual harassment, the court or the administrative authority may also award the person concerned compensation, unless the employer proves that it took measures that have been proven in practice to be necessary and adequate to prevent sexual harassment and which it could reasonably have been expected to take. The compensation must be fixed by taking all the circumstances into account and is calculated on the basis of the average Swiss salary.”

Protection against sexual harassment is part of the duty of care that you as an employer or manager owe towards your staff. You can also be held responsible for harassment committed by temporary employees, suppliers or customers.

Sexual harassment can affect employees of either gender and at any level in the company hierarchy. A study carried out in Switzerland in 2007<sup>1</sup> found that 28 percent of women and 10 percent of men who were questioned had been upset by sexual harassment or similar behaviour in the context of their work.

<sup>1</sup> Silvia Strub and Marianne Schär Moser (2008): *Risiko und Verbreitung sexueller Belästigung am Arbeitsplatz. Eine repräsentative Erhebung in der Deutschschweiz und der Romandie*, Bern. This study (full text in German and French, summary available in Italian) deals with the risk and prevalence of sexual harassment in the workplace on the basis of a representative survey conducted in German and French-speaking Switzerland. It was commissioned by the Federal Office for Gender Equality and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs.





The study shows that three-quarters of cases of sexual harassment in which women are victims are carried out by men (usually individual men, but also groups of men). Women also report harassment by mixed groups (men and women), and in isolated instances by women.

Men stated that around half of all cases of harassment were perpetrated by men (individuals or groups), around a quarter by women, and also a quarter by mixed groups.

Most instances of harassment are carried out by colleagues, but customers often behave in a similar way. Superiors also engage in such conduct, but more rarely. Women report harassment on the part of superiors much more often than men. In contrast, men are more likely than women to suffer harassment by colleagues further down in the hierarchy.

### Why does sexual harassment occur?

People who engage in or suffer harassment are not sick or neurotic. The main motivation behind sexual harassment is the exercise of power and dominance. Erotic feelings, attraction or even love play a minor role. People are sensitive and vulnerable about sexual matters, and this fact is exploited.

### WHAT FORMS OF HARASSMENT ARE COMMON?

Women and men are mainly confronted with insinuating, denigrating comments, jokes and innuendo. Women often also experience situations such as wolf-whistles, leering and unwanted bodily contact. Men mention phone calls, letters or e-mails with insulting or sexual content, obscene gestures and pornographic material.



Sexual harassment has a negative impact on the company, interferes with good teamwork and reduces productivity. People who are faced with an atmosphere of insecurity and distrust do not work well, often do not turn up for work and call in sick. Sexual harassment often leads to resignations and dismissals. A high staff turnover is costly and the company loses the experience of those who leave.

Employers can face additional costs if a court finds that sexual harassment has taken place, as they have to pay lawyers' fees, court costs, compensation of up to six months' salary as well as damages for any financial loss and pain and suffering caused.

The media often seize on court cases dealing with sexual harassment, which can be detrimental to the company's image.

People who suffer sexual harassment often feel extremely insecure and undermined. This affects their motivation to work. Their performance suffers and they often resign without giving a reason. They feel helpless and ashamed, lack concentration, and are afraid that it might happen again. Their self-confidence is shattered.

Health problems often arise if the harassment cannot be stopped: victims may have difficulty sleeping, become fatigued, suffer headaches and stomach pain and feel insecure in their position at work. Harassment also affects family life and social relationships.

# WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Let us start with the most important thing: you must take a firm stand in favour of a harassment-free environment, and intervene if you notice, for instance, that sexist material is circulating in the workplace or if an employee becomes the target of humiliating comments and jokes. This clearly demonstrates your attitude.

Both the Gender Equality Act and the Employment Act require employers to take measures to prevent sexual harassment. It is in your interest to act in line with this legal requirement:

- > You will reduce the likelihood of incidents in your company.
- > Preventive measures also protect both your employees and you as an individual to the same degree.
- > If sexual harassment does occur, you will be treated more leniently by the court if you can show that you took appropriate preventive steps.

