

Sexual Harassment Policy

Explanation of sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature. The law (equality act 2010) protects the following people against sexual harassment;

- Employees and workers
- Contractors and self employed people hired to personally do the work
- Job applicants

To be sexual harassment the unwanted behaviour must have either;

- Violated someone's dignity
- Created an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for someone

It can be sexual harassment if the behaviour;

- Has one of these effects, even if it was not intended
- Intended to have one of these effects even if it did not have that effect

ARC Group will not tolerate any form of sexual harassment. Any complaint of sexual harassment will be taken seriously and followed through with a full investigation where necessary. This applies to every person within the organisation, regardless of role or status and includes;

- permanent workers
- temporary workers
- clients

Sexual harassment can include, but isn't limited to;

- Making conditions of employment or advancement dependent on sexual favours, either explicitly or implicitly.
- Physical acts of sexual assault.
- Requests for sexual favours.
- Verbal harassment of a sexual nature, including jokes referring to sexual acts or sexual orientation.
- Unwanted touching or physical contact.
- Unwelcome sexual advances.
- Discussing sexual relations/stories/fantasies at work, or in other inappropriate places.
- Feeling pressured to engage with someone sexually.
- Exposing oneself or performing sexual acts on oneself.
- Unwanted sexually explicit photos, emails, or text messages.

What someone should do if they experience or witness sexual harassment

Your policy should refer to either:

- your usual grievance procedure
- a separate procedure for sexual harassment complaints, if you have one

If you need to report any form of sexual harassment please follow the guidelines below;

- their line manager
- a more senior manager/HR Director
- a senior member of ARC Group staff (for temps and clients)
- staff who are specially trained to deal with sexual harassment complaints
- their trade union representative, if they're a member or Acas

You can choose to either:

- raise a problem informally
- raise a grievance – this is where someone makes a formal complaint

In the case of raising a sexual harassment complaint, it can be dealt with in the following ways;

- you can make a complaint and choose if you want it to be dealt with informally or formally, as stated above
- please note that some situations might be too serious to deal with informally
- All complaints will be dealt with fairly, sensitively and as quickly as possible
- All complaints will be dealt with confidentially

If the problem is not resolved

If your problem is not resolved by trying informal or formal steps, you might be able to make a claim to an employment tribunal.

There are strict time limits for making a claim. In most cases, you have 3 months minus 1 day from the date of the most recent sexual harassment.

If the time limit has passed, you can still make a claim to an employment tribunal. It's up to the judge to decide whether they will accept your claim. They will consider:

- if there's a good reason for you taking more than 3 months
- if it's fair to the employer to allow your case to go ahead

Find out more about:

- [making a claim to an employment tribunal](#)
- [employment tribunal time limits](#)

ARC Group will always follow advice from ACAS with regards to any form of harassment within the workplace, as this type of behaviour will not be tolerated.

To ensure a person making a complaint about sexual harassment is supported throughout the complaints procedure ARC Group will;

- Make reporting sexual harassment is as easy as possible
- Ensure the member of staff making the complaint feels safe and protected
- offer the member of staff [mental health support](#)
- talk to them privately and do not rush them
- the person investigating the complaint is impartial and trained for the role

ARC Group will ensure all steps are taken to manage the risk of sexual harassment inside and outside of the workplace. These steps include;

- A sexual harassment policy
- Ensuring the policy is delivered to anyone involved with ARC Group, including permanent and temporary members of staff, clients and contractors
- Ensuring the policy is available for everyone to see on the ARC group website
- Taking any complaint of sexual harassment seriously
- Follow up on any complaint received regarding sexual harassment
- Take the necessary steps and actions to follow through on any complaint, regardless on the severity of the complaint
- Take advice from Acas regarding any complaint
- If it's a serious complaint, seek legal advice from our solicitors