

# SEXUAL HARASSMENT

## 1. How do I know if I have been or am being sexually harassed by someone?

The term “sexual harassment” refers to any unwanted sexual attention and/or advances that lead to the creation of a hostile and offensive environment. Sexual harassment can occur between individuals of the same or differing sexes, regardless of either individual’s sexual preference. Although sexual harassment most often exploits a relationship between individuals in positions of unequal power, (such as a faculty member and student, supervisor and employee, or tenured and untenured faculty member), it may also occur between fellow students or co-workers. It’s even possible for sexual harassment to occur in a circumstance where it appears the harasser has less power than the person being harassed (for example, a student harassing a faculty member).

Legally, sexual harassment is divided into two categories, *quid pro quo*, and hostile environment.

### *Quid Pro Quo*

In Latin, *Quid Pro Quo* means “this for that.” This type of sexual harassment occurs when a person uses his/her position of power to pressure another person to meet his/her sexual demands. For example, a professor insists on sex in return for a higher grade or a supervisor implies that your job security will be based on your submission to sexual demands. The threat need not be explicitly stated, but can be implied by the existence of a power structure.

### *Hostile Environment*

This kind of sexual harassment occurs when repeated offensive behavior or comments create an unpleasant or intimidating environment that as a result, interferes with someone receiving an education or earning a living.

### **A sexually hostile environment may be created by:**

- Discussing sexual activities or telling off-color jokes
- Unnecessary touching
- Commenting on physical attributes
- Displaying sexually suggestive pictures
- Using demeaning or inappropriate terms such as “Babe,” “Sexy,” “Mami,” etc.
- Using indecent gestures or/and crude or offensive language
- Using homophobic language

## 2. What can I do if I’m being sexually harassed?

### **Sexual harassment is illegal, and students and employees are protected by law.**

If you think you are being harassed by a student, faculty or staff member, you should contact the John Jay Sexual Harassment Coordinator: Sylvia Montalban, Esq. Room 625T-buliding (646) 557-4409. [smontalban@jjay.cuny.edu](mailto:smontalban@jjay.cuny.edu)

You can also get counseling and advocacy support at the Women’s enter.

It is the policy of The City University of New York to promote a cooperative work and academic environment in which there exists mutual respect for all University students, faculty, and staff. Harassment of employees or students based upon sex is inconsistent with this objective and contrary to the University's non-discrimination policy. Sexual harassment is illegal under Federal, State, and City laws, and will not be tolerated within the University.

For more information on CUNY’s Sexual Harassment Policy, [click here](#). If you are unsure about your situation or want information about the process of reporting incidents, you can speak to someone in the Women’s Center or Counseling Department confidentially about your options. Counselors in both offices can help educate you about the

process of reporting incidents to the Sexual Harassment Officer. You can also speak to the Undergraduate Dean to discuss the situation. The important thing is that you seek out support from someone who can help you.

### **3. How can I help a friend who's being sexually harassed?**

- **Listen.** Avoid making judgments and giving advice.
- **Take the situation seriously.** If you are concerned about a friend's safety, tell her/him so. Offer to help to contact the local police precinct or call 911.

### **4. Go to our resource page for more services.**

Know these are no guarantee of your safety and should not be used as a substitute for reaching out to a trained service provider or the police. Come to the Women's Center or contact one of the resources listed on our resource page for more comprehensive services.