

POLICY ON PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT WORKPLACE

BACKGROUND

1. PREAMBLE

The company had formulated a policy on Sexual Harassment at workplace which was effective from July 2019. The Sexual Harassment at the Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013 and The Sexual Harassment at the Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Rules 2013 have been notified by the Central Government with the effect from December 9, 2013 (hereinafter called the Act).

2. OBJECTIVE

Vijay Textiles Limited is a progressive company providing equal employment opportunities and is committed to creating a healthy work environment that enables employees to work without fear of prejudice, gender bias and sexual harassment. The company also believes that all employees of the company should have the freedom to work in an environment that is free from all kinds of harassment including sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment at the work place is unacceptable and therefore this policy is being framed to prohibit, prevent or deter the commission of acts of sexual harassment at workplace, outline procedures for filing complaints, investigating sexual harassment claims and issuing appropriate disciplinary measures in the case of violations pertaining to sexual harassment.

2. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all the employees at all levels, workers, trainees, contract employees (whether in the office premises or outside while on assignment). Where sexual harassment occurs to an employee / associate as a result of an act by a third party or outsider while on official duty, the company shall take all necessary and reasonable steps to assist the affected person in terms of support, preventive action and legal recourse, if required, against such third persons.

3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy shall come into effect immediately.

4. DEFINITIONS

(a) 'Aggrieved' woman means a woman, of any age, who alleges to have been subjected to any act of sexual harassment ;

(b) 'Employee or Associate ' means a person employed at any of the workplace of the company for any work on regular, temporary, ad hoc or daily wage basis, either directly or through an agent, including a contractor, with or, without the knowledge of the principal employer, whether for remuneration or not, or working on a voluntary basis or otherwise, whether the terms of employment are express or implied and includes a coworker, a contract worker, probationer, trainee, apprentice or called by any other such name;

(c) 'Employer' means Vijay Textiles Limited represented by its Managing Director who is responsible for the day to day management, supervision and control of the workplace or such other officer as may be designated by the Managing Director.

(d) 'Internal Committee' means an Internal Complaints Committee constituted by the Company.

(e) 'Member of the Committee ' means a Member of the Internal Committee;

(f) 'Prescribed' means prescribed by rules made under this Act;

(g) 'Presiding Officer' means the Presiding Officer of the Internal Complaints Committee nominated by the company;

(h) 'Respondent' means a person against whom the aggrieved woman has made a complaint under the Act;

(i) 'Sexual Harassment' is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that is persistent or offensive and interferes with an employee's job performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. includes, notwithstanding the same sexual harassment includes but not limited to, any one or more of the following unwelcome acts or behavior (whether directly or by implication) namely – (a) physical contact and advances; or (b) a demand or request for sexual favors; or (c) making sexually colored remarks; or (d)

showing pornography; or (e) any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature;

(j) 'Workplace' includes, but not limited to (a) The registered office and all the various area offices / regional offices/Sales offices, guest houses, properties owned by of the company. (b) any place visited by the employee arising out of or during the course of employment including transportation provided by the employer for undertaking such journey;

(k) The following circumstances, but not limited to, among other circumstances, if it occurs or is present in relation to or connected with any act or behavior of sexual harassment may amount to sexual harassment :- (a) implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment in her employment; or (b) implied or explicit threat of detrimental treatment in her employment; or (c) implied or explicit threat about her present or future employment status; or (d) interference with her work or creating an intimidating or offensive or hostile work environment for her; or (e) humiliating treatment likely to affect her health or safety.

5. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

i). Responsibilities of Individual: It is the responsibility of all to respect the rights of others and to never encourage harassment. It can be done by: a. Refusing to participate in any activity which constitutes harassment b. Supporting the person to reject unwelcome behavior c. Acting as a witness if the person being harassed decides to lodge a complaint

All are encouraged to advise others of behavior that is unwelcome. Often, some behaviors are not intentional.

ii). Responsibilities of Managers: All managers at Vijay Textiles Limited must ensure that nobody is subject to harassment and there is equal treatment. They must also ensure that all employees understand that harassment will not be tolerated; that complaints will be taken seriously; and that the complainant, respondent/s, or witnesses are not victimized in any way.

6.COMPLAINTS REDRESSAL COMMITTEE

a. A committee named as Internal Complaints Committee has been constituted to consider and redress complaints of Sexual Harassment. The Committee shall consist of a Presiding Officer who shall be a senior lady employee of the company and shall be the Chairperson of the committee.

b. The Committee shall also have three other members, two of whom shall be employees of the company and one member, who shall be a person from a non-government organization or association committed to the cause of women or a person from legal background familiar with the issues relating to sexual harassment.

