

MRHFL Policy:

Issue Date: - March 31, 2016

MRHFL/HRD/POLICYONSEXUALHARRASMENTFORWOMEN/2016

Issued By: Human Resources department

Effective Date: April 01, 2016

BACKGROUND

It is our endeavor to keep our workplace at Mahindra Rural Housing Finance Ltd. ("Company") safe, transparent and friendly for people to work in. Understanding employees and giving them the confidence that their workplace is fair, transparent and safe has been a core philosophy and to that effect we had a Policy on Sexual Harassment for several years. The Government has recently released an act on Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 ("Act"). This Act has come into force with effect from 9th Dec'13. In order to ensure compliance and more, we have redrafted the policy on Sexual Harassment as below.

APPLICABILITY OF THIS POLICY

This policy applies to:

- i. all women, who are employed with the Company including but not limited to permanent, contractual or temporary employees ("Employee");
- ii. all women, who visit the Premises of the Company for any purpose, such as customers, visitors etc. ("Aggrieved Woman");

SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

This policy would extend to all the locations of the Company. The possible locations could be:-

- i. any of the business locations of the Company; or
- ii. any external location visited by an Employee due to or during the course of employment with the Company, such as business locations of other organizations/entities, guest houses, hotels etc.; or
- iii. any mode of transport provided by the Company (or a representative of the Company) to an Employee for undertaking a journey to and from the locations mentioned above.

The definitions (i) – (iii) are together referred to as "Premises".

DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

A broad definition of sexual harassment consists of any unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of unnecessary, improper or unwelcome sexual nature and may include one or more of the following acts or behavior (whether directly or by implication):

- i. Unwelcome sexual advances, demands or requests for sexual favours, display of sexual visuals, sexual audios, pornographic or obscene material and any other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature; or
- ii. Transmitting any message, by mail, telephone, electronic media including social networking websites etc. which is obscene, lewd, suggestive or blatantly sexual in nature; or
- iii. Any explicit or implicit communication wherein a sexual favour or demand, whether by words or actions, is made a condition for an individual's employment, career progress, promotion etc. thereby creating a hostile environment; or
- iv. Sexually charged jokes or remarks and behaviour which have sexually oriented innuendoes; or
- v. Consistent pattern of unnecessary physical contact and advances, staring or targeting unreasonable attention at an individual in day to day dealings; or
- vi. Any pervasive pattern of behaviour which makes women uncomfortable, insecure or feel humiliated or disadvantaged on the basis of gender differentiation; or
- vii. Stalking or making repeated unnecessary/unwelcome visits to the place of residence; or
- viii. Actual sexual assault.

This is only an indicative list of the possible acts and in no way is exhaustive in nature.

COMPANY APPROACH TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT ISSUES

The company views all incidents of sexual harassment seriously and follows a zero tolerance approach towards any act of sexual harassment. All incidents of sexual harassment are prohibited and any complaint or report of sexual harassment will be investigated and if proved, appropriate action will be taken against the offending person. The nature and seriousness of the offence will be adjudged by the Committee depending on several factors, including the presence of the following circumstances while the Employee and/or Aggrieved Woman was being subjected to any acts of sexual harassment:

- i. implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment in her employment; or
- ii. implied or explicit threat of detrimental treatment in her employment; or
- iii. implied or explicit threat about her present or future employment status; or
- iv. interferes with her work or creating an intimidating or offensive or hostile work environment for her; or
- v. Humiliating treatment likely to affect her health or safety.

The circumstances enlisted above are not exhaustive. Every proven act of sexual harassment will be treated as misconduct under the service rules and appropriate action will be undertaken for such misconduct.

COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCESS

The Company has established the following process to ensure that any incidence of sexual harassment is dealt with appropriately, sensitively and expeditiously.

1 FORMATION OF INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE FOR SEXUAL HARASSMENT

At all the locations of the Company, an "Internal Complaints Committee" ("Committee") will be constituted. The Chief People Officer along with the HR Head will be responsible for the formation of the Committee and ensuring that all the complaints are addressed by the Committee. The constitution of the Committee will be as per the provisions of the Act. Each location will announce the names and contact details of the members of this Committee for all locations and publicly display the same in common areas accessible to employees and visitors, alike.

The Committee will be constituted as per the following guidelines at all the locations of the Company:-

Category of the member	No. of members	Remarks
Presiding Officer	1	A senior level woman employee to be appointed as Presiding Officer of the Committee
Employee	2 or more	Employees of the Company committed to the cause of women or having experience in social work or legal knowledge to be nominated as a part of the Committee One of them should be a HR representative or a person nominated by HR for the location
NGO or Associations committed to the cause of women	1	A member from an NGO or associations committed to the cause of women or a person familiar with the issues relating to sexual harassment to be nominated as a part of the Committee

Please note:-

- In case a senior level employee woman employee is not available, the Presiding officer can be nominated from other administrative offices of the Company.
- It is mandatory that at least one-half of the total members of the Internal Complaints Committee so appointed be women members.

The constitution of the Committee for each location will be announced separately.

