

POLICY DOCUMENT

Zero Tolerance to Sexual Harassment and Gender Discrimination



**Centre of Excellence
Government College Sanjauli, Shimla
Himachal Pradesh**

Introduction

Our college recognizes that sexual harassment and gender discrimination are pervasive problems that negatively impact our community. Sexual harassment and gender discrimination undermine the safety, dignity, and equality of our students, staff, and faculty. We are committed to creating a safe and inclusive environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. Therefore, we have developed a policy of zero tolerance towards sexual harassment and gender discrimination in all its forms.

Policy Statement

Our college is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment free from sexual harassment and gender discrimination. We recognize that sexual harassment and gender discrimination are serious violations of human rights that undermine the dignity, safety, and equality of individuals in our community. Therefore, we have developed a policy of zero tolerance towards sexual harassment and gender discrimination in all its forms.

Sexual Harassment: Any unwelcome sexual behaviour that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. It includes physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature, such as unwanted touching, comments or jokes of a sexual nature, displaying sexually suggestive images, or making sexual advances. Sexual harassment can occur between individuals of the same or different genders, and can occur in any context, including in person or online.

Gender Discrimination: Our college also recognizes that gender discrimination is a serious problem that undermines the equality and dignity of individuals in our community. Gender discrimination refers to any unequal treatment based on gender, including discrimination based on gender identity or expression. This includes denying opportunities or benefits to individuals based on their gender, as well as creating a hostile or offensive environment based on gender.

Legal Provisions

The college's policy on sexual harassment and gender discrimination is consistent with the following legal provisions:

- The Vishaka Guidelines, issued by the Supreme Court of India in 1997;
- The UGCs Saksham Measures for Ensuring the Safety of Women and Programmes for Gender Sensitization on Campuses;
- The University Grants Commission (Prevention, prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment of women employees and students in higher educational institutions) Regulations, 2015.

Women Cell and Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Committee

The college will have a Women Cell and Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Committee responsible for implementing the college's policy on sexual harassment and gender discrimination. The Women Cell will be headed by a senior woman faculty member of the college. The POSH Committee will be made up of representatives from the college administration, faculty, and students.

The mandate of the Women Cell and POSH Committee will be to provide a variety of services relating to sexual harassment and gender discrimination. These activities will be divided in two broad categories:

- Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Gender Discrimination, including providing information and resources, and sensitization about sexual harassment and gender discrimination
- Remedies for Sexual Harassment and Gender Discrimination, including counseling and support, and support in the complaint process

The Women Cell and POSH Committee are committed to creating a safe and inclusive environment for all students, faculty, and staff. All stakeholder will be encouraged to contact and consult contact the Women Cell or POSH Committee in case of questions or concerns about sexual harassment or gender discrimination in the College.

The names and contact information of Women Cell or POSH Committee members will be prominently displayed on the College website as well as at prominent places in the College campus.

Prevention of Sexual Harassment

- The prevention of sexual harassment is an important part of our commitment to creating a safe and inclusive environment. The preventive framework will include:
- Sensitization and training to all employees and students on the prevention of sexual harassment and gender discrimination along with the procedures for reporting and addressing complaints. Focus area of sensitization and training will include topics such as:
 - identifying sexual harassment;
 - identifying gender discrimination;
 - the impact of gender discrimination on individuals and the community;
 - the impact of sexual harassment on individuals and the community;
 - strategies for preventing sexual harassment; and
 - strategies for preventing gender discrimination.
- In addition to training, the college will also take steps to create a culture of respect and inclusion. This includes promoting respectful communication, addressing stereotypes and biases, and encouraging open and honest dialogue about issues related to gender and sexuality.
- The college will also provide resources and support services to individuals who have experienced sexual harassment or gender discrimination.

Reporting Sexual Harassment and Gender Discrimination

We encourage all members of our community to report incidents of sexual harassment/gender discrimination. Reports can be made to any staff member or faculty member, and will be treated with sensitivity and respect. Complaints can also be made anonymously if desired.

Complaint Procedure

- **Who can file a complaint:** Any student, faculty member or personnel from the college administrative staff, who believes that they have been the victim of sexual harassment or gender discrimination is encouraged to report the incident.
- **To Whom:** A complaint can be addressed to either the POSH Committee or any individual member of the Post Committee.

- **How:** A complaint can be made in person, through email or in writing.
- **Confidentiality:** All complaints of sexual harassment and gender discrimination will be handled in a confidential manner to the extent possible. All members of the Committee, including the Coordinator, will take all necessary steps to protect the confidentiality of the complainant and the respondent.
- **Protection of Complainant:** The college will also take steps to ensure that the complainant is protected from retaliation or further harassment.

Remedies

The college takes allegations of gender discrimination seriously and will take appropriate action against individuals who engage in such behaviour.

- Upon receipt of a complaint, the college will initiate an investigation into the incident. The investigation will be conducted by a complaints committee, which will be composed of three members. The committee will be trained in the procedures for handling complaints of gender discrimination and will be independent of the parties involved in the complaint.
- The investigation will be conducted in a prompt and confidential manner. The complainant and the accused will have an opportunity to present evidence and witnesses to the committee. The committee will make a determination as to whether an offence has been committed based on a preponderance of the evidence. If the committee determines that an offence has occurred, it will recommend appropriate action to the College.

Sanctions for Sexual Harassment/Gender Discrimination

Sanctions for gender discrimination may include:

- Counselling
- Disciplinary action
- Termination of employment
- Expulsion from the college

Conclusion

Our College is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all students, faculty, and staff. This policy is intended to prevent sexual harassment and gender discrimination and to ensure that all members of the college community are treated with respect.

In addition to the above, the college will take the following steps to prevent sexual harassment and gender discrimination:

Create a culture of respect and inclusion. The college will promote a culture of respect and inclusion by providing training on sexual harassment and gender discrimination to all members of the college community. The college will also create opportunities for dialogue and discussion on these issues.

Provide resources for victims of sexual harassment and gender discrimination. The college will provide resources for victims of sexual harassment and gender discrimination, including counseling, support groups, and legal assistance.

Hold perpetrators accountable. The college will hold perpetrators of sexual harassment and gender discrimination accountable, up to and including expulsion from the college.

The college is committed to creating a safe and inclusive environment for all.