





PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

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Prepared by	Reviewed By	Approved by	Version	Effective Date
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Objective

The Company strives to maintain a workplace that fosters mutual employee respect and promotes harmonious, productive working relationships. It is the goal of the Company to promote a workplace that is free of sexual harassment, discrimination and retaliation by any Company employee, customer, contractor or other non-employee doing business with the Company, occurring in the workplace or in other settings in which employees find themselves in connection with their employment. Sexual Harassment at the work place is a grave offence and is strictly prohibited and punishable by law.

Scope

This policy is based on the guidelines laid down under the Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. This policy extends to all employees of the Company, and includes any incident in the course of the employment and shall be incorporated in the service conditions of all employees. This policy may be updated and amended by the Company, at any time, in its sole discretion.

Solely for the purposes of this policy, employees shall be deemed to include any temporary or contract employees, interns, probationers, or any other staff who are engaged by the Company with or without remuneration, either directly or through contractors or agents.

Sexual Harassment

- Sexual Harassment refers to:
 - a. unwelcome sexual or physical contact or advances;
 - b. a request or demand for sexual favours;
 - c. sexually coloured remarks;
 - d. showing pornography;
 - e. any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature.

- The following circumstances amongst others, if they occur or are present in relation to or are connected with any sexual act or behaviour, amount to Sexual Harassment:
 - a. An implied or explicit promise or threat of preferential or detrimental treatment in employment.
 - b. An implied or explicit threat about present or future employment status.
 - c. Interference with work or creating an intimidating, offensive or hostile work environment.
 - d. Humiliating treatment likely to affect health or safety.

Employee Responsibilities

- The Company has a zero tolerance approach to any form of Sexual Harassment. The Company shall not in any manner support or condone an employee who sexually harasses any other person at the workplace.
- There shall be no retaliation against any employee who makes a complaint of Sexual Harassment or who assists with the investigation or ensures resolution of a Sexual Harassment complaint. Provided, that no employee shall file or instigate a malicious complaint, any such conduct shall be punishable in accordance with this policy.

Internal Complaints Committee

An Internal Complaints Committee (hereinafter the “Committee”) has been constituted by the Company to consider and redress complaints of Sexual Harassment. The Committee shall consist of the following members:

- A Presiding Officer who is a senior level female employee at the level of AVP or above;
- Two (2) members from the employee base who have a minimum of ten (10) years’ experience in the Company and have experience in social work or have legal knowledge or have working knowledge of issues related to gender diversity; and
- One (1) member from a NGO or an association committed to the cause of women or familiar with issues relating to sexual harassment.

The details of the members of the Committee shall be communicated from time to time. The Committee shall function in accordance with the charter notified by the Company for the functioning of the Committee.

Filing a Complaint

- An employee can file a complaint within three (3) months of the incident or three (3) months from the date of the last incident, in case of a series of incidents. If an employee is unable to make a complaint on account of physical or mental incapacity or death, the employee’s legal heir or any other person prescribed can submit a complaint on the employee’s behalf. Such a complaint can be filed by writing to the email address provided below or to the concerned human resources point of contact.

Email: icc@embassyindia.com

- Complaints can be filed by an employee either electronically or as a physical handwritten complaint. All complaints shall be accompanied by the requisite supporting documents and a list of witnesses to the extent possible. If the complaint is filed in physical form, the complainant shall furnish six (6) copies of the complaint and accompanying documents. Within seven (7) working days, a copy of the complaint shall be provided to the respondent who shall provide their response (either in electronic form or physically written) and all supporting documents and a list of witnesses within a period of ten (10) working days of receipt of the complaint by them.
- If the Committee, upon inquiry, discovers that the complaint including any evidence or witnesses are malicious or known to be false or misleading, the Committee may recommend that action be taken against such a party. A mere inability to substantiate a claim shall not be considered as a malicious complaint by a Committee.
- Where any offence attracts the provisions of the Indian Penal Code, 1860, then at the request of the complainant, the Company shall assist the complainant in filing a police complaint.

