**Steps That Women Can Take If They are a Victim of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace**

If you have experienced or are experiencing sexual harassment at your workplace you can file a complaint with both state and Federal agencies to hold your employer accountable. Sexual harassment and discrimination are against the law. [Title VII of the Civil Rights Act](https://www.eeoc.gov/statutes/title-vii-civil-rights-act-1964) prohibits employers from discrimination based on sex, color, race, religion, or national origin and sexual harassment falls under the category of discrimination. You don’t have to put up with sexual harassment at your workplace.

**What You Can Do if You’re a Victim:**

If you’ve experienced or are experiencing sexual harassment at your workplace you should know that it’s not your fault. You’re a victim of a predatory and discriminatory work environment. You are not responsible for what is happened to you or what happened to you. And you’re not powerless.

First will need to [gather evidence](https://www.employmentlawhelp.org/sexual-harassment/document) to help support your claim. You should get a copy of your company’s written policy on sexual harassment. Every company should have one. It could be in the employee handbook or it could one of the papers that you have to sign when you are first hired. Get a copy of that written policy and read it carefully.

Then write down every incident of harassment that has occurred in the workplace that violates that written policy. Write down the date and time of the incident, the names of the people involved or present, and a brief summary of what happened. Be as specific as you can. Write down any new incidents as they happen.

In addition to the written incident summaries try to gather as much evidence as you can of the harassment. Photos, screen shots, memos, and any other documents related to the harassment could be helpful in proving your case.

Next send a detailed [email or a physical letter](https://www.employmentlawhelp.org/sexual-harassment/submit-with-letter) to your boss and your HR department detailing every incident and how it violates the company’s written policy on sexual harassment. Keep all communication in writing, either in email or in regular mail, so that there is a paper trail. Report the harassment promptly, if you don’t act within the time limits required by law you could lose the right to any damages or compensation. Don’t wait.

**Filing a Claim for Sexual Harassment**

You can file a claim against your employer for sexual harassment with the state labor board in your state or other state agencies. You can also file a Federal complaint against your employer [with the EEOC](https://www.eeoc.gov/filing-charge-discrimination). Don’t be afraid to get your employer in trouble or be embarrassed about reporting what happened. None of it is your fault. By filing a complaint to hold your employer accountable you could be saving many other women from experiencing harassment. Once a claim is filed, the EEOC will investigate your claim and determine the next best course of action.

You can also file a claim at the state level. For example, in Pennsylvania, you can file a claim with the [Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission](https://www.phrc.pa.gov/File-A-Complaint/Pages/About-Filing-A-Complaint.aspx) (PHRA). You must file your claim within 180 days of the incident.

**Resources:**

<https://www.eeoc.gov/statutes/title-vii-civil-rights-act-1964>

<https://www.employmentlawhelp.org/sexual-harassment/document>

<https://www.employmentlawhelp.org/sexual-harassment/submit-with-letter>

<https://www.eeoc.gov/filing-charge-discrimination>

<https://www.phrc.pa.gov/File-A-Complaint/Pages/About-Filing-A-Complaint.aspx>