

What to do

Remember that each situation is different so do what makes sense and what feels safe for you.

- 1. *Speak to the Harasser:***

If you feel safe, tell the person that his or her behavior offends you. Be specific regarding the behavior. Demand that the harasser stop. Whether the communication was written or verbal, keep a record of the conversation (e.g., date, time, place, specifics of what was discussed and response).
- 2. *Start a Paper Trail:***

Keep copies of everything you send and receive from the harasser and your employer regarding the sexual harassment. Create written notes of all incidents as soon as possible while the details are still fresh in your mind (e.g., dates, places, times, what was said and possible witnesses). Save all relevant exchange by either keeping the original correspondence or snapping an image of the exchange, including emails, texts and social media messages. Keep the record in a safe place and outside of the work environment. Do not keep the record at work or on a work computer.
- 3. *Review Your Personnel File:***

Request to see your personnel files before reporting the harassment. Both current and former employees have such rights.
- 4. *Report the Harassment to Your Employer:***

Consult your employee handbook or policies. If your employer has a sexual harassment policy, follow the complaint procedures to demonstrate that you did what you could do to make the employer aware of the harassment. If your company does not have a policy, speak to your supervisor and/or human resources. You may be able to use this process to stop the harassment and resolve the problem. If you think you may want to file a lawsuit against your employer in the future, you have to report the harassment to your employer first.
- 5. *Involve your Union:***

If you belong to a union, you may want to report the harassment to your union. File a Discrimination Complaint with a Government Agency: If you want to file a lawsuit in federal or state court, you must first file a formal sexual harassment complaint with the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and/or your state's fair employment agency (if one exist).
- 6. *Be Aware of Deadlines:***

Even if your employer has an internal process for dealing with harassment complaints, you should be aware of legal deadlines for filing a formal complaint with government agencies. You cannot bring a lawsuit against your employer unless you have first filed a complaint with the EEOC or state's fair employment agency. In some states, you may have as few as 180 days from the date of the sexual harassment activity to file a complaint.
- 7. *File a Lawsuit:***

After you file a formal complaint with the EEOC and/or your state's fair employment agency, you may also consider filing a lawsuit.