Conducting an Inquiry

- Once the Committee receives a complaint, an inquiry will be initiated within seven (7) days. The proceedings shall be conducted in accordance with the ICC Charter to ensure uniformity and speedy redressal of complaints. The Committee shall have the inherent authority to provide any reasonable extensions in time to any of the parties in their discretion.
- During the pendency of the inquiry, the complainant may request and the Committee may grant either party a transfer from the current workplace or a leave of absence to the complainant or any other relief it may deem fit under the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Rules, 2013.
- The Committee shall ensure that the confidentiality and privacy of the parties are maintained at all times, unless otherwise required. The Committee will investigate the complaint through interviewing the parties and all witnesses, including review of any relevant evidence. The entire inquiry process shall be completed within ninety (90) days. The Committee shall make recommendations based on the inquiry, and copies of the final findings shall be provided to all parties.
- The recommendations of the Committee shall be acted upon by the Company within sixty (60) days of receipt of the same.
- An employee aggrieved by the recommendation of the Committee, may within ninety (90) days of receipt of the same, prefer an appeal to a court or tribunal in accordance with the provisions of the Act.
- Neither party shall have the right to be represented by a legal practitioner or any third party in proceedings before the Committee. Provided that, a party may, with the permission of the Committee, be represented by any other employee of the Company (not being a legal practitioner or in-house counsel), where the Committee believes that such representation is required in accordance with the principles of natural justice.
- The Committee may terminate any inquiry or give an ex-parte decision where either party fails, without sufficient cause, to present themselves before the Committee for three consecutive hearings convened by the Committee.

Penalties

- If the complaint is not proven, no action will be recommended by the Committee.
- If the respondent is found to be guilty of Sexual Harassment, the Committee may at its discretion recommend that the Company:
 - a) Initiate disciplinary action against the employee up to and including termination which may include a warning, reprimand, censure, withholding of promotion of increments, community service or termination of service;
 - b) Fine the employee for misconduct or order compensation to be paid to the complainant.
- If the complainant is found to be guilty of submitting a malicious complaint or any of the parties including witnesses are found to have provided false or misleading evidence, the Committee may at its discretion recommend, that the Company:
 - a) Initiate disciplinary action against the employee which may include a warning, reprimand, censure, withholding of promotion of increments, community service or termination of service;
 - b) Impose fines or penalties on the employee for misconduct.

(Sexual Harassment Complaints Procedure – provided under Annexure 1)

Annexure 1

SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

An employee can file a complaint within three (3) months of the incident or three (3) months from the date of the last incident, in case of a series of incidents. If an employee is unable to make a complaint on account of physical or mental incapacity or death, the employee's legal heir or any other person prescribed can submit a complaint on the employee's behalf. Such a complaint can be filed by writing to the email address provided below or to the concerned human resources point of contact.

Email: ICC@embassyindia.com

All complaints shall be accompanied by the requisite supporting documents and a list of witnesses to the extent possible. The complainant shall furnish six (6) copies of the complaint and accompanying documents.

Once the Committee receives a complaint, an inquiry will be initiated within seven (7) days with a copy of the complaint being provided to the respondents for their response.

The respondents shall provide their response (either in electronic form or physically written) and all supporting documents and a list of witnesses within a period of ten (10) working days of receipt of the complaint by them.

If the Committee, upon inquiry, discovers that the complaint including any evidence or witnesses are malicious or known to be false or misleading, the Committee may recommend that action be taken against such a party. A mere inability to substantiate a claim shall not be considered as a malicious complaint by a Committee.

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The Committee shall make recommendations based on the inquiry, and copies of the final findings shall be provided to all parties.

The recommendations of the Committee shall be acted upon by the Company within sixty (60) days of receipt of the same.

An employee aggrieved by the recommendation of the Committee, may within ninety (90) days of receipt of the same, prefer an appeal to a court or tribunal in accordance with the provisions of the Act.