



HARASSMENT INCL. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

IMPACTS OF HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The impacts of harassment, including sexual harassment, on both workers and organisations is numerous. Some impacts to consider are:

ON WORKERS

Mental health conditions: such as depression, anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or adjustment disorders.

Physical health problems: The stress and anxiety caused by harassment can manifest in physical symptoms such as headaches, gastrointestinal issues, sleep disturbances, and compromised immune function.

Decreased job satisfaction: Harassment creates a hostile work environment, leading to decreased job satisfaction, engagement, and productivity. It can affect concentration, focus, and the ability to perform tasks effectively.

Strained interpersonal relationships: Harassment can damage relationships between colleagues, leading to conflicts, mistrust, and a breakdown in teamwork. It may also create a culture of fear and silence within the workplace.

Career setbacks: Workers who experience harassment may face career setbacks due to decreased opportunities, missed promotions, or even wrongful termination. It can negatively impact their professional growth and advancement.

ON ORGANISATIONS

Decreased productivity: Harassment creates a hostile work environment, which can lead to decreased employee productivity and engagement. When employees are subjected to harassment, their focus and energy may be diverted from their work responsibilities.

Increased absenteeism and turnover: Harassment can contribute to increased absenteeism as employees may choose to stay away from work to avoid the hostile environment. Additionally, it can lead to higher turnover rates as employees may seek employment elsewhere to escape the harassment. This can disrupt workflow, increase recruitment costs, and result in the loss of valuable talent.

Damaged reputation: Harassment incidents within an organisation can damage its reputation both internally and externally. News of harassment can spread quickly, impacting the perception of the organisation among employees, clients, customers, and the public. It may result in loss of trust, credibility, and potential business opportunities.

Increase in workers compensation claims.

Legal consequences and financial costs: Harassment can expose organisations to legal liability. Victims may file complaints or lawsuits, resulting in legal investigations, settlements, or judgments. Defending against harassment claims can be financially draining for organisations, including legal fees, potential fines, and compensation pay-outs.

Decline in employee morale and teamwork:

Harassment erodes employee morale and trust within the organisation. It creates a toxic work environment



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where employees may feel unsafe, stressed, and demoralised. This can lead to a breakdown in teamwork, collaboration, and a negative organisational culture.

Recruitment and retention challenges: Organisations with a reputation for tolerating harassment may face difficulties attracting and retaining top talent. Prospective employees may be hesitant to join an organisation known for its hostile work environment, while current employees may actively seek opportunities elsewhere.

Decreased organisational effectiveness: Harassment can hinder organisational effectiveness by undermining communication, cooperation, and employee commitment. It creates a climate of fear and silence, hindering open dialogue, innovation, and the free flow of ideas.