## DOCUMENT OUTLINING PRINCIPLES

You should have a document outlining principles in place to prevent sexual harassment in your company, containing (at least) the following elements:

### > Declaration of principles

You as an employer or manager state that you are firmly opposed to sexual harassment and will not tolerate it in the workplace.

### > Definition

The document should contain a definition of sexual harassment in the workplace, but it is important that this abstract concept is expressed in tangible form. The best way of doing this is to list some examples that are relevant to the everyday operation of your company and that your employees will understand. You can also use the list on page 3 of this brochure.

### > Offering support for victims

You should urge your employees to take a stand against sexual harassment and to intervene if they observe it. You should make it clear that victims of sexual harassment will receive help from the company. What this means in practice is that they need not worry about reprisals or losing their job. You should also indicate to victims where they can obtain information, help and advice. (There is more on this point under the heading “Where victims can go for help”, starting on page 16).

### > Sanctions

Stating that the perpetrators of sexual harassment are likely to face sanctions makes it clear that such conduct will not be tolerated.

The document outlining principles with its four key points should be available in writing. It might take the form of a memo, a leaflet or a document in a manual that is accessible to all employees. Other information can be added as required (useful addresses, external advice or counselling services, background information, etc.).

## PROVIDING INFORMATION

All employees must be aware of the document. You can give information verbally or in writing. You can choose the presentation form that is best suited to you and your company culture. Providing information in both forms is most effective. Presenting the information verbally gives you the opportunity to express your firm stance. Written material has the advantage that it can be given to all employees, including new entrants, and that it can be used more than once.

## VERBALLY...

You can give verbal information as part of an event which all employees can attend. As this is a sensitive topic, you will need to prepare your presentation well. You might want to approach someone outside the company to help you. There are many experts who have been dealing with the topic for years, and who can assist you in planning, conducting and overseeing the event.

The benefit of a single company-wide session is that all employees receive the information at the same time. If you have a large number of part-time workers, you must choose the timing of the event carefully, or repeat it, so that all employees get the message.

Discussions that you hold with your employees at regular intervals to set targets or review skills can also create an opportunity for providing information about sexual harassment in the workplace. You can hand over a copy of the document outlining principles at that time.



### ... OR IN WRITING

If the document outlining principles is available in written form, you must make sure that it is distributed to all employees. The brochure "Sexual harassment in the workplace. A guide for employees" (see page 24 for details of how to order the brochure) provides additional information. You can distribute this in addition to your own company document. Large firms produce their own brochures about sexual harassment in the workplace or agree procedures governing how the company deals with sexual harassment. You can find examples of documents at: [www.sexuellebelaestigung.ch](http://www.sexuellebelaestigung.ch)

Whichever option you choose for distributing information, it is important that you take a firm, clear stand and that your employees understand that your company will not tolerate sexual harassment.

### A LONG-TERM APPROACH

Simply holding one event about sexual harassment, or distributing your document outlining principles once, is not enough. The information must be repeated. You can do this in various ways, such as distributing the documents once a year with employees' pay statements, or referring to them in staff circulars. Displaying a memo on the notice board is a good idea, as this makes the information clearly visible. You may have files or manuals with important documents that all employees can access. In any event, the information must be easy to find without employees having to make a special effort to get hold of it.



You may experience a case of sexual harassment in your company despite taking every precaution and issuing information repeatedly. This is unpleasant and creates a bad atmosphere in the workplace. Rumours start to fly. People will inevitably take sides, supporting either the victim or the alleged perpetrator. This creates ideal conditions for preconceptions. It is vital that common preconceptions are recognised, identified as such and contradicted. Preconceptions can cause the situation to be dismissed as trivial, and victims can be made to appear the guilty party, for example because of their gender or background.

Some examples of common preconceptions, and their explanation, are given below.

