

Policy on Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) of Women at Workplace

Introduction

This policy has been framed in accordance with the provisions of “The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013” and rules framed thereunder (hereinafter “the Act”). Accordingly, while the policy covers all the key aspects of the Act, for any further clarification reference shall always be made to the Act and the provisions of the Act shall prevail.

Further, as stated in the “COMPANY VALUES” - Our success is based on our people. We treat each other with respect and dignity and expect everyone to promote a sense of personal responsibility. We recruit competent and motivated people who respect our values, provide equal opportunities for their development and advancement; protect their privacy and **do not tolerate any form of harassment or discrimination**.

The ‘Policy on Prevention of Sexual Harassment of women at workplace: Guidelines for Wardwizard Foods and Beverages Limited’ intends to provide protection against sexual harassment of women at workplace and the prevention and redressal of complaints of sexual harassment and matters related to it.

Definitions

1. **Sexual harassment** may occur not only where a person uses sexual behavior to control, influence or affect the career, salary or job of another person, but also between co-workers. It may also occur between Wardwizard Foods and Beverage Limited employee and someone that employee deals with in the course of his/her work who is not employed by the Company.

“Sexual Harassment” includes any one or more of the following unwelcome acts or behavior (whether directly or by implication):

- (a) Any unwelcome sexually determined behavior, or pattern of conduct, that would cause discomfort and/or humiliate a person at whom the behavior or conduct was directed namely:
 - Physical contact and advances;
 - Demand or request for sexual favors;
 - Sexually colored remarks or remarks of a sexual nature about a person's clothing or body;
 - Showing pornography, making or posting sexual pranks, sexual teasing, sexual jokes, sexually demeaning or offensive pictures, cartoons or other materials through email, SMS, MMS etc.
 - Repeatedly asking to socialize during off-duty hours or continued expressions of sexual interest against a person's wishes;
 - Giving gifts or leaving objects that are sexually suggestive;
 - Eve teasing, innuendos and taunts, physical confinement against one's will or any such act likely to intrude upon one's privacy;

(b) The following circumstances if it occurs or is present in relation to any sexually determined act or behavior amount to sexual harassment :

- Implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment in employment;
- Implied or explicit threat of detrimental treatment in employment;
- Implied or explicit threat about the present or future employment status;
- Interference with the person's work or creating an intimidating or offensive or hostile work environment; or
- Humiliating treatment likely to affect her mental health or safety.

The reasonable person standard is used to determine whether or not the conduct was offensive and what a reasonable person would have done. Further, it is important to note that whether harassment has occurred or not, does not depend on the intention of the people but on the experience of the aggrieved woman.

1. **Aggrieved woman:** In relation to a workplace, a woman, of any age, whether employed or not, who alleges to have been subjected to any act of sexual harassment by the respondent and includes contractual, temporary, visitors.
2. **Respondent:** A person against whom a complaint of sexual harassment has been made by the aggrieved woman
3. **Employee:** A person employed at the workplace, for any work on regular, temporary, ad-hoc or daily wage basis, either directly or through an agent, including a contractor, with or without the knowledge of the principal employer, whether for remuneration or not, or working on a voluntary basis or otherwise, whether the terms of employment are express or implied and includes a coworker, a contract worker, probationer, trainee, apprentice or by any other such name.
4. **Workplace:** In addition to the place of work [Head office / Branch offices, Factories] it shall also include any place where the aggrieved woman or the respondent visits in connection with his/her work, during the course of and/or arising out of employment/ contract/ engagement with Wardwizard Foods and Beverages Limited, including transportation provided for undertaking such a journey.
5. **Employer:** A person responsible for management, supervision and control of the workplace.

Roles & Responsibilities

1. **Responsibilities of Individual:** It is the responsibility of all to respect the rights of others and to never encourage harassment. It can be done by:
 - a. Refusing to participate in any activity which constitutes harassment
 - b. Supporting the person to reject unwelcome behavior
 - c. Acting as a witness if the person being harassed decides to lodge a complaint

All are encouraged to advise others of behavior that is unwelcome. Often, some behaviors are not intentional. While this does not make it acceptable, it does give the person behaving inappropriately, the opportunity to modify or stop their offensive behavior.

2. **Responsibilities of Managers:** All managers at Wardwizard Foods and Beverages Limited must ensure that nobody is subject to harassment and there is equal treatment. They must also ensure that all employees understand that harassment will not be tolerated; that complaints will be taken seriously; and that the complainant, respondent/s, or witnesses are not victimized in any way.

