



Kansas Conservation Districts

“Sexual Harassment”

Module VIII

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS MODULE

What is sexual harassment?

Legal considerations

What are some circumstances of sexual harassment?

Examples of sexual harassment

What do district boards need to do to ensure sexual harassment does not occur?

What should district boards do if allegations of sexual harassment are made?

Sample sexual harassment policy

WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

- Unwelcome sexual advances
- Requests for sexual favors
- Other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature

These apply to the following situations:

- Submission to or rejection of this conduct explicitly to implicitly affects and individual:
 - Employment
 - Work performance
 - Creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- The Supreme Court recognizes the sexual harassment:
 - Does not have to be actual physical conduct
 - Is not limited to female victims
 - Can occur among same-sex employees
 - Is not limited to supervisor-employee

WHAT ARE SOME CIRCUMSTANCES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

The victim or the harasser may be a woman or a man.

The victim does not have to be the person harassed but could be anyone affected by the offensive conduct.

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 harassers conduct must be unwelcome.

EXAMPLES

- Clearly S.H. Behavior Potential S.H. Behavior
 - Asking for sexual favors in return for employment rewards
 - Threats if sexual requests are not provided
 - Sexually explicit pictures
 - Grabbing private body parts
 - Forced kissing
 - Sexual assault or rape
 - Sexually explicit remarks
 - Obscene letter or comments
 - Violating personal space

EXAMPLES (CONTINUED)

- Clearly S.H. Behavior Potential S.H. Behavior
 - Foul Language
 - Body language, posturing, or gesturing sexually
 - Sexually aggressive touching
 - Whistles or cat calls
 - Lewd, off-color jokes
 - Licking lips or blowing kisses
 - Leering, winking, or staring

WHAT DO DISTRICT BOARDS NEED TO DO TO ENSURE SEXUAL HARASSMENT DOES NOT OCCUR?

- Discuss the subject at board meetings
- Establish a zero-tolerance policy
- Ensure employees know how to deal with and report sexual harassment
- Consider training on the subject for employees and board members

- Intervene in a timely and effective manner and monitor the situation
- Get professional assistance
- Maintain confidentiality to the extent permitted by law
- Never retaliate
- Do not make judgments
- Document, document, document

**WHAT SHOULD DISTRICT
BOARDS DO IF ALLEGATIONS
OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT ARE
MADE?**

SAMPLE SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY:

- *The Happy County Conservation District believes that employees have the right to work in an environment free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the employment relationship. No employee, either male or female, should be subjected verbally or physically to unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct. Anyone engaging in harassing conduct will be subject to discipline, ranging from a warning to termination.*

REVIEW QUESTION

1. Brushing your arm against another person's body can be sexual harassment.

True or False?

REVIEW ANSWER

1. Brushing your arm against another person's body can be sexual harassment.

True

REVIEW QUESTION

2. The victim does not have to be the person harassed but could be anyone affected by the offensive conduct.

True or False?

REVIEW ANSWER

2. The victim does not have to be the person harassed but could be anyone affected by the offensive conduct.

True

REVIEW QUESTION

3. When a sexual harassment incident is reported it is best to wait a few weeks for the harasser to apologize and then forget about the incident.

True or False?

REVIEW ANSWER

3. When a sexual harassment incident is reported it is best to wait a few weeks for the harasser to apologize and then forget about the incident.

False - action should be taken immediately

REVIEW QUESTION

4. Telling a joke with sexual content is sexual harassment if overheard by an offended employee?

True or False?

REVIEW ANSWER

4. Telling a joke with sexual content is sexual harassment if overheard by an offended employee?

True

SUMMARY

Conservation district boards cannot allow sexual harassment or other misconduct to occur in the district office.

All board members and employees should have a good understanding of what constitutes sexual harassment and know how to deal with such situations.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE & WHERE TO FIND THEM

Conservation District Handbook

Location:

Conservation
district office &
CSIMS

Kansas Human Rights

Location:

[http://www.khrc.net/
commission](http://www.khrc.net/commission)