

# UNIPLY

## **PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

**FOR**

**UNIPLY DECOR LIMITED**

*The aim of this policy is to ensure that sexual harassment does not occur and, where it does occur, to ensure that adequate procedures are readily available to deal with the problem and prevent its recurrence*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Uniply Decor Ltd. ("**UDL**") is very scrupulous about the working environment at any of its offices. UDL strives to provide a professional work environment free of sexual harassment, exploitation and intimidation. UDL also believes that all Employees (as defined hereinafter) have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- 1.2 In accordance with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 and the Rules framed thereunder, UDL has framed this Policy on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (this "**Policy**").
- 1.3 The objective of this Policy is to provide the Employees of UDL a workplace, free from harassment/discrimination and ensure that every Employee is treated with dignity and respect. The Policy also endeavors to set expectations regarding workplace behaviour, and provide Employees with a framework for reporting concerns.

## **2 THE LAW**

- 2.1 The Parliament of India enacted the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (hereinafter referred to as the "**Act**") codifying the protection available to women employees against sexual harassment.
- 2.2 The Act is to be strictly observed in all workplaces. The Act derives its powers from Article 14, 15 and 21 of the Constitution of India and is meant to be applied by all courts within the territory of India when dealing with matters involving sexual harassment in the workplace.

## **3 SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

- 3.1 This Policy shall apply to all Employees of UDL whether at the office(s) of UDL or elsewhere irrespective of their gender.
- 3.2 This Policy shall apply to acts of Sexual Harassment which may have been committed in any place visited by any Employee, travel to such place having been occasioned by or arising out

of, during or in the course of employment with UDL. The Policy shall also apply to all allegations of Sexual Harassment made by a third party against an Employee or vice versa, if such Sexual Harassment has occurred within UDL's premises or during the course of such Employee's employment with UDL.

3.3 This Policy is not intended to impair or limit the right of any Employee seeking a remedy available under law. Proceedings under this Policy shall continue notwithstanding any proceedings initiated by a Complainant (as defined hereinafter) against an alleged perpetrator under any law in force.

#### **4 DEFINITIONS**

4.1 **Aggrieved Person** - means a person who has experienced or has been subjected to any act of Sexual Harassment within the Workplace, by an Employee or a third party

4.2 **Complaint** - means a complaint of Sexual Harassment lodged with the Internal Committee

4.3 **Complainant** - means an Aggrieved Person who lodges a Complaint with the Internal Committee

4.4 **Employee(s)** - means a person employed with UDL 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 co-worker, a contract worker, probationer, trainee, apprentice or called by any other such name;

4.5 **Internal Committee** - means the Internal Complaints Committee constituted by UDL in accordance with the provisions of Section 4 of the Act for redressal of a Complaint;

4.6 **Respondent** - means an Employee against whom a Complaint is made by an Aggrieved Person; and as maybe amended by law from time to time.

4.7 **Sexual Harassment** - includes any one or more of the following unwelcome behavior.

(whether directly or by implication) namely:

- Physical Contact & advances; or
- A demand or request for sexual favours; or
- Making sexually coloured remarks; or
- Showing pornography; or
- Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature;

The following circumstances, among other circumstances, if it occurs or is present in relation to or connected with any act or behaviour of sexual harassment may amount to sexual harassment:

- Implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment in her/his employment; or
- Implied or explicit threat of detrimental treatment in her/his employment; or
- Implied or explicit threat about her/his present or future employment status; or
- Interference with her/his work or creating an intimidating or offensive or hostile work environment for her/him; or
- Humiliating treatment likely to affect her/his health or safety.

Sexual harassment in the workplace is generally of two distinct types.

(i) Quid Pro Quo (Conditional) Sexual Harassment

"Quid pro quo" sexual harassment means seeking sexual favors or advances in exchange for preferential treatment. This kind of sexual harassment occurs when consent to sexually explicit behavior or speech is made a condition for employment or preferential treatment in employment. This kind of sexual harassment also occurs when refusal to comply with a "request of sexual favour" is met with retaliatory action such as dismissal, demotion, difficult working conditions etc.

(ii) Hostile working environment sexual harassment

Hostile working environment sexual harassment occurs where employees in a workplace are subject to a pattern of exposure to unwanted and unwelcome sexual behavior from the management or co-workers. This kind of behavior makes the work environment of an employee hostile. This is for the reason that such conduct creates an intimidating, offensive, oppressive, abusive or humiliating work

environment and which is severe and pervasive enough to interfere with the employee's ability to work and perform.

