



State of Illinois
Department of Human Rights

IDHR



IT'S NEVER OKAY.

Illinois Law Prohibits Sexual Harassment

It feels like harassment, it probably is.
But how do you know for sure? And what are your rights?

If it feels like harassment, it probably is.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is unwanted, deliberate or repeated sexual behavior. Sexually suggestive objects, signs, magazines, email, text messages, or pictures may be sexual harassment as well. The person hearing, seeing, or being touched does not want this attention.

It is normal to feel embarrassed and angry by unwanted, unflattering attention or demands. However, you have a right to be free of sexual harassment in the work place or educational institution.

Sexual harassment can also be a form of unlawful sex discrimination if there is a subtle or direct threat that a sexual or social relationship is part of your job or your educational performance. The threat can be present in any part of your job: wages, promotions, references or working conditions; or your educational performance: grades, honors, course work, or scholarships.

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO BE FREE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORK PLACE.

Definitions

In employment, sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or any conduct of a sexual nature when 1) submission to such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of employment, and 2) submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for making decisions about your employment; or 3)

such conduct interferes with your job performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

In education, sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors made to a student by an executive, administrative staff or faculty member, or any conduct of a sexual nature that substantially interferes with the student's educational performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

THE ILLINOIS HUMAN RIGHTS ACT PROTECTS ILLINOIS EMPLOYEES FROM SEXUAL HARASSMENT.

what you should know

Both males and females can be victims of sexual harassment.

Victims of sexual harassment and harassers can be members of the opposite sex or of the same sex.

Sexual harassment in the work place can be perpetrated by a supervisor, coworker, or someone on the business premises at the invitation of the employer.

Sexual harassment in educational institutions can be perpetrated by an executive, faculty or administrative staff member, or teaching assistant.

Sexual harassment is not limited to any level of employment or education. Harassers and victims can be found in all areas.

Charges of sexual harassment can be filed against the individual harasser and the employer or educational institution. Both parties can be found liable.

Legal protections

The Illinois Human Rights Act protects Illinois employees and students from sexual harassment. The law is enforced by the Illinois Department of Human Rights. Employers who are public contractors and bidders are required to have a written policy which states that sexual harassment is illegal. The policy should also include the legal definition of sexual harassment, a description of sexual harassment (including examples), and internal procedures for investigating complaints, and any penalties.

What to do if you are sexually harassed...

- Let the harasser know that you are offended by this conduct and want it to stop.
- Write down what happened to you, when it happened, who was there and what was said by all the parties involved. Keep records of subtle or overt job or educational related promises or threats.
- Speak with peers whom you trust. Often, the person harassing you may be bothering others as well. These witnesses may be willing to testify to the facts.
- Though not necessary, it is a good idea to report the incident to your supervisor or academic advisor. If the supervisor or academic advisor is the sexual harasser, see his or her supervisor, and also report the incident to the affirmative action officer and/or human resources.
- If the sexual harassment conduct is criminal in nature, report the incident to law enforcement authorities immediately.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF
 **Human Rights**

www.illinois.gov/dhr
800-662-3942

Office Hours

Monday through Friday
8:30am – 5:00pm
(No Intake Interviews on Fridays)

Chicago

James R. Thompson Center
100 W. Randolph St.
Suite 10-100
Chicago, IL 60601
312-814-6200
866-740-3953 (TTY)

Springfield

222 South College St.
Room 101A
Springfield, IL 62704
217-785-5100
866-740-3953 (TTY)

Marion

2309 W. Main St.
Marion, IL 62959
618-993-7463

A charge of sexual harassment must be filed with the Department within 180 days of the date you believe the harassment took place, even if you are using union or internal grievance procedures.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Illinois Human Rights Act, the Department of Human Rights will ensure that all programs are readily accessible to and usable by qualified individuals with disabilities. The ADA coordinator can provide additional information about compliance requirements, at (217) 785-5119 (voice) or (866)740-3953 (TTY).