The Members of the Committee shall be decided by the Managing Director from time to time. At least one half of the total members so nominated shall be women

c. The committee is responsible for:

- Receiving complaints of sexual harassment at the workplace
- Initiating and conducting inquiry as per the established procedure
- Submitting findings and recommendations of inquiries
- Coordinating with the employer in implementing appropriate action
- Maintaining strict confidentiality throughout the process as per established guidelines
- Submitting annual reports in the prescribed format

d. Period of office: The presiding officer and every member of the committee shall hold office for a period not exceeding three years, from the date of their nomination. The members of the committee shall be appointed by the Managing Director and the Managing Director shall be authorized to nominate or withdraw any member from the committee at his sole discretion.

e. Quorum : A quorum of three members is required to be present including the Presiding Officer for the proceedings to take place and at least two members present shall be women.

f. Payment of allowances etc : The member appointed from amongst non governmental organization or a person from legal background shall be paid an

allowance and reimbursed expenses as prescribed by the Act or Rules from time to time.

g. Removal of Presiding officer or member Where the Presiding Officer or any Member of the Internal Committee - (a) contravenes the provisions as laid down in the Act ; or (b) has been convicted for an offence or an inquiry into an offence under any law for the time being in force is pending against him / her ; or (c) he / she has been found guilty in any disciplinary proceedings or a disciplinary proceeding is pending against him/ her ; or (d) has so abused his / her position as to render his/ her continuance in office prejudicial to the public interest, such Presiding Officer or Member, as the case may be, shall be removed from the Committee and the vacancy so created or any casual vacancy shall be filled by fresh nomination in accordance with the provisions of this section.

7. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The committee shall have the terms of reference as approved by the Board of Directors / Managing Director of the Company and the same shall be in conformity with the Act.

8. REDRESSAL AND INQUIRY PROCESS

a. Any aggrieved woman may file a written complaint with any member of the Committee or send an email to mrunalini@vijaytextiles.in, and shall file 6 copies of the complaint along with necessary documents, within a period of three months from the date of incident and in 6 case of a series of incidents, within a period of three months from the date of last incident; The Internal Committee shall render all reasonable assistance to the aggrieved woman for making the complaint in writing and extend the time limit not exceeding 90 days, if it is satisfied that the circumstances exist to warrant such extension. Internal Complaints Committee on receipt of such written complaint, may, if require ask the aggrieved person to furnish additional information about the alleged harassment.

b. The Internal Committee shall call upon the person against whom the complaint has been made (Respondent) and provide an opportunity to be heard.

c. The Respondent shall file his reply to the complaint along with his list of documents, within a period not exceeding 10 working days from the date of receipt of the copy of the complaint.

d. The aggrieved woman can seek the assistance of her legal heir or such other person as stated in the Prescribed Rules, if she is unable to make a complaint on account of her physical or mental incapacity or death or otherwise.

e. The Internal Committee may terminate the inquiry proceedings or to give an ex-parte decision on the complaint, under certain circumstances as prescribed.

f. No legal practitioner can represent the parties in their case at any stage of the proceedings before the Internal Committee.

g. The Internal Committee, may, before initiating an inquiry and at the request of the aggrieved woman take steps to settle the matter between her and the respondent through conciliation; No monetary settlement shall be made as a basis of conciliation.

h. The Internal Committee shall record any settlement arrived at and forward to the employer to take action as specified in the recommendation.

i. The Internal Committee shall provide the copies of the settlement to the parties concerned and on such settlement, no further inquiry shall be conducted by the Internal Committee .

j. The Internal Committee, shall, where the respondent is an employee, proceed to make inquiry into the complaint in accordance with the provisions of the service rules applicable to the respondent and where no such rules exist, in such manner as prescribed in the Act and the Prescribed Rules, within a period of seven days. In case any terms or conditions of the settlement arrived at, has not been complied with by the respondent, the Internal Committee shall proceed to make an inquiry into the complaint.

h. The Internal Committee shall have the same powers as are vested in a civil court under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 and the Internal Committee complete the inquiry shall within a period of ninety days.

i. On a written request made by the aggrieved woman, during the pendency of the inquiry the Internal Committee may recommend to the employer to (i)

transfer the aggrieved woman or the respondent to any other workplace; or (ii) grant leave to the aggrieved woman up to a period of three months; or (iii) grant such other relief to the aggrieved woman as per Prescribed Rules

j. The leave granted to the aggrieved woman under the Act, shall be in addition to the leave she would be otherwise entitled.

k. The Internal Committee shall provide a report of its findings to the employer, within a period of ten days from the date of completion of the inquiry and such report be made available to the concerned parties

l. The employer shall implement the recommendations made by the Internal Committee and send the report of such implementation, to the Internal Committee.

m. In the event, the allegation against the respondent has not been proved, the Internal Committee shall recommend to the employer that no action is required to be taken in the matter.

n. In the event, the allegation against the respondent has been proved, the Internal Committee shall recommend to the employer actions against the respondent as prescribed in the Act and the Prescribed Rules.

o. The Employer shall act upon the recommendation within sixty days of receipt of the recommendations.

