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SEXUAL
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WORKPLACE IS

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WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Sexual harassment is an infringement of an employee's right to work in an environment free from unwanted sexual attention and sexual pressure of any kind. While sexual harassment need not necessarily involve a male supervisor and a female subordinate, this has been the most common situation in which the problem arises. But pressure can come from a person of either sex against a person of the opposite or same sex and from peers as well as supervisors. In addition to being a personal violation, sexual demands in the workplace, especially between the supervisor and the employee, threaten a person's economic livelihood and create an atmosphere that is not conducive to work. Sexual harassment is considered to be a form of sex discrimination and may be illegal.

*"Have sex or
be fired"**

MARYLAND LAW

CIVIL CODE—Article 49B of the Annotated Code of Maryland prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of sex with respect to compensation, terms, conditions or privileges.

CRIMINAL CODE—Article 27, Sections 464B and C, of the Annotated Code of Maryland prohibits coercive sexual demands or contact, including the intentional touching of any intimate part of the victim's body, with another person against the will and without the consent of the other person.

EXECUTIVE ORDER ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT—No. 01.01.1980.16 issued by Governor Hughes on October 20, 1980 prohibits sexual harassment in Maryland State Government.

FEDERAL LAW

TITLE VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in all terms, conditions or privileges of employment.

The EEOC recently amended its Guidelines on Discrimination Because of Sex to clarify its position and reaffirm that sexual harassment is an unlawful employment practice.

HAVE YOU BEEN A VICTIM?

You have been a victim if you have experienced any of the following on the job:

- Lewd remarks, catcalls, whistles, obscene reference to your anatomy made by your boss or co-workers.
- Unwanted physical advances or contact by your boss or co-workers.
- Requests for acquiescence in sexual acts by your boss or co-workers.
- Repeated propositions for dates.
- Demands for sexual intercourse.
- Required to listen to sexually suggestive jokes and remarks, whether you want to or not.
- Rape or attempted rape.

"I have suffered many months of mental anguish working under a boss who harassed not only me, but all of the young women who worked in the office. I have grown older, wiser and stronger because of my experience, but some may not be as strong."

As a result of refusing these advances, you may have experienced any of the following:

- Denial of a promotion.
- Termination or forced resignation.
- Resignation under duress.
- Bad evaluations or poor recommendations.
- Assignment of different, less favorable working hours.
- Demotion.
- Loss of any other normal employee benefits.
- Additional job duties beyond your normal job description.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

If you are a victim of sexual harassment, you may be entitled to statutory relief including:

- Cessation of the sexual harassment.
- Back pay and/or lost benefits.
- Job reinstatement.
- Recovery of lost benefits.
- Promotion you are entitled to.
- Restoration of an employment environment free from sexual harassment.

To make a strong case on your behalf, you should try to document the incidents of sexual harassment you experience by:

- Keeping a record of when, how and by whom the acts were committed.
- Getting support from co-workers as possible witnesses or corroborators.
- Keeping a record of when and how you informed supervisory personnel or the personnel department of the conditions of sexual harassment you faced.

"In the past, the issue has been one of such humiliation to working women that many of us have been unwilling to discuss the problem publicly. Consequently, each victim suffers alone in silence and embarrassment, and few of our fellow workers (male or female) have an accurate idea of the extent of the problem."

If you have been a victim of sexual harassment and wish to file formal charges, contact any of the agencies listed in the "WHERE CAN I GO FOR HELP?" section of this brochure.

* Quoted from the Maryland State Survey on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace.

WHERE CAN I GO FOR HELP?

To pursue formal charges, contact:

- Maryland Commission on Human Relations
20 East Franklin Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
301/659-1700
- Maryland Commission on Human Relations Satellite Office
514 Race Street
Cambridge, MD 21613
301/228-0112
- Local/County/Municipal Human Relations Commissions
- Your Union
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- Your Attorney for private litigation

TIME LIMIT FOR FILING CHARGES

Charges alleging sexual harassment should be filed immediately with the Maryland Commission on Human Relations and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, but should not exceed 180 business days after the alleged occurrence.

If you want further information, contact:

- Maryland Commission for Women
1123 North Eutaw Street, Room 603
Baltimore, MD 21201
301/383-5608
- Local/County/Municipal Commissions for Women
- Women's Law Center
2621 Maryland Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21218
301/366-8883

Please consult your telephone directory for numbers and locations not listed above.

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