## PRECONCEPTION 1

### **WOMEN PROVOKE MEN BY THE WAY THEY BEHAVE OR DRESS**

On the contrary: women who are the target of sexual harassment often dress and behave in an unobtrusive manner. This kind of statement is an attempt to place the responsibility for inappropriate and aggressive conduct on the victim.





## PRECONCEPTION 2

**BOTH WOMEN AND MEN LIKE TO BE COMPLIMENTED ON THEIR APPEARANCE, DRESS AND (SEXUAL) ATTRACTIVENESS.**

This may well be true. But if the person in question makes it clear, explicitly or implicitly, that such comments are unwelcome, they should not be made.

## PRECONCEPTION 3

**CUSTOMS VARY IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES**

It is true that what is acceptable in one country in terms of inter-gender relations may not be acceptable in another country. But the thing that remains the same in all cultures, and the point that really counts, is whether or not those at whom the behaviour is directed regard it as harassment and an attack on their sexual integrity. These boundaries must be respected.

### **The clothing issue**

Most employees know what type of clothing is appropriate for their position or for their usual duties. The appropriate type of clothing may vary depending on whether employees are attending a formal event or are working in a more relaxed setting. If the issue of dress really becomes a problem in your company, you should talk to the individuals concerned or ask an appropriate person to do so. It is best for the person having this conversation with the employee to be of the same gender.

Larger companies may have a dress code laid down by management. This makes things clear.

## WHERE VICTIMS CAN GO FOR HELP

Preventive measures must include ensuring that victims of harassment know where they can obtain information, advice or help. Make sure that your employees are aware of whom they can contact if matters become serious. You should designate a contact (an individual or an organisation) inside or outside the company which can support people in need of advice.

### WHAT SHOULD CONTACTS DO?

Contacts should perform the following tasks as a minimum requirement:

- > Listen to the person who has suffered harassment or is seeking advice, believe them and reassure them that their statements will be treated confidentially and that any further action will only be taken with their consent.
- > Keep a brief written record of every event.
- > List options for action. They should encourage people seeking advice to defend themselves actively, to set clear boundaries for the person who is harassing them, and indicate in writing what further steps will be taken if the harassment does not stop.
- > Be aware of the options for further action and their consequences. They should discuss the situation with the victim and come to a decision as to which option is most appropriate in this particular case.
- > If the victim is not in a position to stop the harassment, or tries to do so but is unsuccessful, the contact can initiate a discussion with the perpetrator or with superiors. The victim's consent is required for this.

### CONTACT PROFILE

A contact should be someone who is respected by employees, who is regarded as trustworthy, impartial, discreet and credible. This provides victims with the assurance that their complaint will be handled confidentially. The contact's role and position within the organisation allows him or her to take an independent position and defend this towards perpetrators and victims as well as

In companies with fewer than 50 employees, it is theoretically possible for the employer or a member of the management team to act as the contact. However, this can create more problems than it solves. Sexual harassment is an area dominated by shame and embarrassment. Victims can find it difficult to ask someone at a very high level in the hierarchy for help. It is also quite possible that employers and managers may themselves be suspected of sexual harassment.

their superiors. In cases that are not so serious, contacts should have the power to reach a decision on their own. Contacts can be company staff members or external experts.

## HOW TO FIND AN INTERNAL CONTACT

If you have decided that an internal contact is the best solution, you need to look out for a suitable member of staff. You as the employer or manager know your workforce, and are best placed to decide who fits the profile of a contact and who will be able to perform this task after undergoing appropriate training. As women are more likely than men to suffer sexual harassment, it can be advantageous to appoint a woman to this role. Ideally you should have two contacts, one of each gender.

In larger companies, contacts are often HR employees or members of an employees' committee. Smaller companies will inevitably have a narrower choice of people who could act as contacts. Some individuals will not be suitable because of personal bias. Here are two tips that can help you come to a decision:

- > There might be a recently retired member of staff who would be ideal in this role.
- > You could join forces with one or more other companies in your area, and each appoint one or more people to this role. Victims can then choose to approach a contact from their own company or one from a partner company.

