

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

1. Scope:

Our Company Vels Film International Limited is an equal employment opportunity company and is committed to creating a healthy working environment that enables employees to work without fear of prejudice, gender bias, and sexual harassment. The Company also believes that all employees of the Company have the right to be treated with dignity. Sexual harassment at the workplace or other than work if involving employees is a grave offense and is, therefore, punishable.

This policy has been framed in accordance with the provisions of “The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013” and rules framed thereunder (hereinafter “the Act”). Accordingly, while the policy covers all the key aspects of the Act, for any further clarification, reference shall always be made to the Act and the provisions of the Act shall prevail.

Our Policy on Prevention of Sexual Harassment at workplace intends to provide protection against sexual harassment of our employees at workplace and the prevention and redressal of complaints of sexual harassment and matters related to it.

2. DEFINITION

The term Sexual Harassment is defined in Section 2 (n) of the ‘Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013’ as any one or more of the following unwelcome acts or behavior (whether directly or by implication) namely: -

- a) Physical contact or advances; or
- b) A demand or request for sexual favors; or
- c) Making sexually colored remarks; or
- d) Showing pornography; or
- e) Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or nonverbal conduct of sexual nature;

The following circumstances among other circumstances if it occurs or is present about any act or behavior of sexual harassment may amount to sexual harassment:

- a) Implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment in employment; or
- b) Implied or explicit threat of detrimental treatment in employment; or
- c) Implied or explicit threat about present or future employment; or
- d) Interference with work or creating an intimidating or offensive or hostile work environment; or
- e) Humiliating treatment likely to affect health or safety.

A simpler understanding of the term sexual harassment consists of any physical or verbal behaviour and any form of communication that has unnecessary, improper or unwelcome sexual connotations. Sexual harassment may vary in form depending on circumstances. It may consist of, but not be limited to, any of the following:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, display of sexual visuals, sexual audios, pornographic or obscene material and any other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature
- Transmitting any message, by mail, telephone, e-mail, etc. which is obscene, lewd, suggestive or blatantly sexual

- Any explicit or implicit communication wherein a sexual favor or demand, whether by words or actions, is made a condition for an individual's employment, career progress, promotion, etc. thereby creating a hostile environment.
- Sexually charged jokes or remarks and behaviour which have sexually-oriented innuendoes
- A consistent pattern of unnecessary physical contact, staring or targeting unreasonable attention at an individual in day-to-day dealings
- Any pervasive pattern of behaviour which makes employees uncomfortable, insecure or feel humiliated or disadvantaged based on gender differentiation
- Actual sexual assault.
- As mentioned above, this is an indicative but not an exhaustive list of possible forms of sexual harassment.

This policy is to prohibit and deter any employee/ staff employed with the Company advancing any form of sexual harassment in the way employees behave with each other. This applies equally to relations between superiors and subordinates as well as between peers. Any incident of sexual harassment will be viewed with extreme seriousness. A complaint or report of sexual harassment will be immediately investigated and appropriate action will be taken against the offending employee or employees. For every incident of Sexual Harassment, the accused/ respondent shall be prosecuted under the provisions of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (hereinafter referred to as 'the Act') and such other laws enforced in India at the time of the commission of the offense.

Further, it is important to note that whether harassment has occurred or not, does not depend on the intention of the people but on the experience of the aggrieved party.

Aggrieved Party: In relation to a workplace, an employee, of any age, who alleges to have been subjected to any act of sexual harassment by other employee(s) and non-employee(s) during work hours for work reasons.

Respondent: A person against whom a complaint of sexual harassment has been made by the aggrieved party.

Workplace: In addition to the place of work, it shall also include any place where the aggrieved party or the respondent visits in connection with his/her work, during and/or arising out of employment/ contract/ engagement with the Company, including transportation provided for undertaking such a journey.