2 PROCESS FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Any Employee or Aggrieved Woman who experiences sexual harassment at the Premises must file a complaint in writing to the relevant Committee within 3 months from the date of the incident. However, this time limit may be extended by the Committee if there are substantial reasons, justifications or circumstances which have prevented the Employee or Aggrieved Woman from filing this complaint. In the event of the physical or mental incapacity or death of the affected Employee or Aggrieved Woman, then her heirs can also file such a complaint on her behalf.

i. Settlement

After filing such a complaint, if the Employee or Aggrieved Woman so requests, prior to initiating an inquiry, the Committee can try to settle the matter through conciliation, provided that no monetary settlement shall be made as a basis of such conciliation. If such a settlement is reached, the Committee will record the settlement and action will be taken by the Company as specified in the recommendation. Copies of the settlement will also be provided to the Employee or Aggrieved Woman and the respondent. However, it is to be noted that where a settlement is arrived at, no further inquiry will be made by the Committee, unless the terms of settlement have not been complied with.

ii. Inquiry

- If the Employee or Aggrieved Woman does not request for a settlement then, on receipt of such a complaint, the Committee will immediately arrange to fully investigate all relevant details of the matter.
- The Committee shall make the inquiry into the complaint in accordance with the principles of Natural Justice.
- A minimum number of 3 members of the Committee, including the Presiding Officer, should be present for conducting the inquiry.
- Both parties will be given reasonable opportunity to be heard by the Committee. A copy of the findings shall also be given to both parties to enable them to make representations against the findings before the Committee.
- This inquiry will be completed within 90 days. Further, within 10 days of completion of the inquiry, the Committee will formally record the result of the inquiry and forward its recommendations for appropriate action to the concerned officers of the Company who will act upon such recommendations of the Committee within 60 days.
- An appeal to the decision of the Committee may be preferred within a period of 90 days to a court or tribunal as may be prescribed under the Act.

iii. Interim Relief

Where an inquiry is initiated on a complaint then, if the complainant so desires, she can request for any of the following actions to be taken during the pendency of the complaint as an interim measure of relief:

- transfer of either of the parties to any other workplace; or
- grant of leave to the complainant upto a period of 3 months; or
- restraining the respondent from reporting on the work performance of the complainant or writing her confidential report and assign the same to another officer; or
- Grant such other relief to the complainant as may be prescribed under the Act.

The Committee may provide such recommendations to the Company to implement. The leave granted to the complainant will be in addition to the leave she would be otherwise entitled to.

iv. Procedure to be followed by the Committee for conducting an Inquiry

For the purpose of conducting an inquiry into any complaint received by it from an Employee or an Aggrieved Woman, the Committee may:

- summon and enforce the attendance of any person and examine her on oath;
- require the discovery and production of documents; and
- Perform or require performance of any other such act which may be prescribed under the Act.

v. Action against the Offender

- Necessary action, including but not limited to such disciplinary action as may be specified in the terms of employment of the offender(s), will be taken with regard to such offender(s) based on the circumstances and seriousness of the offence.
- If the Committee so deems fit and appropriate, then it may direct the respondent to pay compensation to the complainant (either through deduction from salary or in case respondent has left Mahindra Rural Housing Finance Ltd. or is on leave, then direct payment).
- If such compensation is not paid, then recovery of this amount will be done as an arrear of land revenue.

vi. Invocation of Indian Penal Code

If the aggrieved person chooses to file a complaint in relation to the offence under the Indian Penal Code or any other applicable law, the Company will provide such assistance to her as she may require. Furthermore, the Company may also cause to initiate action, under the Indian Penal Code or any other applicable law, against the offender. In the event that the offender is an employee of a different entity/organization/company, then if the aggrieved Employee so desires, the Company will cause to initiate action in the workplace at which the incident of sexual harassment took place.

vii. False, Frivolous or Malicious Complaints

Where the Committee arrives at a conclusion that the allegation against the offender is malicious or the complainant has made the complaint knowing it to be false or has produced any forged or misleading document, then the same will be viewed very seriously by the Company and appropriate action will be taken against such complaints.

viii. Confidentiality of the Complainant

Any complaints or incidents reported under this policy shall be treated with all possible care, sensitivity and discretion in protecting the sensibilities of the affected person and no information will be divulged publicly or to any third party which can enable identification of the identity of the affected person.

As the Act has come into force from 9th Dec'13, all locations are advised to implement the said policy and ensure adherence to the provisions of the Act and the rules.


ix. Preparation of Annual report and compliance with appropriate Government:

The Committee will prepare the annual report in accordance with Section 21 of the Act which shall contain the following details:

- a) Number of complaints of sexual harassment received in the year
- b) Number of complaints disposed off during the year
- c) Number of cases pending for more than 90 days
- d) Number of workshops or awareness programs against sexual harassment carried out
- e) Nature of action taken by the concerned officers of the Company.

The annual report will be submitted to the CGC (Corporate Governance committee).

At every location, in the Committee, an HR representative will be nominated. It will be the duty of this person to file annual report with the District Officer notified under **Section 5** of the Act by the appropriate Government.



Imtiyaz Isani

Head HR

Mahindra Rural Housing Finance Ltd.