

Information for Supervisors



When You First Hear of the Complaint

- Triage what you have heard
 - Is this about conflict of personalities?
 - Is it appropriate to use the grievance procedure?
 - Does it involve “protected status” or sexual harassment?
- Determine if you have a conflict of interest
- Be prepared to be an unbiased fact finder, not a judge
- Establish an investigation plan
- Follow policies and procedures carefully

Meeting with the Complainant

- Meet with complaining employee privately
- Explain the investigation policy
- Don’t promise absolute confidentiality – you can promise that the situation will be handled as discreetly as possible
- Avoid making statements that imply you don’t believe the complainant or recipient
- Avoid making excuses for the alleged harasser or imply that his or her behavior was misunderstood
- Ensure prompt action
- Ensure no retaliation
- Follow up with employee to make sure they are comfortable with the process

Documenting the Complaint

In the case of a lawsuit, all documentation can be required to be presented as evidence. Include the following information in your notes:

- Names of individuals bringing allegations
- Names of alleged harassers
- Date of documentation
- To whom allegations were first reported and when
- Dates, times, and locations of alleged harassment
- List of specific examples of harassment
- Names of possible witnesses
- Complainant’s perception of the impact of alleged harassment
- Complainant’s perception of what will happen if alleged harassment continues
- Complainant’s suggestion of what would remedy the situation
- Attach all relevant documents, e.g., emails, photographs, etc.
- Copies of accused’s personnel identification information
- *No* personal opinions or conclusions regarding whether you believe harassment occurred or did not occur
- Copy of the church’s harassment policy and compliant process

Store documentation in an investigative file—not in the complainant’s Personnel Folder.

Follow your normal record retention guidelines regarding length of storage.

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(continued)



Regarding the Alleged Harasser

- Rights of the accused must be consciously and carefully considered
- The accused must be given full notice of the nature of the allegations at the earliest possible time with an opportunity to respond – but *not* to confront the alleged victim
- Any discipline focus on conduct that bears a real significant risk of harassment claims (not just actions which merely appear improper)

Findings

1. No harassment or violation of sexual harassment policy
(If further substantial evidence is provided, the investigation may be reopened.)
2. Harassment occurred and discipline recommended
3. Harassment occurred but resolution between the parties successful

Follow-Up Actions

- Education of all employees
- Corrective counseling
- Sexual harassment prevention training for offender
- Disciplinary action for offender
- Transfer, reassignment, retirement, resignation, termination of offender
- No action that adversely affects the recipient of the harassment or complainant
- Review of the sexual harassment policy and the complaint procedure
- Maintenance of the confidentiality of the investigation and the privacy of all involved