
SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

1. What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment is any unwanted or unwelcome conduct of sexual nature or other conduct based on sex or which is degrading and cause discomfort to the victim. This may (can) include unwelcome physical, verbal, non verbal or psychological conduct done by males or females, e.g. comments, gestures or looks, pictures, massages, touching or can be even more aggressive. These acts may be direct or overt. They may be isolated or repeated.

2. PREAMBLE

SADTU acknowledges the seriousness of sexual harassment in the union, workplace and in society at large. The union also acknowledges that every member or staff member has a right to a work place or union environment free from harassment and bullying. Sexual Harassment impacts negatively on the psychological aspect of individuals, it has a destructive effect on the workplace environment, individual well being and solidarity in the union. SADTU also acknowledges the deafening silence, injustice dehumanizing nature, disrespect, lowering self esteem that sexual harassment is causing amongst its leaders, membership and staff members. SADTU has the moral obligation to eradicate sexual harassment in the union. The union encourages, promotes and is committed to the implementation of policies and procedures that will lead to the creation of an environment that is free of sexual harassment, where members, leaders and staff members respect one another's integrity, dignity, privacy and the right equity in the union.

3. VISION

SADTU recognises the importance of preventing, addressing and eradicating sexual harassment. The need exist to protect the rights of individuals to ensure a healthy and safe environment.

4. MISSION

The vision shall be realized through:

- Advocacy
- Awareness campaigns
- Capacity building and empowerment programmes
- Provision of counselling, care and support

5. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To create awareness of sexual harassment
- To educate individuals on legal prescripts pertaining to sexual harassment
- To provide necessary skills methods to overcome the effects of sexual harassment
- To protect human rights and promote mutual respect and trust
- To foster inclusion
- To create an environment that does not tolerate or condone intimidation, demeaning, hostile and aggressive behaviour against another member, leader or staff member
- To create platforms where members, leaders or staff members can speak out or report acts of sexual harassment

6. MANAGEMENT OF GRIEVANCES

Any member who feels targeted by harassment must be able to speak up and know their concerns will be responded to immediately in accordance with SADTU'S policies, resolutions and complaint procedure. Grievances can be handled either formally or informally.

6.1 INFORMAL PROCEDURE

- The member, leader or staff member should make it clear to the perpetrator that s/he finds the behaviour offensive and ask that it be stopped.
- This above action can be done personally either in writing or verbally with a witness or a third party
- If the behaviour recurs or persist or if the member does not feel safe in approaching the perpetrator directly s/he should speak with the designated official and ask her/ him to act. If no official has been designated, the member. Leader or staff member should speak with the official in charge to ask that one be appointed.
- If the matter is not resolved and / or continues then a formal procedure will be followed.

6.2 FORMAL PROCEDURE

- The complainant will lodge a complain formally, in writing and provide the relevant information
- The complain should then be directed to relevant secretary of the immediate executive structure
- The executive structure will then refer it to the relevant disciplinary committee
- Once the matter is referred to the disciplinary committee then normal disciplinary procedure as outlined in the guidelines for the functioning of disciplinary committees will follow
- Confidentiality in dealing with such a matter must be observed at all the times

7. SANCTIONS/ RESOLUTION

Resolution/ Sanctions may include but are not limited to:

- Apologies, mediation, warnings, temporary limiting of access, or removal/exclusion from the meeting or event, suspension or expulsion from the union
- If a decision is made to remove or exclude a member, leader or staff member a confidential letter outlining the reasons for this decision will be sent to relevant secretary.

- The secretary of the relevant structure shall keep a confidential file of all the records and reports related to the investigating of written complaints for five years
- None of the above restricts a member's right to file a complaint with any relevant chapter 9 institution as described in the South African constitution or open a case with the police

8. STRATEGIES

- Education should be done through awareness, workshops and distribution of the policy to different structures and all offices of the union
- Members should be encouraged to speak up about sexual harassment to ensure that perpetrators are brought to book
- The union should narrow the space for the prevalence of sexual harassment
- The union should act swiftly and stringently on occurrence of sexual harassment
- Union members should guard against occurrence of sexual harassment especially against learners