

Sexual Harassment

A survey was conducted to find out if companies in Singapore have a sexual harassment policy in their organisations.

Out of the 11 companies who responded to the survey, six of them have a sexual harassment policy in place. Most cited that they would approach the HR manager or their immediate superior should someone in the company gets harassed. One company even has a hotline that is managed by a committee formed by several members within the organisation. Identities of the members are kept anonymous to protect the interests of all parties.

Most companies do not have specific procedures to handle sexual harassment cases but all stated that counseling is provided for the victims.

The disciplinary action taken against the offender depends on the severity of the situation. Two companies cited dismissal as their course of action, while three companies would offer counseling, verbal warning and written warning. If all else fails, they would terminate the employment of the offender.

The majority of the respondents believe that HR bears the greatest responsibility in preventing future cases of sexual harassment at the workplace.

One commented that the HR department should roll out a policy to protect the interest of the employees but everyone plays a part in making a sexual-harassment free working environment. It is also the HR department's responsibility to enforce and emphasize the severity of such cases. This is in order to protect the well-being of the staff and to preserve the working culture in the company.

The HR department of one company explained that it has already been part of the group policy that is made known to all employees. If there are parties who trigger such actions; it is the responsibility of the individual. There is no way they can prevent it, we can only hope that it does not happen at all.