

Preventing Harassment

Hagerstown Community College

This training is designed to help you, an employee of Hagerstown Community College, to learn and understand how everyone has a part in preventing harassment in the workplace. You will start off with the training objectives and outline, and a pretest. You will then move into learning more about what harassment is and what your responsibility are as an employee in preventing sexual harassment. The course will end with a post test.

What is Workplace Harassment?

- Harassment of any kind is bothersome, demeaning, irritating, and annoying behavior based on personal attributes such as race, color, religion, and other protected classes we will discuss later in the training.
- Sexual harassment is specifically harassment of sexual nature.
- Disrespectful or offensive behavior by all staff is inappropriate. We all suffer when disrespectful and demeaning behavior is tolerated in the workplace.

Objectives of this Training

- The primary goals of this training are:
 - An awareness of the laws pertaining to harassment
 - Types of harassment
 - Unacceptable behavior in the workplace
 - Hagerstown Community College's Harassment Policy and reporting process
 - Employees responsibilities

Training Outline

- We will first start with a Pre-test to find out what you know about harassment and a comfortable workplace.
- The presentation explaining the laws, what is and is not acceptable behavior in the workplace, and Hagerstown Community Colleges Harassment policy.
- We will complete the training with a Post-test, and when you receive a 100% you will have completed the training. So, let's begin.

The Laws

- We will begin with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 under Title VII
- Followed by an explanation of Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- The Federal Violence Against Women Act of 1994
- The definition of sexual harassment

Civil Rights Act of 1964 under Title VII

- This law, as amended in 1972, states that an employer cannot discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. This act covers almost everyone and makes it unlawful for employers with 15 or more employees in public or private organizations to discriminate in hiring, retaining, or dismissing employees.
- The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has the responsibility to administer and enforce the Civil Rights law at work. The commission itself consists of five members appointed by the President of the United States. In practice, the commission includes thousands of employees around the country. Their job is to receive, investigate, and resolve complaints by distressed individuals.

The Law States:

Under Title VII, sexual harassment generally refers to harassment on the basis of sex when such conduct substantially:

- Interferes with a person's work performance or
 - Creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.
- The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission , referred to as the (EEOC) emphasizes that employers have an affirmative action duty to maintain workplaces free from intimidation and harassment.
 - The Federal Violence Against Women Act of 1994 provides another path women can use to seek relief for violent sexual harassment. It provides that a person “who commits a crime of violence motivated by gender and thus deprives another” of her rights shall be liable to the party injured.
 - Sexual harassment is defined by the EEOC guidelines as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other **verbal** or **physical** conduct of a sexual nature.

The Law States (continued)

- Conduct or actions based on the following:
 - Race
 - Religion
 - Sex
 - National origin
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Genetic information
 - Military membership or veteran status
 - State laws may further define harassment to include additional protections. Some examples are: sexual orientation, marital status, cross dressing, political affiliations. Maryland complies to the federal definition.
- Harassment in the workplace is alleged as:
 - Severe or pervasive enough to create a hostile or intimidating work environment for a REASONABLE person.
 - The courts rule in favor of the Perception of the victim not the Intent of the harasser.

Types of Harassment

- Unwelcome verbal or physical conduct.
 - Example: swearing, touching
- Severe, pervasive, and persistent conduct that unreasonable interferes with employees work performance.
 - Example: when someone continues the conduct, is asked to stop the conduct, but continues to do so
- Employees status or benefits are directly affected.
 - Example: if an employee is promoted because of the relationship with the supervisor
- Adverse employment action against employee who complained.
 - Example: retaliation

Unacceptable Behavior in the Workplace

- Examples of unacceptable behavior in the workplace includes:
 - Social bantering or teasing.
 - Verbal abuse, profanity, humiliation, constant criticism
 - Gossip
 - Jokes
 - Emails that may contain too much personal information for the workplace or may be written out of anger or frustration

Harassment versus Inappropriate Conduct or Behavior

- The term harassment refers to the illegal form of discrimination.
- One may say they are being harassed; however, are subject to inappropriate conduct or behavior.
- The term is frequently used to describe this type of behavior and conduct is **inappropriate conduct**.
- There is perhaps misunderstood or poor practice or judgment versus illegal behavior.

Employee Responsibilities

- In a professional manner communicate when someone offends you. Make sure the conversation takes place in a confidential area and is between the two parties involved.
- Remain professional while at work. Be mindful of jokes, and/or religious, cultural, or political views.
- Know the [Hagerstown Community College Harassment policy](#), which can be located in the [Employee Handbook](#).
- Contact Human Resources if you have any questions or need clarification.

How to Report a Harassment Concern

- Hagerstown Community College's practice is:
 - Report the incident to Human Resources immediately via the link:
dmmarriott@hagerstowncc.edu

Summary

- Harassment is conduct or actions, based on race, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, military membership, or veteran status, severe or pervasive enough to create a hostile, abusive, or intimidating work environment for a **reasonable person**.

Summary continued

- Inappropriate conduct or behavior that is unacceptable is referred to workplace bullying.
- Repeated mistreatment of one or more persons using humiliation, intimidation, and belittling one's character is not acceptable.
- Conflicts with [Hagerstown Community College's Code of Trust](#)
- Is illegal under federal and state laws.
- Remember your obligation!