TOOLBOX TALK AWARENESS PACKAGES

HAZ-SXH · Sexual Harassment Awareness

Product Overview

Audience: All workers · Duration: 20–30 minutes

Version 1.0 · 8 November 2026

For every worker: what sexual harassment is, the employer's positive duty to prevent it, and how to report it or support someone who has experienced it.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that a reasonable person would anticipate could offend, humiliate or intimidate. It can be physical, verbal, written or online, and can happen at work events, while travelling and through messages outside work hours. Employers have a positive duty under federal law to take reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate it, as well as duties under WHS or OHS laws.

This talk explains what sexual harassment looks like, the risk factors in work, what bystanders can do safely, how to report, and that victimising someone who reports is unlawful.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session participants will be able to:

- Explain what sexual harassment is, including examples that are verbal, physical, written and online
- Describe the employer's positive duty to take reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate sexual harassment
- Recognise risk factors in work, such as power imbalances, isolation, alcohol at work events and customer contact
- Act as a bystander in ways that are safe and supportive
- Report sexual harassment through the workplace procedure, and know the outside options
- Explain that victimising a person who reports or supports a report is unlawful

What it covers

Module	Covers
What it is	The legal meaning, in plain terms; Examples, including online and outside work hours; Sex-based harassment and hostile environments
Duties and risk factors	The positive duty and WHS or OHS duties; Risk factors in the work; Controls the business puts in place
Your part	Standards of behaviour; Bystander action; Reporting, confidentiality and support; Victimisation

Activities

- Where is the line: workers discuss short scenarios set at work, at a work function and online

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- Supporting a colleague: what to say, and what not to say, when someone tells you about harassment

What is in the package

Item	File
Editable PowerPoint presentation with speaker notes, plus PDF	02_TRAINING_PRESENTATION/Training Presentation.pptx and .pdf
Facilitator guide with a running sheet, discussion prompts and model answers	03_FACILITATOR_GUIDE/Facilitator Guide.docx and .pdf
Participant handout with the key points to take away	04_PARTICIPANT_HANDOUT/Participant Handout.docx and .pdf
Attendance record form, to capture who attended, when, and who facilitated	06_RECORDS/Attendance Record.docx and .pdf
Excel attendance register	06_RECORDS/Attendance Register.xlsx
Multiple-choice theory assessment, to record understanding if your business wants to	05_ASSESSMENT/Theory Assessment.docx and .pdf
Answer key for the assessment	05_ASSESSMENT/Assessment Answer Key.docx and .pdf
Certificate template	06_RECORDS/Certificate Template.docx
Start here: Read Me First, Product Overview, Permitted Use Terms, Version Information	01_START_HERE/ (four PDFs)

What you need to deliver it

- A facilitator such as a supervisor, leading hand or WHS adviser who has read the facilitator guide and knows your site's arrangements for the topic
- A screen or projector, or printed slides or handouts: it works in a crib room, site office or on a video call
- Your own site procedures for the topic, to point to during the session

Questions

Can we add our own site procedures and photos? Yes. The slides, handout and guide are editable, and the facilitator guide marks the places to add your own procedures, contacts and photos of your workplace.

Do we have to use the assessment? No. It is there if your business wants a record that each worker understood the key points. The attendance record on its own shows who attended and when.

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TOOLBOX TALK

Sexual Harassment Awareness

What it is, the duty to prevent it, and how to report it or support someone

20–30 minutes · All workers

[Company name] · [Date] · [Facilitator name]

SXH

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What this talk is, and is not

This talk covers

- ✓ What sexual harassment is, with examples
- ✓ The duty to prevent it, and risk factors
- ✓ Being a safe, supportive bystander
- ✓ Reporting, support, and victimisation

This talk is not

- ✕ Investigation or complaint-handling training
- ✕ Legal advice
- ✕ Counselling
- ✕ Our policy: **[Your sexual harassment policy]**

Awareness only. Investigating a complaint needs a fair process and trained people. Sexual assault is a crime: police and specialist services respond.

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What it is

Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that a reasonable person would anticipate could offend, humiliate or intimidate.

- Verbal: comments about someone's body or sex life, sexual jokes, repeated requests for dates
- Physical: unwanted touching, brushing past, hugging or kissing, standing too close
- Written and online: sexual messages, images or emails, posts, and comments in group chats
- Intent does not matter; one incident is enough

A composite example

- A supervisor messages a new worker late at night: compliments on her looks, then requests to meet up. She says no. The messages keep coming, and her shifts get worse.
- It happened outside work hours, on her own phone. It is still connected to work.

It is about the effect, not the intent.

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Where it happens, and hostile environments

Where and when

- At work, and at work functions, conferences and end-of-year parties
- While travelling for work, and in work accommodation
- In messages, calls and social media, including outside work hours
- From co-workers, managers, customers, clients, patients and the public

Also unlawful

- Harassment on the ground of sex: demeaning conduct because of someone's sex, even if not sexual
- A hostile workplace environment: sexual posters, jokes or banter that make the workplace offensive or intimidating
- It does not have to be aimed at you to affect you

If it is connected to work, it is covered.

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The positive duty, and WHS or OHS duties

The business must

- Take reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate sexual harassment, as far as possible
- Manage it as a risk under WHS or OHS laws, using the order of controls
- Have clear policies and safe, fair ways to report
- Act on reports, and prevent victimisation

You must

- Not sexually harass anyone connected to work
- Meet the standards of behaviour
- Take reasonable care for others' health and safety
- Not victimise anyone who reports or supports a report

The positive duty is in the federal Sex Discrimination Act. Victoria and some other states have their own duties. Fair Work orders can also apply.

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Sexual Harassment Awareness

Participant handout · keep this

Sexual harassment is unlawful, and a hazard that businesses must prevent. Everyone has a part. Keep this page.

What it is

- Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that a reasonable person would see could offend, humiliate or intimidate
- Verbal, physical, written or online; at work, at events, when travelling, and in messages after hours
- Intent does not matter; one incident is enough
- Also unlawful: harassment because of sex, and a hostile workplace environment

The order of controls

1. Design the work: avoid isolation; balanced teams and leadership
2. Change the setting: safe events and travel
3. Separate and protect after a report; ban harassing customers
4. Clear standards, several ways to report, fair responses
5. Training and bystanders

Being a safe bystander

- Speak up, if it is safe
- Interrupt: give a reason to move the person away
- Check in privately: listen and believe
- Report what you saw, and when

Report it

- **[Who to report sexual harassment to here]**
- **[How to report here]**
- Outside: the Australian Human Rights Commission or your state body; the Fair Work Commission; your WHS or OHS regulator; police for crimes
- Victimising someone who reports or supports a report is unlawful

If someone tells you

- Listen, believe them, and thank them
- Don't question, blame or take over
- Ask what they would like to happen
- Give them the support contacts

Support

- Employee assistance program: **[Your EAP or support contact]**
- 1800RESPECT: 1800 737 732, 24 hours
- Lifeline: 13 11 14, 24 hours
- Danger now: Triple Zero (000)

Prevent it, call it out safely, and report it.

This is awareness training. It is not a licence, a ticket, a permit or a competency. It is not investigation training, legal advice or counselling.

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