Employer: A person responsible for management, supervision and control of the workplace

3. INTERNAL COMMITTEE

The Company has to constitute an Internal Complaints Committee to ensure that any incidence of sexual harassment is dealt with appropriately, sensitively and expeditiously;

Internal Complaints Committee for Sexual Harassment comprises of:

- Presiding Officer: A woman employed at a senior level in the organization or workplace
- At least 2 members from amongst employees, committed to the cause of women and or having the legal knowledge
- One external member, familiar with the issues relating to sexual harassment

- At least one-half of the total members is women

The committee is responsible for:

- Receiving complaints of sexual harassment at the workplace
- Initiating and conducting an inquiry as per the established procedure
- Submitting findings and recommendations of inquiries
- Coordinating with the employer in implementing appropriate action
- Maintaining strict confidentiality throughout the process as per established guidelines
- Submitting annual reports in a prescribed format

4. REDRESSAL MECHANISM – FORMAL INTERVENTION

In compliance with the Act, if the complainant's warrants formal intervention, the complainant needs to lodge a written complaint, which shall be followed by a formal redressal mechanism as described in this Policy. In case of a verbal complaint, the complaint will be reduced in writing by the receiver of the complaint and signatures of the complainant will be obtained.

Lodging a Complaint:

The complainant needs to submit a detailed complaint, along with any documentary evidence available or names of witnesses, to any of the committee members at the workplace.

The complaint must be lodged within 3 months from the date of incident/ last incident. The Committee can extend the timeline by another 3 months for reasons recorded in writing, if satisfied that these reasons prevented the lodging of the complaint.

Provided that where such a complaint cannot be made in writing, the Presiding Officer or any Member of the Internal Complaint Committee shall render all reasonable assistance to the employee for making the complaint in writing.

If the aggrieved party is unable to lodge the complaint in account of his/her incapacity, the following may do so on his/her behalf, with explicit written consent.

- Legal heir, relative or friend
- Co-worker
- Any person having the knowledge of the incident

If the initial complaint is made to a person other than a committee member, upon receiving such a complaint, it will be the responsibility of the complaint receiver to report the same to the committee immediately.

Receiving a Complaint:

The following points are kept in mind by the receiver of the complaint:

- All conversations are kept strictly confidential. Complainant's agreement is taken to allow proceeding with the matter, which involves a formal investigation. The complainant's agreement is taken to lodge a formal complaint with the presiding officer of the committee.
- The complainant is advised that although the process is confidential, the respondent needs to be informed and any witnesses and persons directly involved in the complaint process will also learn of the complainant's identity.

Resolution procedure through conciliation:

Once the complaint is received, before initiating the inquiry the committee may take steps to conciliate the complaint between the complainant and the respondent. This is only if requested by the aggrieved party.

It is made clear to all parties that conciliation doesn't necessarily mean acceptance of complaint by the respondent. It is a practical mechanism through which issues are resolved or misunderstandings cleared.

In case a settlement is arrived at, the committee records & reports the same to the employer for taking appropriate action. Resolution through conciliation should happen within 2 working days of receipt of complaint.

The committee provides copies of the settlement to complainant & respondent. Once the action is implemented, no further inquiry is conducted.

Resolution procedure through formal inquiry:

Conducting Inquiry

The committee initiates inquiry in the following cases:

- No conciliation is requested by aggrieved party
- Conciliation has not resulted in any settlement
- Complainant informs the committee that any term or condition of the settlement arrived through conciliation, has not been complied with by respondent

The Committee proceeds to make an inquiry into the complaint within a period of 4 working days of its receipt of the original complaint/closure of conciliation/repeat complaint.

Confidentiality:

The identity of the complainant, respondent, witnesses, statements and other evidence obtained during inquiry process, recommendations of the committees, action taken by the employer is considered as confidential materials, and not published or made known to public or media.

Any person contravening the confidentiality clauses is subject to disciplinary action as prescribed in the act.

Access to reports and documents:

All records of complaints, including contents of meetings, results of investigations and other relevant material will be kept confidential by the Company except where disclosure is required under disciplinary or other remedial processes.

Protection to Complainant/Victim:

The Company is committed to ensuring that no employee who brings forward a harassment concern is subject to any form of reprisal. Any reprisal will be subject to disciplinary action. The Company will ensure that victim or witnesses are not victimized or discriminated against while dealing with complaints of sexual harassment.

However, anyone who abuses the procedure with established malicious intent will be penalized as outlined above.