



Defining Sexual Harassment:

As defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example: a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

There are two types of sexual harassment:

- **Quid Pro Quo** - a favor or advantage granted or expected in return for something. In the context of sexual harassment, a sexual request in exchange for an employment benefit, or negative consequence if declined.
- **Hostile Work Environment** - behavior that is either overtly based on sex or is of a sexual nature that is so severe and pervasive that it creates an environment that interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Sexual Misconduct is sexual behavior that is unwelcome and usually without consent. It can occur under the umbrella of either Quid Pro Quo or Hostile Work Environment Harassment.

What can you do today ensure your ministry has a safe workplace?

- Raise awareness with your leadership about sexual harassment. Gain commitment to maintaining a harassment free environment.
- Determine your reporting procedure and accountable person.
- Develop a harassment and complaint policy.
- Communicate your policy to your staff and volunteers, ensure they know the complaint reporting procedure if they experience harassment.
- Train your staff at the time of hire and annually on respect in the workplace. Engage an outside firm to do the training if you do not have internal resources.
- Talk to your staff. How are they feeling about your culture? Address concerns.

Examples of Practical Measures

- Ensure offices have windows that are not covered.
- When possible, have open door meetings.
- Be aware of perceptions.
- Consider group activities, e.g. lunches, rather than a male and female alone.
- Travel options: If a male and female have a need to travel together, consider taking separate flights, or not sitting together on flights, booking hotel rooms on separate floors, group meals.
- Enforce a zero-tolerance policy for harassment.
- Follow the Platinum Rule - do unto others as they would have you do unto them.

Additional Resources

- Check with your insurance company. Many times an insurance carrier will offer sexual harassment training.
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) - The EEOC has a wide range of information for employers, including a special section for small employers (eoc.gov/employers/smallbusiness/index.cfm)