Redressal Mechanism – Formal Intervention

In compliance with the Act, if the complainant's warrants formal intervention, the complainant needs to lodge a written complaint, which shall be followed by a formal redressal mechanism as described in this Policy. In case of a verbal complaint, the complaint will be reduced in writing by the receiver of the complaint and signatures of the complainant will be obtained.

Internal Complaints Committee (Henceforth known as 'committee')

To prevent instances of sexual harassment and to receive and effectively deal with complaints pertaining to the same, an "**Internal Complaints Committee**" is constituted at each location. The detail of the committee is notified to all covered persons at the location (workplace).

The committee at each location comprises of:

- **Presiding Officer:** A woman employed at a senior level in the organization or workplace
- At least 2 members from amongst employees, committed to the cause of women and or having legal knowledge
- One external member, familiar with the issues relating to sexual harassment
- At least two third of the total members is women
- Majority Women representation of IC Members Committee.

The **committee** is responsible for:

- Receiving complaints of sexual harassment at the workplace
- Initiating and conducting inquiry as per the established procedure
- Submitting findings and recommendations of inquiries
- Coordinating with the employer in implementing appropriate action
- Maintaining strict confidentiality throughout the process as per established guidelines
- Submitting annual reports in the prescribed format

Current nominated members of the committees are given in **Annexure A**.

Lodging a Complaint

The complainant needs to submit a detailed complaint, along with any documentary evidence available or names of witnesses, to any of the committee members at the workplace.

The complaint must be lodged within **3 months** from the date of incident/ last incident. The Committee can extend the timeline by **another 3 months** for reasons recorded in writing, if satisfied that these reasons prevented the lodging of the complaint.

Provided that where such a complaint cannot be made in writing, the Presiding Officer or any Member of the Internal Complaint Committee shall render all reasonable assistance to the women for making the complaint in writing.

If the aggrieved woman is unable to lodge the complaint in account of her incapacity, the following may do so on her behalf, **with her written consent**.

- Legal heir, relative or friend
- Co-worker
- Any person having the knowledge of the incident

Receiving a Complaint (guidelines)

Dealing with incidents of harassment is not like any other type of dispute. Complainants may be embarrassed and distressed and it requires tact and discretion while receiving the complaint.

The following points are kept in mind by the receiver of the complaint:

- Complaint are listened to and the complainant informed that the Company takes the concerns seriously. Complainant is informed that these concerns will be reported to the appropriate committee and follow up will be done speedily
- Situation are not be pre-judged. Written notes are taken while listening to the person. Complainant is allowed to bring another person to the meeting if they wish. When taking accurate notes, complainants own words, where possible, is used. Clear description of the incident in simple and direct terms is prepared and details are confirmed with the complainant.

- All notes are kept strictly confidential. Complainant's agreement is taken to allow proceeding with the matter, which involves a formal investigation.
- The complainant is advised that although the process is confidential, the respondent needs to be informed and any witnesses and persons directly involved in the complaint process will also learn of the complainant's identity

Inquiry procedure

All proceedings of the inquiry is documented. The Committee interviews the respondent separately and impartially. Committee states exactly what the allegation is and who has made the allegation. The respondent is given full opportunity to respond and provide any evidence etc. Detailed notes of the meetings are prepared which may be shared with the respondent and complainant upon request. Any witnesses produced by the respondent are also interviewed & statements are taken.

If the complainant or respondent desires to cross examine any witnesses, the Committee facilitates the same and records the statements.

In case complainant or respondent seeks to ask questions to the other party, they may give them to the Committee which asks them and records the statement of the other party.

Any such inquiry is completed, including the submission of the Inquiry Report, within **90 days** from the date on which the inquiry is commenced. The inquiry procedure ensures absolute fairness to all parties.

Confidentiality

The identity of the complainant, respondent, witnesses, statements and other evidence obtained in the course of inquiry process, recommendations of the committees, action taken by the employer is considered as confidential materials, and not published or made known to public or media.

Any person contravening the confidentiality clauses is subject to disciplinary action as prescribed in the act.

Appeal

Any party not satisfied or further aggrieved by the implementation or non-implementation of recommendations made, may appeal to the appellate authority in accordance with the Act and rules, within **90 days** of the recommendations being communicated.

ANNEXURE-A

Internal Complaints Committee at Wardwizard Foods and Beverages Limited

Presiding Officer	Mrs. Sheetal Bhalerao
Member	Ms. Bhoomi Talati
Member	Ms. Sejal Varia
Member	Mr. Shivang Mehta
Member	Mr. Samarjeet Surve
External Member	Ms. Shital Upadhyay

**For and on behalf of the Board
For Wardwizard Foods and Beverages Limited
(Formerly known as Vegetable Products Limited)**

**SD/-
Sheetal Mandar Bhalerao
Managing Director
DIN: 06453413**