

Date: 9093-202

YGC ... INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE (ICC) -

The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act,2013 implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India. The Ministry of Human Resource Development via notification dated 2nd May, 2016 made University Grants Commission (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of Sexual Harassment of Women employees and students in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulation, 2015. It is a comprehensive legislation to provide a safe, secure and enabling environment. free from sexual harassment to every woman. This statute was enacted to fill the legislative void which had been partially addressed by the judiciary in *Vishaka and Others v. State of Rajasthan and Others* (1997 (7) SCC 323). In this seminal public interest litigation verdict, the Supreme Court of India had framed a set of guidelines ("**Vishaka Guidelines**") for dealing with instances of sexual harassment at the workplace, which has now been codified in the POSH Act.

Under the POSH Act, an employer is legally required to comply with certain statutory requirements. One of these is the constitution of an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC), a body envisaged to receive complaints on sexual harassment at the workplace from an aggrieved woman, as well as to inquire into and make recommendations to the employer on the action required pursuant to its inquiry of such complaint made. UGC Regulation states the responsibility of HEIs to act decisively against all gender based violence against employees and students of all sexes and to reinforce its commitment to creating its campus free from discrimination, harassment, retaliation and any form of sexual assault. According to Supreme Court Guidelines Sexual Harassment can be defined as unwelcome sexually determined behaviour whether directly or by implication as –

- 1. Physical contact and advances
- 2. Demand or request for sexual favours
- 3. Making sexually coloured remarks
- 4. Showing pornography
- 5. Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or nonverbal conduct of sexual nature.



- 2. Prevent gender discrimination and sexual harassment by promoting gender sensitization among the students and employees.
- 3. Make recommendations to the administration to lay down the procedures for the prohibition, resolution and prosecution of acts of discrimination and sexual harassment by the student and the employee.
- 4. Deal with the cases of discrimination and sexual harassment of a women employee in a time bound manner aiming at ensuring support services to the victim and termination of harassment.
- 5. Recommend appropriate punitive action against guilty party.
- 6. Constantly keep a vigil on the internal processes to check on the safety parameters for women workers especially.
- 7. Recommend to the employer on changes that needs to be incorporated in various policies, processes and procedural matters related to safety of employees/prevent any kind of sexual harassment from taking place.

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