

Policy for Prevention of Sexual Harassment

Vaksons Automobiles Limited Policy for Prevention of Sexual Harassment

Introduction:

Vaksons Automobiles Limited quest for competitive excellence consists of our commitment to lawful and ethical conduct and adhering to our company's values. Integrity, honesty and respect for people remain some of our core values.

Vaksons Automobiles Limited ("**the Company**") is committed to providing work environment that ensures every employee is treated with dignity and respect and afforded equitable treatment. The Company is also committed to promoting a work environment that is conducive to the professional growth of its employees and encourages equality of opportunity. The Company will not tolerate any form of sexual harassment and is committed to take all necessary steps to ensure that its employees are not subjected to any form of harassment.

The Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy has been formed to prohibit, prevent or deter the commission of acts of sexual harassment at workplace and to provide the procedure for the redressal of complaints pertaining to sexual harassment.

The Policy for Prevention of Sexual Harassment was constituted by the Board of Directors at the meeting held on [•] in compliance with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.

Applicability:

This Policy applies to all the employees and trainees (whether in the office premises or outside while on duty) of the Company and all of its group companies in India, Where sexual harassment occurs to an employee as a result of an act by a third party or outsider while on official duty, will take all necessary and reasonable steps to assist the affected person in terms of support and preventive action.

What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual Harassment includes such unwelcome sexually determined behavior, as physical contacts and advances, sexually colored remarks, showing pornography and sexual demands whether by words, gestures or actions. Such conduct can be humiliating and may constitute a health and safety problem. It is discriminatory when the complainant has reasonable grounds to believe that his other objection would disadvantage them in connection with employment, including recruiting or promotion or when it creates a hostile working environment.

Sexual harassment includes such unwelcome sexually determined behavior (whether directly or by implication) as:

- (a) Physical contact and advances;
- (b) A demand or request for sexual favors;
- (c) Sexually colored remarks;
- (d) Showing pornography;
- (e) Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature.

Sexual harassment is emotionally abusive and creates an unhealthy, unproductive atmosphere at the workplace. Sexual harassment cases can be classified into two categories - quid pro quo and creation of a hostile working environment.

(a) Under the quid pro quo (meaning this for that) form of harassment, a person or authority, usually the superior of the victim, demands sexual favors for getting or keeping a job benefit and threatens to fire the employee if the conditions are not met.

(b) A hostile work environment arises when a co-worker or supervisor creates a work environment through verbal or physical conduct that interferes with another co-worker's job performance or creates the workplace atmosphere which is intimidating, hostile, offensive or humiliating and experienced as an attack on personal dignity. For example an employee tells offensive jokes. No person shall indulge or caused to be indulged under instructions from superior in sexual harassment of co-workers.

However, an employee who is sexually harassed can complain about the same even if there is no adverse job consequence.

Responsibilities regarding Sexual Harassment:

All employees of the Company have a personal responsibility to ensure that their behavior is not contrary to this policy. All employees are encouraged to reinforce the maintenance of a work environment free from sexual harassment.

Complaint Mechanism:

An appropriate complaint mechanism in the form of "Complaints Committee" has been created in the Company for time-bound redressal of the complaint made by the victim.

Internal Complaints Committee (ICC):

The "Internal Complaints Committee" shall consist of a Chairperson, Secretary and 3 other members. A woman employed at the senior level shall be the Chairperson. Not less than two members should, preferably be committed to the cause of women or have had experience in social work. One of the Committee members shall be a woman from a reputed NGO/ legal body / any other social work body familiar with the issues of sexual harassment. The tenure of the committee shall be not exceeding 3 years & names of the committee members shall be announced by the HR Manager. The Executive Director shall be the authority for disciplinary actions on issues relating to sexual harassment at the workplace.

Dealing with the Complaint:

Given that this policy highlights a preventive focus, there is a need to distinguish between an informal and formal process.

