# Sexual Harassment Fact Sheet

### What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature. The law (Equality Act 2010) protects the following people against sexual harassment at work:

* employees and workers
* contractors and self-employed people hired to personally do the work
* job applicants

To be sexual harassment, the unwanted behaviour must have either:

* violated someone's dignity
* created an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for someone

It can be sexual harassment if the behaviour:

* has one of these effects even if it was not intended
* intended to have one of these effects even if it did not have that effect

Sexual harassment can happen to men, women and people of any gender identity or sexual orientation. It can be carried out by anyone of the same sex, a different sex or anyone of any gender identity.

You could experience sexual harassment from anyone you come into contact with because of your job, including:

* someone you work with
* a manager, supervisor or someone else in a position of authority
* someone high profile or influential
* You can also experience sexual harassment from a customer, client or member of the public. An employer should take steps to prevent this.

Sexual harassment can be a one-off incident or an ongoing pattern of behaviour.

It can happen in person or in other ways, for example online through things like email, social media or messaging tools.

### Examples of Sexual Harassment

Examples include:

* making sexual remarks about someone's body, clothing or appearance
* asking questions about someone's sex life
* telling sexually offensive jokes
* making sexual comments or jokes about someone's sexual orientation or gender reassignment
* displaying or sharing pornographic or sexual images, or other sexual content
* touching someone against their will, for example hugging them
* sexual assault or rape

What some people might consider as joking, 'banter' or part of their workplace culture can still be sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is usually directed at an individual, but it's not always the case. Sometimes there can be a culture of behaviour that's not specifically aimed at one person – such as sharing sexual images. Someone could still make a complaint of sexual harassment in this situation.

### What should I do if I have been sexually harassed?

If you've experienced sexual harassment at work, you can make a complaint to [APPROPRIATE MANAGER/HR]. We will take your complaint seriously and handle it fairly and sensitively.

You should make a note of what's happened including dates, time and names, and any other witnesses. You will need these notes as part of your complaint, or as part of your support for the person who has complained.

You should initially talk to [APPROPRIATE MANAGER/HR] first so that we can resolve the situation, however if you feel that we have not resolved your complaint satisfactorily, you can raise a formal grievance in writing. Details of how to do this can be found in Appendix 5 of the Staff Handbook (Grievance Policy).

### What if I have been sexually assaulted or raped at work?

If you've been sexually assaulted or raped at work, there are specialist helplines you can call for support and advice. They can help talk through your options.

If you wish to report this to the police, please talk to us about this so that we can support you. We will not pressure you to make a decision that you are not comfortable with.

We do not have to wait for the result of police action before we can take action of our own in terms of our equal opportunity and positive working policy and our grievance and disciplinary policies.

### What should I do if I have witnessed sexual harassment?

If you see someone being sexually harassed at work, you could step in and try to stop it happening, if you feel it's safe to do so.

After it happened, you can:

* support a complaint made by the person who experienced the sexual harassment
* report what you've seen or experienced to an appropriate line manager or HR
* give evidence as a witness, for example as part of a grievance procedure (You should make a note of what's happened including dates, time and names, and any other witnesses. You will need these notes as part of your complaint, or as part of your support for the person who has complained)
* make a sexual harassment complaint yourself because what you've seen has violated your dignity or created an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for you

\* If you're making a complaint yourself, you do not need the permission of the person who's been sexually harassed.

You will not be victimised if you make or support a complaint, or act as a witness. You will not be stopped from giving evidence or treated unfairly because you've made a complaint, given evidence or supported a complaint

### Training

If you would like to understand more about sexual harassment, as well as other forms of harassment and discrimination, there are 3 eLearning modules that you can take (Sexual Harassment at Work, Unconscious Bias, Equality & Diversity). Please speak to your line manager in order to enroll on these courses and they will contact the Parish HR Advisor.

### 3rd Parties, such as Contractors, Builders, Cleaners etc

If you are responsible for booking contractors or have self-employed people working with/around you or other staff, you should provide them a copy of this fact sheet with their contract, so that they understand what sexual harassment is, and the consequences should they engage in this.

You should also assess whether any of your staff are at risk of being sexually harassed, for example in roles where they are customer facing. You should then ensure that they know how to report this.

If an employee reports sexual harassment by a third party, then you must take this seriously.