Prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace - guide for small businesses

HUMAN THREADS HR

Policy

You need a Prevention of Sexual Harassment policy and need to make sure your employees know about it. Explain what is not acceptable behaviour, how to recognise sexual harassment and what to do if they experience it. Remind them before any big events.

Listen

Understand what's happening in your workplace - whether in 1:1 meetings, or through staff surveys. Ensure everyone knows how they can report sexual harassment, about your policy and the consequence of breaching the policy.

Risk Assessment

Assess the risks of sexual harassment in your organisation, including whether there will be any third parties (customers, suppliers, the public) on site and whether anyone is a lone worker? Document the risks you identify.

ALL reasonable steps

Develop a plan to reduce the risk of sexual harassment based on what is reasonable in your business. Write this up in your risk assessment as your control measures.

Implement the plan

Create an action and responsibilities plan which sets out the reasonable steps you will take, how you will achieve them and who is responsible for taking the action.

How to report

Make sure that there is a clear procedure in place so that workers know how they can report concerns, anonymously if they wish.

Training

Train all staff on sexual harassment, what is considered to be unacceptable behaviour in the workplace and what to do if they experience or witness it. Keep a record of the training staff complete and refresh this training at least annually.

Deal with complaints

Take immediate action to resolve a complaint of sexual harassment, protecting the complainant from further harassment or victimisation during the investigation. Make sure that you offer support to those involved and keep everything confidential.

3rd party harassment

Also new this month is the duty to prevent sexual harassment of your workers by any third-parties. Add this to your risk assessment with the reasonable steps you have identified (e.g. signage, added to booking confirmations & voicemail messages)

You'll need to be sure that what you're doing is working, and adjust your risk assessment and your policy if anything needs to change.