

# HUMANKIND NGO POLICY FOR PROHIBITION, PREVENTION AND REDRESSAL OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT WORKPLACE (POSH ACT 2013)

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## 1. Introduction

Humankind is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and respectful work environment for all, especially for women engaged through our community, vocational and grassroots programs. This policy reflects our adherence to the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (“the Act”) and applies to both organized and unorganized sectors. The policy aims to ensure zero tolerance towards sexual harassment.

## 2. Applicability

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, consultants, beneficiaries, community workers, trainees and visitors who are part of or associated with Humankind NGO across all locations, including training centers, field sites, community outreach areas and any premises where Humankind conducts programs.

## 3. Definitions

- **Complainant:** A person who files a complaint of sexual harassment under this policy.
- **Employee:** Includes anyone working in any capacity—paid or unpaid—on a regular, temporary, ad hoc or voluntary basis.
- **Employer:** Refers to the board and/or persons responsible for managing the operations of Humankind.
- **Internal Committee (IC):** A committee constituted to address complaints of sexual harassment as per the Act.
- **Presiding Officer:** A senior woman member of the IC designated to preside over cases.
- **Respondent:** A person against whom a complaint has been made.
- **Sexual Harassment:** As defined in Section 2(n) of the POSH Act, including physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct.
- **Workplace:** Includes all Humankind premises, training sites, events, travel for work and online platforms.

#### **4. Prohibition and Prevention of Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment in any form is strictly prohibited. Humankind shall:

- Display policy and contact info at all centers
- Conduct awareness sessions
- Sensitize male and female participants and staff through training
- Build support through nodal persons for unorganised sector women

#### **5. Complaint**

Complaints may be made in writing or verbally to any IC member or nodal person. Support will be provided to women from the unorganised sector to submit complaints to the appropriate Local Complaints Committee (LC), in case an IC is not constituted in their context.

#### **6. Conciliation**

Before inquiry, if the complainant requests, conciliation may be initiated without any monetary settlement. Terms will be recorded and signed by both parties. If breached, the IC will initiate inquiry.

#### **7. Process of Inquiry**

Inquiry shall be conducted fairly and confidentially, with both parties given an opportunity to present their case. IC will complete inquiry in 90 days and submit a report to management. If harassment is proven, appropriate disciplinary or corrective action will be taken.

#### **8. False or Malicious Complaints**

If a complaint is found to be knowingly false or malicious, appropriate disciplinary action may be taken after due inquiry. Lack of proof will not be treated as malicious intent.

#### **9. Confidentiality**

All matters related to the complaint, parties involved and inquiry proceedings shall remain confidential. Breach of confidentiality will lead to disciplinary action.

#### **10. Protection**

Humankind shall ensure that complainants, witnesses and other participants in the inquiry are protected from retaliation or victimisation.

## **11. Appeal**

Aggrieved individuals may appeal against the findings or recommendations of the IC within 90 days to the appropriate court or tribunal.

## **12. Review and Amendments**

This policy shall be reviewed annually or as per legal updates. In case of legal conflict, the POSH Act and subsequent government guidelines will take precedence.

## **13. Annexure A: List of IC Members**

To be updated and displayed at each Humankind center and training location.

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