

“Step by Step Instructions on how to comply with the Law”

Now that it is necessary for every organization to comply with the law against Sexual Harassment following are the steps that need to be taken immediately. A code of conduct has already been prepared in simple language insuring 100% compliance to the law. This document is far easier to understand and follow than the text of the law itself. The document is ready to be incorporated in your HR policies as it is.

STEP 1: Download Code of Conduct from AASHA’s website

STEP 2: In a meeting of your senior management take a decision to officially incorporate the code in your HR policies

STEP 3: Management will appoint a three-member standing Inquiry Committee to handle any complaints of sexual harassment. At least one member should be a woman. It is good to have a representation of CBA (if applicable)

STEP 4: Management should also identify a competent authority in their organization if not already identified (in most cases it is the CEO or who ever has the hiring/ firing authority).

STEP 5 : Management will notify all employees of incorporating of the Code of Conduct in their HR policies, the names, contact information of the three committee members, instructions of approaching any of the Committee member in case of a sexual harassment complaint.

STEP 6: Management will also post this notification and the full text of the code on a notice board or any common area in a language understandable by the employees. (AASHA has printed a set of two posters with full text of the code in English and Urdu. You may request them from AASHA’s office. It is quite convenient to frame them and put them up in the office.

ONCE YOU HAVE COMPLETED THESE SIX STEPS, YOU HAVE SUCCESSFULLY ADOPTED THE CODE AS PRESCRIBED BY THE LAW.

The objective of adopting the code is to make the work environment more professional and dignified, which will make the organization more efficient and productive, therefore it is necessary for the management to undertake steps to institutionalize the code in letter and spirit.

The management should:

1. Educate employees regarding the issue of sexual harassment and how to create Zero tolerance for it.
2. Train inquiry committee members to conduct their inquiries in a just and sensitive manner.
3. Ensure that due process is undertaken in a fair and just manner. It should intervene if there is any retaliation or black mailing by any party.
4. The management and the inquiry committee should be proactive in taking steps to make the work environment more professional and free of sexual harassment. Issues of sexual harassment are not usual in organization as people bring them to work place as a part of their upbringing. It is the responsibility of management to have mechanism to handle these cases appropriately.