## CONTACTS NEED TO BE TRAINED FOR THEIR DUTIES

Acting as a contact is no easy task. Preparation and specialised training is always necessary. The training will usually take one or two days. You as an employer will have to bear the costs of this training. However, you are investing to maintain a working atmosphere in which employees respect each other and treat each other properly. This will pay off in the longer term.

## TRAINING INTERNAL CONTACTS

In large companies, the HR department will organise training, or experts from outside the company will be hired to train contacts. This approach is too time-consuming and expensive for smaller firms. Here are a few practical tips:

- > Find out whether there are courses available to the public in your region to train employees to work as sexual harassment contacts (they may be offered by large training institutions or trade unions).
- > If there are any large companies in your region, ask them whether they offer internal training which your contacts could attend.
- > There may be other companies near you that would be interested in sharing the cost of a joint training programme.
- > You could approach employer organisations for help. You will certainly be a member of a local or regional trade, professional or sectoral organisation, and could suggest that these bodies offer such training.

## EXTERNAL CONTACTS (INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS)

Finally, you could also go for an external solution:

- > There are external specialists who could act as your company contact. They have experience in dealing with sexual harassment in the workplace. However, you would have to pay for using external resources.  
Go to [www.sexuellebelaestigung.ch](http://www.sexuellebelaestigung.ch) for addresses of external experts.
- > In major towns there are advice centres that provide advice and support to the victims of sexual harassment. These centres are usually public and accessible to anyone seeking advice. Information can be obtained from various sources, such as local and regional social services, cantonal equality offices, victim support centres, employment advice centres for women and cantonal conciliation boards.



## WHAT TO DO IF SEXUAL HARASSMENT OCCURS

20

There are a number of options if a complaint of sexual harassment is lodged within your company. You will probably first try to resolve the problem internally, either informally or via formal procedures. But allegations of discrimination may well end up in court.

### INFORMAL SOLUTIONS

Appointing contacts is an important step in resolving conflicts internally. In some cases, the contact can help the parties concerned to come to a mutual agreement. This is an informal process which may never even come to your attention as the employer or manager. But not all conflicts can be resolved in this way. You should therefore also give some thought to what should be done if the informal route does not lead to agreement between the parties.

### A FORMAL INTERNAL PROCEDURE

In order for the incident to be investigated, the person who suffered harassment must file a complaint. This should ideally be done in writing, but a verbal complaint may also be acceptable. When filing a complaint, the person who suffered harassment is also consenting to a formal procedure being launched. In this situation, you as the employer have a leading role. If the incident is a clear case of sexual harassment, you should immediately stop the person committing the harassment and issue a warning, redeploy or in very serious cases dismiss the offender.

## INVESTIGATION

It may well be that the facts of the case are not clear and that further investigation of the incident is needed. The investigation should be launched and completed without delay. This is part of your duty of care. You can appoint a suitable person from within your company to perform the investigation. However, it is better for all concerned (especially in small companies) if someone from outside the company conducts the investigation.

### An internal investigation must include four steps:

- > A hearing of the person making the complaint;
- > A hearing of the person against whom the complaint has been made;
- > A search for and interviews of any witnesses;
- > Compilation of an investigation report.

### Two points apply to all steps in the procedure:

- > A written record must be made of the entire procedure.
- > Both parties are entitled to inspect documents.

## AVOID PREJUDICE AND RUMOURS

An ongoing investigation usually involves several people, and the case becomes the subject of discussion among employees. This is particularly true in small companies where everyone knows one another. You should therefore issue a brief, objective statement about the incident. This prevents prejudice that could affect the person making the complaint, the witnesses, and the person against whom the complaint has been made.

