

# Checklist

## Sexual harassment in the workplace



### Mutual respect for a positive work environment

As an employer, what do you do in your company to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace? A clear attitude from management is the first step towards prevention.

Sexual harassment can take many forms. It includes any behaviour of a sexual or sexist nature that is unwanted by one party and which infringes on a person's dignity. Harassment can take place during working hours or outside of them, for example at company events, business trips and other work-related activities. Perpetrators can be employees, superiors, people from partner firms or clients.

The main risks of sexual harassment are:

- Damage to the mental and physical well-being of the victim and to their health,
- damage to the work environment and performance.

This checklist shows employers how they can prevent and combat sexual harassment in their company.

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This checklist covers the main questions on the topic of sexual harassment. If you answer a question with  «no», then you need to take action. Note the required action on the reverse side of this checklist.

## Recognising sexual harassment

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

- lewd and suggestive remarks about an employee's outward appearance,
- comments or jokes about employees' sexual characteristics and behaviour, sexual orientation or gender identity or expression,
- showing, displaying or sharing of pornographic or nude pictures in the workplace,
- employees receiving unwanted invitations with explicit intent or unwanted emails, texts or social media messages or calls with derogatory or obscene jokes, banter, pictures, videos with sexual or sexist content,
- unwelcome physical contact,
- stalking of employees at or outside of work,
- advances involving the promise of job benefits or the threat of adverse consequences,
- romantic relationships may develop in the workplace, but if they deteriorate, this can lead to sexual harassment,
- sexual assault, coercion or rape.

There is a simple rule to help decide whether observed conduct is harmless flirtation, a budding relationship between work colleagues or a case of sexual harassment: What is important is not the intention of the perpetrator but how their behaviour is perceived by the other party, i.e. whether it is welcome or not.

## Taking preventive measures and defining procedures

1	Are the measures for preventing sexual harassment part of an overall concept aimed at preventing psychosocial risks in the workplace?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes
		<input type="checkbox"/> no
2	Are employees given verbal and/or written information by company management as to what constitutes sexual harassment?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes
		<input type="checkbox"/> no
3	Are employees informed by management that sexual harassment will not be tolerated in the workplace and that it is against the law?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes
		<input type="checkbox"/> no
4	Is this information repeated at regular intervals?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes
		<input type="checkbox"/> no

5	Are new employees given this information?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes
		<input type="checkbox"/> no
6	Are apprentices, interns and temporary employees given this information?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes
		<input type="checkbox"/> no
7	Has the company appointed persons or organisations inside or outside the company to whom witnesses or victims of sexual harassment can turn for help, advice and support in a confidential setting?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes
		<input type="checkbox"/> no
8	Do employees know where to go for help in the event of an incident?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes
		<input type="checkbox"/> no
9	Do superiors know what to do if sexual harassment occurs in the company or if it is suspected?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes
		<input type="checkbox"/> no
10	Are sanctions envisaged should a case of sexual harassment be established?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes
		<input type="checkbox"/> no
11	Are employees aware of these sanctions?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes
		<input type="checkbox"/> no

## Being observant and taking action

12 Do superiors ensure that no pornographic material or nude pictures are shared, shown or displayed in the workplace?

yes

no

13 Are employees who make comments and jokes about sexual characteristics, sexual behaviour or the gender identity of other employees confronted and told to stop?

yes

no

14 Is it made clear to employees that lewd and suggestive remarks about the outward appearance of colleagues are unacceptable?

yes

no

15 Are employees made aware that sending emails, texts or social media messages or making calls/voice messages with derogatory or obscene jokes, banter, pictures, videos with sexual or sexist content is unwanted?

yes

no

To guarantee an effective prevention strategy, regular checks should be made to ensure that the policy and measures are actually implemented in practice. An internal annual evaluation, for example, can examine whether all employees are informed about the procedures in place and designated contact persons. Additionally, training and workshops can be provided for a deeper understanding of the topic and employees can be trained to recognise when personal boundaries have been crossed and how to react appropriately. The possibility to report incidents anonymously can be a valuable way of identifying and handling potential cases.

Checklist completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Plan of action: sexual harassment**

No.	Measure required	When	By whom	Completed		Comments	Reviewed	
				Date	Initials		Date	Initials

Rechecked on: \_\_\_\_\_ (Recommended: every six months)

Detailed information can be found in the «Sexual harassment in the workplace. A guide for employers» brochure (order no.:301.926.e). The «Sexual harassment in the workplace. A guide for employees» brochure is suitable for distribution to employees (order no. 301.922.e). It is also available in German (301.922.d), French (301.922.f) and Italian (301.922.i). Both brochures can be obtained for free from BBL Verkauf Bundespublikationen, CH-3003 Bern, [www.bundespublikationen.admin.ch](http://www.bundespublikationen.admin.ch).

Further information and tried and tested material can be found at [www.ebg.admin.ch/en/sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace](http://www.ebg.admin.ch/en/sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace).