

Workplace Harassment Toolbox Talk

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A ready-to-run 5-minute crew talk · Preventing Workplace Harassment · Title VII / EEOC

Workplace Compliance Training

How to run this talk (5 minutes): Gather your team before the shift. Read each talking point aloud, then ask the discussion questions and let people answer. Close with the one rule and pass the sign-in sheet on page 2. This is an awareness refresher — it does **not** replace your company's written anti-harassment policy, complaint procedure, or any training your state requires.

What Harassment Is

- **Unwelcome conduct based on a protected characteristic.** Title VII covers race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and transgender status), and national origin; the ADEA covers age 40+, the ADA disability, and GINA genetic information. State and local laws may protect more. It can be verbal, physical, or visual.
- It crosses the legal line when putting up with it becomes a condition of keeping your job, or when it is **severe or pervasive** enough that the affected person actually experiences the workplace as hostile or abusive **and** a reasonable person would agree. Minor isolated conduct ordinarily isn't unlawful unless extremely serious — but policy can prohibit it sooner.
- Anyone affected can be harmed — the target or a bystander. A harasser can be a supervisor, a coworker, or an outsider like a customer or vendor.

Sexual & Sexist Remarks

- Sexual jokes, comments about someone's body, repeated advances after a refusal, unwanted touching, and sexist put-downs **may violate policy and can contribute to unlawful harassment** — even when someone says they were “just kidding.” The legal call depends on the protected basis, severity, frequency, and context.
- Conduct doesn't have to be aimed directly at you to affect you. **If someone says it's unwelcome — or clearly would — stop,** and report concerns through the company's channels.
- Showing or sending sexual or degrading images — including on a phone — can be harassment too.

Discrimination & the Law

- Federal EEO laws are enforced by the **EEOC**. Title VII and the ADA generally apply to employers with **15+ employees**, the ADEA at **20+**; state and local laws often cover smaller employers and add protected classes.
- **Quid pro quo:** a supervisor tying job benefits — or threats — to sexual favors is always illegal.
- Employers should **prevent and promptly correct** unlawful harassment. Liability rules vary: supervisor harassment causing a tangible employment action can mean automatic liability; for coworkers or controlled non-employees, liability can arise when the employer **knew or should have known** and failed to act appropriately.

If You're Harassed — or See It

- You are **not required to confront the person**. If it feels safe and appropriate, you may say the conduct is unwelcome — the person doing it, not the person reporting it, is responsible for the misconduct.
- **Report it** to your supervisor, manager, or HR using your company's complaint procedure — don't wait for it to get worse.
- **Retaliation is illegal** — for participating in an EEO charge or investigation, or for opposing suspected harassment based on a good-faith, reasonable belief it may violate the law. Protected activity doesn't excuse unrelated misconduct or performance problems.

When It Escalates

- Harassment can turn into threats, stalking, or violence. Take threatening behavior seriously.
- Report threats, unwanted following, or a stalker to your supervisor and security **right away**, and keep a record of dates, times, and what happened.

Discussion — Ask the Crew

1. What's the difference between friendly joking and harassment — and who decides whether conduct is “welcome”?
2. If something made you or a coworker uncomfortable, who in *our* company would you report it to, and how?
3. Why is it illegal to retaliate against someone who reports harassment — and what might retaliation look like?
4. What warning signs would tell you a situation is escalating from harassment toward a threat or violence?

The one rule to remember today: If conduct may be **unwelcome**, stop it and follow the workplace policy. Report protected-basis conduct or retaliation promptly — company policy can prohibit inappropriate behavior before it meets the legal definition of unlawful harassment.

This talk is a refresher, not a compliance program. Many states require documented anti-harassment training for employees or supervisors. The **Workplace Harassment Training Kit** gives you the full professional video (available in English or Spanish), an **employee quiz**, and a printable **Training Completion Certificate** — a one-time, reusable purchase for every employee. [SafetyVideos.com/Workplace_Harassment_Training_Video_p/90.htm](https://www.safetyvideos.com/Workplace_Harassment_Training_Video_p/90.htm)

Toolbox Talk Sign-In Sheet

Date	Location / Facility	Presented by
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#	Name (print)	Signature	Job title / Department
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By signing above, each attendee acknowledges they participated in this workplace harassment toolbox talk on the date shown. Retain this sheet with your training records. **Note:** attendance at a toolbox talk is not a complete anti-harassment training program — keep it with, not in place of, your company's policy, complaint procedure, and any state-mandated training.