## AFTER THE INVESTIGATION

Once the investigation has been completed and a decision has been reached as to whether sexual harassment did indeed take place, certain consequences follow:

- > The person who committed harassment must apologise and receives a warning, is redeployed or dismissed depending on the severity of the case. The same applies to people who made a false allegation.
- > The person who suffered harassment is entitled to compensation.
- > The company must introduce stronger preventive measures.
- > All measures must once again be presented to the workforce in an appropriate way.



**It is useful to have a set of rules**

Of course, as an employer you operate on the assumption that sexual harassment in the workplace does not happen in your company. The document outlining principles is in itself an important signal. However, a set of rules specifying how sexual harassment is dealt with will be helpful to you and your staff. The advantage is that, should an incident occur, the procedures have already been established. Many such rules have already been created and can be used as a basis for drafting your own version with less effort. See [www.sexuellebelaestigung.ch](http://www.sexuellebelaestigung.ch) for some examples and guidelines on how to use them.

**THE CONCILIATION PROCEDURE**

If the problem cannot be resolved internally, you can call on the cantonal conciliation board. All cantons offer this service. The parties to the dispute can contact them if a violation of the Gender Equality Act is suspected. This also applies to cases of sexual harassment. The conciliation boards try to work out an agreement between the parties. Their role is restricted to negotiation. If no agreement can be reached, the party making the complaint must file a claim in court within three months. Some cantons require the parties to go through conciliation procedure before taking legal action, but in others this step is optional. The conciliation board is free of charge.

**A COURT CASE**

Victims of harassment can ask the court to rule under article 5 of the Gender Equality Act that discrimination has taken place (as sexual harassment is regarded as a form of discrimination) and that it should be put a stop to and refrained from in future. You as the employer may be required to pay compensation and damages for financial loss and pain and suffering. Article 10 of the Gender Equality Act also provides for protection against dismissal. This protection is in force for the duration of proceedings taking place within the company, with the conciliation board or before a court. It ends six months after the conclusion of the proceeding. Proceedings can also be initiated after the person making the complaint has left your employment.

**INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYEES**

The Federal Office for Gender Equality FOGE and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO have published a brochure for employees entitled “Sexual harassment in the workplace. A guide for employees”, which is available free of charge. You can order as many copies as you need from the Bundesamt für Bauten und Logistik [Federal Office for Construction and Logistics] BBL. The document is available in German (item number: 301.922.d), French (301.922.f), Italian (301.922.i) and English (301.922.e). Go to [www.bundespublikationen.admin.ch](http://www.bundespublikationen.admin.ch) to place an order.

**MEMOS, RULES**

Go to [www.sexuellebelastigung.ch](http://www.sexuellebelastigung.ch) for further information and samples of memos and rules. This website is operated by the Federal Office for Gender Equality FOGE.

**USEFUL ADDRESSES**

The website [www.sexuellebelastigung.ch](http://www.sexuellebelastigung.ch) also contains addresses of conciliation boards, advice centres, experts, training courses for contacts, etc.

The addresses of the cantonal labour inspectorates are to be found at [www.arbeitsinspektorat.ch](http://www.arbeitsinspektorat.ch).

**PUBLICATIONS**

- > A handbook entitled “Sexuelle Belästigung – was tun?” by Véronique Ducret containing comprehensive information and advice on dealing with sexual harassment is published by vdf Hochschulverlag, Zurich, in 2004. (Available in German, French and Italian).

See [www.sexuellebelastigung.ch](http://www.sexuellebelastigung.ch) for details of more publications.

*You can order the checklist on the following pages in German (item number: 301.928.d), French (301.928.f) and Italian (301.928.i). Go to [www.bundespublikationen.admin.ch](http://www.bundespublikationen.admin.ch) to place an order.*



# Plan of action: sexual harassment



**What do you do in your company to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace? A clear attitude on the part of management is the first step towards prevention.**

Sexual harassment can take many forms. It can include any behaviour with a sexual aspect that is unwanted by one part and that infringes on a person's dignity. Harassment can take place during working hours or at company events. It can be carried out by fellow employees, superiors, people working for partner firms, or by the company's customers.

