

Internal Policy on Prevention of Sexual Harassment at workplace, CSIR IIIM

The CSIR Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine, Jammu is committed to providing a safe environment for all its employees free from discrimination on any ground and from harassment at work including sexual harassment. CSIR IIIM will operate a zero tolerance policy for any form of sexual harassment in the workplace, treat all incidents seriously and promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment. Any person found to have sexually harassed another will face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from service.

All complaints of sexual harassment will be taken seriously and treated with respect and in confidence. No one will be victimised for making such a complaint.

Definition of sexual harassment: Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated. It includes situations where a person is asked to engage in sexual activity as a condition of that person's employment, as well as situations which create an environment which is hostile, intimidating or humiliating for the recipient. Sexual harassment can involve one or more incidents and actions constituting harassment may be physical, verbal and non-verbal. Examples of conduct or behaviour which constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical conduct:

- Unwelcome physical contact including patting, pinching, stroking, kissing, hugging, fondling, or inappropriate touching
- Physical violence, including sexual assault
- Physical contact, e.g. touching, pinching
- The use of job-related threats or rewards to solicit sexual favours
- Comments on a worker's appearance, age, private life, etc.
- Sexual comments, stories and jokes
- Sexual advances
- Repeated and unwanted social invitations for dates or physical intimacy
- Insults based on the sex of the worker
- Condescending or paternalistic remarks

2 Non-verbal conduct

- Sending sexually explicit messages (by phone or by email)
- Display of sexually explicit or suggestive material
- Sexually-suggestive gestures
- Whistling
- Leering

Anyone can be a victim of sexual harassment, regardless of their sex and of the sex of the harasser. CSIR IIIM, recognises that sexual harassment may also occur between people of the same sex. What matters is that the sexual conduct is unwanted and unwelcome by the person against whom the conduct is directed.

CSIR IIIM recognises that sexual harassment is a manifestation of power relationships and often occurs within unequal relationships in the workplace.

All sexual harassment is prohibited whether it takes place within CSIR IIIM premises or outside, including at social events, office trips, training sessions or conferences.

Complaint procedures: Anyone who is subject to sexual harassment should, if possible, inform the alleged harasser that the conduct is unwanted and unwelcome. CSIR IIIM recognises that sexual harassment may occur in unequal relationships and that it may not be possible for the victim to inform the alleged harasser. If a victim cannot directly approach an alleged harasser, he/she can approach one of the following staff members who are responsible for receiving complaints of sexual harassment:

1. Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, Director, CSIR IIIM (zahmed@iiim.res.in)
2. Sh. Vikram Singh, Sr.CoA, CSIR IIIM (srcoa.iiim@iiim.res.in)
3. Dr. Deepika Singh, Pr. Sct, CSIR IIIM (dsingh@iiim.res.in)

When a complaint of sexual harassment is received, the office through a designated person will:

- immediately record the dates, times and facts of the incident(s)
- ascertain the views of the victim as to what outcome he/she wants
- ensure that the victim understands the procedures for dealing with the complaint
- discuss and agree the next steps: either informal or formal complaint, on the understanding that choosing to resolve the matter informally does not preclude the victim from pursuing a formal complaint if he/she is not satisfied with the outcome
- keep a confidential record of all discussions
- respect the choice of the victim
- ensure that the victim knows that they can lodge the complaint outside of the office through the Police.

Informal complaints mechanism: If the victim wishes to deal with the matter informally, the designated person will:

- give an opportunity to the alleged harasser to respond to the complaint
- ensure that the alleged harasser understands the complaints mechanism
- facilitate discussion between both parties to achieve an informal resolution which is acceptable to the complainant, or refer the matter to the Internal Complaints Committee
- ensure that a confidential record is kept of what happens
- follow up after the outcome of the complaints mechanism to ensure that the behaviour has stopped
- ensure that the above is done speedily and within 15 days of the receipt of the complaint being made

Formal complaints mechanism: If the victim wants to make a formal complaint or if the informal complaint mechanism has not led to a satisfactory outcome for the victim, the formal complaint mechanism will be used to resolve the matter. The designated person who initially received the complaint will refer the matter to Sr. CoA to initiate a formal investigation by referring the matter to the Internal Complaints Committee.

The ICC will:

- interview the victim and the alleged harasser separately
- interview other relevant third parties separately
- decide whether or not the incident(s) of sexual harassment took place
- produce a report detailing the investigations, findings and any recommendations
- if the harassment took place, decide what the appropriate remedy for the victim is, in consultation with the victim (i.e.- an apology, a change to working arrangements, training for the harasser, discipline, suspension, dismissal)
- follow up to ensure that the recommendations are implemented, that the behaviour has stopped and that the victim is satisfied with the outcome
- if it cannot determine that the harassment took place, he/she may still make recommendations to ensure proper functioning of the workplace
- keep a record of all actions taken
- ensure that all records concerning the matter are kept confidential
- ensure that the process is done as quickly as possible and in any event within 30 days of the complaint being made.

Outside complaints mechanism: A person who has been subject to sexual harassment can also make a complaint outside of the office. They can do so through the local Police Station with a copy of the complaint to CSIR IIIM.

Sanctions and disciplinary measures: Anyone who has been found to have sexually harassed another person under the terms of this policy is liable to any of the following sanctions:

- verbal or written warning
- adverse performance evaluation
- transfer
- demotion
- suspension
- dismissal

The nature of the sanctions will depend on the gravity and extent of the harassment. Suitable deterrent sanctions will be applied to ensure that incidents of sexual harassment are not treated as trivial. Certain serious cases, including physical violence, will result in the immediate dismissal of the harasser.

CSIR IIIM will ensure that this policy is widely disseminated to all relevant persons. All new employees must be trained on the content of this policy as part of their induction into CSIR IIIM. Every year, CSIR IIIM will require all employees to attend a refresher training course on the content of this policy.

CSIR IIIM recognises the importance of monitoring this sexual harassment policy and will ensure that it anonymously collects statistics and data as to how it is used and whether or not it is effective. Those responsible for dealing with sexual harassment cases will report on compliance with this policy, including the number of incidents, how they were dealt with, and any recommendations made. This will be done on a yearly basis. As a result of this report, CSIR IIIM will evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and make any changes needed.