PROCEDURE FOR INFORMAL GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL:

Informal processes normally involve an intermediary means for resolving a problem. In the case of Sexual Harassment, at first instance, the person (i.e. HOD / HR / Woman representative of the location) may be the point of first contact for anyone seeking informal support/intervention to stop unwelcome behavior.

A sense of restraint and responsibility on the part of all concerned is critical for the effective functioning of these guidelines. The preventive / informal process that can be adopted is as follows:

1. Convey to the person who is the cause of distress, about what that person's actions, words, behavior is doing and convey in no uncertain terms that such behavior is not appreciated. What is important is the "Way" a particular behavior, action or word is perceived; "Intent" is of no consequence.

2. The second step would be to approach someone within the company – preferably your Superior or HR Representative. The Superior or HR Representative would then try and counsel / talk it over with a view towards closing the matter amicably.
3. In any case all such incidents along with the resolution, needs to be reported to the Head of HR who will then provide a short report to the Internal Complaints Committee and the matter will be closed.
4. However, in the event of it not being resolved, then it would need to be escalated to the Internal Complaints Committee.

PROCEDURE FOR FORMAL GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL:

In the event of the complaint, not being resolved through informal mechanism, then it would need to be escalated to the Internal Complaint Committee for redressal;

1. It is the obligation of all employees to report sexual harassment experienced by them personally. A concerned co-worker may also inform the Complaints Committee of any instance or behavior of sexual harassment by a co-worker towards another employee.
2. The concerned employee shall give his complaint in writing to any of the committee member giving details of the incident within a week of its occurrence.
3. Once the complaint is received, it will be kept strictly confidential.
4. The person accused will be informed that a complaint has been filed against him/her and no unfair acts of retaliation or unethical action will be tolerated. The Committee shall ensure that a fair and just investigation is undertaken immediately.
5. Both the complainant and the alleged accused initially will be questioned separately with a view to ascertain the veracity of their contentions. If required, the person who has been named as a witness will need to provide the necessary information to assist in resolving the matter satisfactorily.
6. The Chairperson after studying the report & discussion with the Committee members shall submit her recommendation to the Executive Director within 10 days of completing the inquiry.
7. The complainant and the accused shall be informed of the outcome of the investigation. The investigation shall be completed within 3 months of the receipt of the complaint. If the investigation reveals that the complainant has been sexually harassed as claimed, the accused will be disciplined accordingly. The implementation of the recommendation of Internal Complaint Committee by Executive Director should be done within 30 days of receipt of such recommendation.

Disciplinary Action:

Where any misconduct is found by the Committee, appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken against the accused.

Disciplinary action may include transfer, withholding promotion, suspension or even dismissal. This action shall be in addition to any legal recourse sought by the complainant.

Confidentiality:

All information received shall be kept confidential. Any person (including witnesses) who breaches confidentiality shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Protection to Complainant / Victim:

The Company is committed to ensuring that no employee who brings forward a harassment concern is subject to any form of reprisal. Any reprisal will be subject to disciplinary action. The Company will ensure that the victim or witnesses are not victimized or discriminated against while dealing with complaints of sexual harassment. However, anyone who abuses the procedure (for example, by maliciously putting an allegation knowing it to be untrue) will be subject to disciplinary action.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the Company reiterates its commitment to providing its employees, a workplace free from harassment/ discrimination and where every employee is treated with dignity and respect.

Internal Complaint Committee:

Name	Company	Designation
[•]	[•]	Chairperson/Presiding Officer
[•]	[•]	Member
[•]	[•]	Member
[•]	[•]	Member

[Kanga Comment: Please note that according to Section 4 of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, Company is required to have atleast 4(four) Members as a part of the Internal Complaint Committee of which the Chairperson /Presiding Officer should be a woman and one member should be from amongst an NGO, or associations committed to the cause of women or a person familiar with issues relating to sexual harassment. Further, one half of the committee should comprise of women members. Accordingly, the Company will be required to constitute the committee to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.]

Please Note: The ICC will not entertain any anonymous complaints.