The main risks are:

- Damage to the mental and physical well-being of the victim and effects on their health
- Damage to the workplace atmosphere and performance

This checklist shows you how you can prevent and combat sexual harassment in your company.



Some important questions on the topic covered by this checklist are set out below.

**If you answer ✗ “no” or ✗ “partly” to a question, then you need to take action.**

Note the required action on the reverse of this checklist.

## Recognising sexual harassment

Sexual harassment in the workplace can take various forms, such as:

- Insinuating and suggestive remarks about the appearance of employees.
- Comments and jokes about sexual characteristics, sexual behaviour or the sexuality of women or men.
- Showing or displaying pornographic material in the workplace.
- Issuing unwanted invitations with unmistakable intent to colleagues.
- Unwanted bodily contact.
- Stalking employees at work or outside work.
- Attempting to get close to an employee in a way which involves promises of advantage or threat of disadvantage.
- Sexual assault, coercion or rape.

There is a simple rule which can be applied to decide whether an observed act is harmless flirtation, a developing relationship between colleagues, or sexual harassment: the key point is not the intention of the person carrying out the act, but how their behaviour is received by the other party, i.e. whether it is welcomed or unwanted.



## Taking preventive action and setting up procedures

1 Are employees given verbal and/or written information by company management as to what constitutes sexual harassment?

- ☐ **yes**  
☐ **partly**  
☐ **no**

2 Are employees informed by management that sexual harassment will not be tolerated in the workplace and that it is against the law?

- ☐ **yes**  
☐ **partly**  
☐ **no**

3 Is this information repeated at regular intervals?

- ☐ **yes**  
☐ **partly**  
☐ **no**

Do not simply give a definition of the term; mention some examples that could arise in an everyday working situation.

A document containing at least the following four elements provides the basis for preventing sexual harassment in your workplace:

- **a declaration of principles**
- **an extended definition**
- **an offer of support for victims**
- **possible sanctions**

All supervisors and employees must be familiar with this document.  
Go to [www.sexuellebelästigung.ch](http://www.sexuellebelästigung.ch) for examples of documents of this kind.

4	Is this information also provided to new employees?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> partly <input type="checkbox"/> nein
5	Is it also provided to trainees, interns and temporary staff?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> partly <input type="checkbox"/> no
6	Has the company appointed persons or organisations inside or outside the company to whom victims of sexual harassment can turn for help, advice and support?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
7	Do employees know where they can get help if an incident occurs?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> partly <input type="checkbox"/> no
8	Do supervisors know what is to be done if sexual harassment occurs or is suspected in the company?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> partly <input type="checkbox"/> no
9	Are sanctions in place if sexual harassment is found to have occurred?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
10	Are employees aware of these sanctions?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> partly <input type="checkbox"/> no



**Contact persons** (individuals or organisations) listen to individuals seeking advice, inform them of their rights and advise them as to what action can be taken. They try to stop the harassment if the victim agrees to this.

If an incident of sexual harassment is observed or suspected, **supervisors** take steps to have it investigated. This investigation can be carried out by people inside the company or external experts.  
Go to [www.sexuellebelästigung.ch](http://www.sexuellebelästigung.ch) for information on how to proceed.

### Being observant and taking action

11	Do supervisors ensure that pornographic material is not shown or displayed in the workplace?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> partly <input type="checkbox"/> no
12	Are employees who make comments and jokes about sexual characteristics, sexual behaviour or the sexual orientation of women and men spoken to and told to stop doing so?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> partly <input type="checkbox"/> no
13	Is it made clear to employees that insinuating and suggestive remarks about the appearance of colleagues are unacceptable?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> partly <input type="checkbox"/> no

The most serious and disturbing cases of sexual harassment generally take place behind closed doors. But in your managerial capacity, you give a clear signal if you are proactive and make it understood that pornographic material, suggestive comments and insinuating jokes will not be tolerated in your company.





