

POLICY
AGAINST
SEXUAL
HARASSMENT

April 1

2020



Change Initiatives

POLICY AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to prevent sexual harassment at Change Initiatives (henceforth “Organisation”), and to provide a safe and respectful work environment for all employees, volunteers and other stakeholders

Scope: This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, consultants, vendors, contractors, and any other individuals who work at or for the Organisation, including visitors and guests

Policy: The Organisation strictly prohibits sexual harassment in any form, whether it occurs in the workplace, at work-related events or activities, or outside of work

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Unwanted touching or physical contact
- Sexual comments, jokes, or gestures
- Sexual advances, invitations or propositions
- Displaying sexually explicit materials
- Making sexual or suggestive noises
- Staring or leering in a sexual manner
- Sending sexually suggestive or explicit messages or images electronically

Reporting Sexual Harassment:

- Any individual in the Organisation who believes she has been subjected to sexual harassment or witnessed sexual harassment must report the incident in writing immediately but not later than 90 days to their team leader
- If the complaint involves a team leader, the complaint should be reported to the Director
- All complaints will be taken seriously and investigated promptly and thoroughly not later than 30 days of receiving the complaint
- Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible, consistent with a fair and thorough investigation

Internal Complaint Committee:

The Organisation shall set up an Internal Complaint Committee (henceforth the ICC), which is responsible for investigating and resolving complaints related to sexual harassment in the Organisation:

- ICC should have a minimum of three members, including at least one woman and an external member who is familiar with issues related to sexual harassment. The members should be appointed by the advisory board
- The members of ICC should be appointed for a term of three years or until their successors are appointed.
- ICC should maintain the confidentiality of all complaints and investigations. The members of the committee should not discuss the details of the case with anyone who is not directly involved in the investigation
- ICC should conduct the investigation in a fair and impartial manner. The committee should not be influenced by any external factors or pressures
- ICC should complete the investigation within 30 days of receiving the complaint. If additional time is needed, the complainant and the respondent should be informed of the reasons for the delay

Raising a Complaint

- The complaint should clearly define the nature of the sexual harassment and include specific incidents, dates, times, locations, and names of any witnesses, if possible
- The complaint should be kept confidential and shared only with the designated persons such as the Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) or Governing Body Members
- **TIMEFRAME:** The complaint should be raised as soon as possible but not later than 90 days after the incident or incidents occur. Any delay in reporting the complaint may affect the investigation and resolution of the matter
- **CHANNELS:** The complaint may be raised with ICC or any other designated authority, such as the Governing Body members, in writing or in person
- **NON-RETALIATION:** The employee who raises the complaint should be protected from any retaliation, victimisation or any kind of discrimination
- **SUPPORT:** The employee who raises the complaint should be provided with support and assistance throughout the investigation and resolution process

Redressal:

- **CONCILIATION:** Prior to initiating an enquiry, ICC may at the request of the complainant take steps to settle the matter between the Complainant and Respondent, provided no monetary settlement is made the basis of such conciliation. In case a settlement has been arrived at, ICC shall record the settlement so arrived and forward the same to the Organisation to take action as specified in the recommendation of ICC
- **INVESTIGATION:** The complaint should be investigated promptly, impartially, and objectively, following due process. The ICC or the designated authority should interview the complainant, the respondent, and any witnesses, and collect any relevant evidence.
- **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:** Based on the investigation, the ICC or the designated authority should prepare a report of its findings and recommendations for remedial measures. The report should be submitted to the employer for appropriate action.

- **REMEDIAL MEASURES:** The employer should take appropriate remedial measures based on the recommendations of the ICC or the designated authority. These measures may include disciplinary action against the respondent, counseling for the complainant, training for employees on prevention of sexual harassment, and changes to policies and procedures to prevent future incidents.
- **COMMUNICATION:** The ICC or the designated authority should communicate the findings and recommendations to the complainant and the respondent, and keep them informed of the progress of the investigation and any action taken as a result
- **Retaliation Prohibited:** The Organisation prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports sexual harassment or participates in an investigation of sexual harassment. Any individual who retaliates against someone who has made a complaint or participated in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- **Discipline:** If an investigation reveals that sexual harassment has occurred, prompt and appropriate corrective action will be taken, up to and including termination of employment or volunteer service

Conclusion

The Organisation is committed to maintaining a work environment that is free of sexual harassment. All employees, volunteers, consultants, vendors contractors, and other stakeholders are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and refrain from engaging in any conduct that may be perceived as sexual harassment

Internal Complaints Committee Members:

- Ms Jhumpa Ghosh — Presiding Officer — 91-98317-54306
- Ms Sanghamitra Majumdar (Member) — 91-90072-72536
- Ms Sarmistha Banik (Member) — 91-84660-54665
- Mr Suryatirtha Ray (Member) — 91-98317-54306
- Mr Saumen Gupta (Member) — 91-98308-44595
- Ms Jhulan Ghose (External Member) — 91-98300-16415