**Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Connecticut state law. Title VII applies to employers with 15 or more employees, including state and local governments. It also applies to employment agencies and to labor organizations, as well as to the federal government. Connecticut law applies to employers with 3 or more employees.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment can occur in a variety of circumstances, including:

* The victim as well as the harasser may be a woman or a man. The victim does not have to be of the opposite sex.
* The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, an agent of the employer, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or a non-employee.
* The victim does not have to be the person harassed but could be anyone affected by the offensive conduct.
* Unlawful sexual harassment may occur without economic injury to or discharge of the victim.
* The harasser's conduct must be unwelcome.

It is helpful for the victim to inform the harasser directly that the conduct is unwelcome and must stop. The victim should use any employer complaint mechanism or grievance system available.

It is also unlawful to retaliate against an individual for reporting sexual harassment in the workplace.

*The information here and elsewhere on this site intended solely as background. You should not take it to be legal advice, nor does it create an attorney-client relationship. If you have a legal question, please consult an attorney directly.*