



SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND YOU

What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment is considered a form of sex discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. It also creates an unproductive, unpleasant working environment. Many people do not understand exactly what constitutes sexual harassment. At times they are unsure and defensive about how to behave. It is important that we know how to recognize this behavior, understand the damage it causes and realize why it is prohibited by law and University policy.

There are two types of sexual harassment: *Tangible Employment Action* and *Hostile Environment*.

Tangible Employment Action harassment occurs when someone with authority to take tangible employment action makes requirements of a sexual nature.

Hostile Environment harassment occurs when conduct of a severe and/or persistent sexual nature unreasonably interferes with an individual's job performance.

What is UTHSC-H's policy on sexual harassment?

It is the policy of UTHSC-H to support an educational and working environment that provides equal opportunity to all members of the university community. UTHSC-H explicitly prohibits discrimination and/or harassment by any member of the university community on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status. UTHSC-H's policy applies to the conduct of ALL members of the UTHSC-H community including departmental administrators, faculty, staff, students, residents, fellow and other trainees, volunteers, vendors, consultants, observers and visitors as well as to applicants for admissions or employment. Individuals who engage in discrimination and/or harassment in violation of this policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

How does the policy apply to me?

As a member of the University community, you are responsible for helping to create a positive environment for work and study.

If something that you do offends another member of the community, respect that person by correcting your actions right away. If you and the other person can't resolve the conflict, you may seek advice/information from various sources including your supervisor or Human Resources.

If you are offended by something that another person does or says, DON'T ignore the problem. Remember, some people may not realize that their actions are offensive. Clearly describe to the offender what you find unacceptable and wait for a corrective response. If you feel uncomfortable talking with that individual, you may want to seek assistance or consult with Human Resources.

What do I do if I feel I've been harassed?

If you feel you've been sexually harassed, and your requests for corrective action have not been taken seriously, you may file a complaint with your supervisor or Human Resources. Your supervisor or a Human Resources representative will assist you in understanding your options.

**UTHSC-H Human Resources
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