p. In the event, the allegation against the respondent is malicious or false and it has been so established after the inquiry, the Internal Committee may recommend to the employer to take action against the aggrieved woman or the person making such malicious or false complaint as prescribed. While deciding malicious intent, the committee should consider that mere inability to substantiate a complaint need not mean malicious intent. Malicious intent must be clearly established through a separate inquiry.

q. During the course of inquiry, if any witness has given false evidence or produced any forged or misleading document, the Internal Committee may recommend to the employer of the witness to take action in accordance with the provisions of the service rules applicable to the said witness or where no such service rules exist, in such manner as per Prescribed Rules.

r. For the purpose of determining the sums to be paid to the aggrieved woman as per the Act, the Internal Committee shall have regard to: (i) the mental trauma, pain, suffering and emotional distress caused to the aggrieved woman; (ii) the loss in the career opportunity due to the incident of sexual harassment; (iii) medical expenses incurred by the victim for physical or psychiatric treatment; (iv) the income and financial status of the respondent; (v) feasibility of such payment in lump sum or in installments.

s. If the Internal Complaints Committee arrives at the conclusion that the allegation against the respondent has been proved, or if such complaint is proved to be false or malicious, it may not limited to the below matrix may recommend to take action for sexual harassment as a misconduct, as per the following:-

Penalty matrix	Disciplinary action
Minor	Warning, Reprimand, Written apology to the Complainant
Moderate	Withholding of promotions / increments, Rescinding of bonus, Transfer from present location
Stringent	Compensation or deduction from the salary / wages of the respondent or issue direction for payment; such sum as it may consider appropriate, Suspension, Termination / dismissal from employment, Legal action under the Criminal Code

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

a. Notwithstanding anything contained in the Right to Information Act, 2005, the contents of the complaint made under the Act, the identity and addresses of the aggrieved woman, respondent and witnesses, any information relating to conciliation and inquiry proceedings, recommendations of the Internal Committee and the action taken by the employer under the provisions of this Act shall not be published, communicated or made known to the public, press and media in any manner: However the information may be disseminated regarding the justice secured to any victim of sexual harassment under this Act without disclosing the name, address, identity or any other particulars calculated to lead to the identification of the aggrieved woman and witnesses.

b. Any person involved in the inquiry and breaking the confidentiality may be proceeded against in accordance with the provisions of the service rules applicable to the said person or where no such service rules exist, in such manner as per the Act and the Prescribed Rules.

10. APPEAL

a. Subject to the provisions of Section 18 of the Act, any person aggrieved from the recommendations made by the Internal Committee under the Act, or non-implementation of such recommendations may prefer an appeal to the to the Court or tribunal in accordance with the provisions of the service rules applicable to the said person or where no such service rules exist may prefer an appeal to the appellate authority notified under 2(a) of the Industrial Employment(Standing orders)Act,1946.

b. Appeals shall be preferred within a period of ninety days of the recommendations.

11. DUTIES OF THE EMPLOYER

a. Employer shall be responsible to (i) provide a safe working environment at the workplace which shall include safety from the persons coming into contact at the workplace; (ii) display at any conspicuous place in the workplace, the penal consequences of sexual harassment; and the order constituting the Internal Committee. (iii) organize workshops and awareness programs at regular intervals for sensitizing the employees with the provisions of the Act and orientation programs for the members of the Internal Committee in the manner as per Prescribed Rules (iv) provide necessary facilities to the Internal

Committee for dealing with the complaint and conducting an inquiry; (v) assist in securing the attendance of respondent and witnesses before the Internal Committee ; (vi) make available such information to the Internal Committee as it may require having regard to the complaint made; (vii) provide assistance to the woman if she so chooses to file a complaint in relation to the offence under the Indian Penal Code or any other law of for the time being in force; (viii) cause to initiate action, under the Indian Penal Code or any other law for the time being in force, against the perpetrator, or if the aggrieved woman so desires, where the perpetrator is not an employee, in the workplace at which the incident of sexual harassment took place; (ix) treat sexual harassment as a misconduct under the service rules and initiate action for such misconduct; (x) monitor the timely submission of reports by the Internal Committee.

12. ANNUAL COMPLIANCE BY THE COMMITTEE /COMPANY

The Internal Committee shall in each calendar year prepare, in such form and at such time as per Prescribed Rules, an annual report and submit the same to the employer. b. The employer shall include in its report the number of cases filed, if any, and their disposal under this Act in the annual report of his organization or where no such report is required to be prepared, intimate such number of cases, if any, to the District Officer.

13. MISCELLANEOUS

1. Company may make any alteration or amendment or rescind any of the clauses of this Policy as and when it finds it necessary to do so as long as it complies with the Act. Any such alterations or amendment or rescinding will be intimated to the employee.

2. Nothing contained in these rules shall operate in derogation of any law for the time being in force or to the prejudice of any right of any employee under any other Rules or Law.