

## Workplace Sexual Harassment: **EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Create a **safe and healthy workplace** free of bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Not to engage in **unwanted** sexual comments, behavior or touching.
- Take steps to **prevent** and minimize sexual harassment.
- Develop a **policy** on bullying and harassment including sexual harassment.
- **Inform and train workers** on workplace policies and procedures.
- Create **procedures for workers to report** bullying and harassment and for effective investigations.
- **Conduct investigations** to respond appropriately to reports of bullying and harassment.
- **Respect the privacy** of everyone who is involved in a complaint.
- **Provide appropriate support and referrals** to workers who experience sexual harassment.
- Comply with any investigations or orders made by **WorkSafe BC** (Workers' Compensation Board), the **BC Human Rights Tribunal** and other authorities.

## **Organizational costs of workplace sexual harassment**

### **1 Financial losses from:**

- Low worker morale and motivation,
- Increased absenteeism,
- High turnover, and decreased productivity.

### **2 Legal costs**

Employers may be held responsible for not preventing the harassment and have to pay compensation (e.g. workers' compensation, human rights tribunal awards, civil lawsuits, and legal fees).

### **3 Reputational damage**

Failure to properly address harassment can seriously harm an organization's public image and trust.

## Best practices for employers



Hold **regular education** sessions to raise awareness of workplace sexual harassment.



Ensure management and human resources use a **trauma-informed approach** while dealing with sexual harassment situations.



Train new staff on **workplace sexual harassment policies and procedures**.



**Communicate regularly** with parties to a complaint while respecting privacy laws.



Where appropriate, bring in an **external investigator** to assist with handling complaints.

## Need help with education and training on workplace sexual harassment to support your organization?

Contact SHARP Workplaces:



Telephone: **604-673-3143**



Toll-free: **1-888-685-6222**



Email: **SHARPWorkplaces@clasbc.net**



Website: **clasbc.net/sharpworkplaces**



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