

University of
South Carolina



OFFICE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

South Carolina's Flagship University

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Equal Opportunity Programs
1600 Hampton Street
Suite 805
University of South Carolina
Columbia, South Carolina 29208

Phone: 803-777-3854
Fax: 803-777-2296
TDD: 803-777-5608

Sexual Harassment: What It Is ... What To Do About It ...

IT IS ILLEGAL!

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is prohibited under federal and state laws:

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
- The South Carolina Human Affairs Law

IT COMES IN MANY FORMS ...

Sexual harassment can be directed at a person of the same or opposite sex.

Behaviors that are considered as sexual harassment include:

- unwelcome sexual advances.
- requests for sexual favors.
- language, graphic material, or physical conduct commonly understood to be of a sexual nature.
- demeaning sexist remarks.
- other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Such behaviors are especially offensive when:

1. it is either implied or clearly stated that submission to or rejection of the behavior will affect or is a term or condition of, the individual's employment or educational status, or
2. they create a coercive, hostile or intimidating atmosphere, or interfere with an individual's academic or work performance.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IS NOT TOLERATED AT USC!

University policy prohibits sexual harassment of employees or students within the USC System. (See Sexual Harassment Policy in the USC Policies and Procedures Manual, EOP 1.02.) A copy of this policy may be obtained by calling the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs and is also part of this web page.

Not only is sexual harassment illegal, but it is also unprofessional and seriously undermines the atmosphere of trust which is essential to a healthy academic environment.

The University of South Carolina strives to maintain an environment in which the dignity and self-worth of all members of the institutional community are respected. Persons found to be in violation of the University's sexual harassment policy will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include oral or written warnings, suspension, transfer, demotion or dismissal.

IF YOU ENCOUNTER SEXUAL HARASSMENT ...

Employees, faculty or staff, who believe that they have been sexually harassed or need advice about what constitutes sexual harassment, should contact immediately one of the following persons:

- the Vice President of Human Resources
- Campus Personnel Director
- the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, or
- the Campus Affirmative Action Coordinator.

Students who believe that they have been sexually harassed or need advice about what constitutes sexual harassment should contact:

- the Vice President for Student Affairs or the equivalent Student Affairs official on campus,
- the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, or
- Campus Affirmative Action Coordinator.

If you encounter sexual harassment or are unsure that what you are experiencing is sexual harassment, seek the advice of the appropriate official listed above. Do not assume that the offensive behavior will

go away just by ignoring it. If you ignore the behavior it may be viewed as approval. Show your disapproval by letting the individual know that the behavior is offensive to you and must be stopped. Keep a record of each incident in as much detail as possible, e.g., dates, places, times, and witnesses, as well as the nature of the harassment.

A faculty or staff member who is told of an incident of sexual harassment by an individual who seems unsure of how to deal with the situation, should consult the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs.

Any unwelcome behavior which may be construed as sexual harassment should be reported; however, it is also the policy of the University that willful false accusations of sexual harassment will not be condoned.

UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING INQUIRIES OR COMPLAINTS:

Inquiries about sexual harassment need not begin with a formal complaint nor necessarily result in such a complaint. Inquiries can be made without disclosing specific details such as names and places.

There are administrative procedures for handling complaints of sexual harassment which ensure that there is uniformity in the steps taken to resolve the matter even though more than one official is designated for receiving complaints or inquiries. Initial emphasis is placed on resolving the situation through informal mediation; however, there is also a formal complaint procedure allowing for formal investigations, hearings, and appeals. These administrative procedures guide the conduct of fact finding and the maintenance of records in such a way as to protect the privacy of the persons involved in the complaint.

For further information on the University's administrative procedures for dealing with sexual harassment inquiries or complaints, you may contact one of the designated officials. Confidentiality will be respected for those making inquiry.

PROTECTION AGAINST RETALIATION ...

Retaliation against anyone seeking information on sexual harassment, filing a sexual harassment complaint or serving as a witness is forbidden. If you feel that you are being retaliated against, you may report the matter to the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against anyone found to be taking retaliatory action.

The University of South Carolina is committed to providing an academic and working environment that is free from sexual harassment.

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