Explanation of the word 'Unwelcome'

Unwelcome is the key in defining what conduct constitutes sexual harassment. The conduct in question must have been *unwelcome*. In other words, the complaining employee must have found the behavior in question offensive, repulsive or repugnant. It is the impact and effect the behavior or conduct has on the recipient that will define the behavior as sexual harassment.

Annexure 'A' of this Policy provides a partial list of examples of behavior which may be found to constitute sexual harassment in the workplace.

4.8 **Workplace -** means offices of UDL and any place visited by the Employee arising out of or during the course of employment including transportation provided by UDL for undertaking such journey

## **5 CONSTITUTION OF THE INTERNAL COMMITTEE ("IC")**

5.1 The members of the IC for all offices of UDL are enlisted at Annexure B of this policy.

5.2 The IC shall be empowered to deal with Complaints for which purpose they shall have the same powers as are vested in a civil court under the Civil Procedure Code, 1908 viz:

- a Summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person and examining him/her on oath
- b Requiring the discovery and production of documents
- c any other matter relating to the incident as decided by the IC from time to time.

5.3 The members of the IC including the Presiding Officer shall hold office for not

more than three (3) years, after which a new person shall be nominated.

5.4 The IC shall in each calendar year prepare an annual report as per Annexure C of this Policy and submit the same with UDL and District Officer as notified under Section 5 of the Act.;

## **6 REDRESSAL MECHANISM**

### **6.1 Complaint of Sexual Harassment**

- i. An Aggrieved Person may make in writing, a Complaint of Sexual Harassment to the Internal Committee, within a period of three (3) months from the date of the incident and in case of series of incident, within a period of three (3) months from the date of last incident.
- ii. Where the Internal Committee is satisfied that the circumstances were such which prevented the Aggrieved Person from filing a complaint within the said period of three months, the Internal Committee may extend the time limit beyond 3 months, by recording the reasons in writing.
- iii. Where the Aggrieved Person is unable to make a Complaint on account of physical incapacity, a Complaint may be filed by the Aggrieved Person's-
  - a. relative or friend; or
  - b. co-worker; or
  - c. An officer of the National Commission for Women or State Commission for Women (if the Aggrieved Person is a woman); or
  - d. Any person who has knowledge of the incident, with the written consent of the Aggrieved Person.
- iv. Where the Aggrieved Person is unable to make a Complaint on account of mental incapacity, a Complaint may be filed by the Aggrieved Person's -
  - a. relative or friend; or
  - b. special educator; or
  - c. qualified psychiatrist or psychologist; or
  - d. The guardian or authority under whose care the Aggrieved Person is receiving

- treatment or care; or
- e. Any person who has knowledge jointly with the Aggrieved Person's relative or friend or a special educator or qualified psychiatrist or psychologist, or guardian or authority under whose care the Aggrieved Person is receiving treatment or care;
  - v. Where the Aggrieved Person for any other reason is unable to make a Complaint, a Complaint may be filed by a person who has knowledge of the incident, with the Aggrieved Person's written consent;
  - vi. Where the Aggrieved Person is dead, a Complaint may be filed by any person who has knowledge of the incident, with the written consent of the Aggrieved Person's legal heir(s).
  - vii. A Complaint may also be made orally. If the Complaint is oral, member of the Internal Committee to whom the Complaint is made shall record the same in writing, in detail, and have the contents confirmed by the Complainant.
  - viii. The Aggrieved Person may file the complaint with the IC and the police or Ministry of Women and Child Development (if the Aggrieved Person is a woman) simultaneously, if the Aggrieved Person so chooses.
  - ix. IC shall have the necessary powers to take suo-motu notice of incidents of Sexual Harassment and/or gender injustice within the Workplace and act against the same in such manner as it deems appropriate.

#### 6.2 Procedure for Resolution, Settlement or Prosecution:

- A. Conciliation - The Internal Committee may, before initiating an inquiry, at the request of the Complainant take steps to settle the matter between the Complainant and the Respondent. The conciliation shall not be on monetary settlement basis. The settlement terms shall be recorded in writing and forwarded to UDL. Copies of the same shall be provided to the Complainant and the Respondent. Where a settlement has been arrived at, no further inquiry shall be conducted by the Internal Committee.

OR

- B. If the above is not possible, the Internal Committee shall proceed to make inquiry into the

Complaint in such manner as prescribed hereunder:

- (i) The Complainant or the person lodging a Complaint on behalf of the Complainant shall file, with the Internal Committee, 6 written copies of the Complaint along with the supporting documents and names and addresses of witnesses.
- (ii) On receipt of Complaint the Internal Committee shall within a period of 7(Seven) days send one of the copies of the Complaint to the Respondent.
- (iii) The Respondent shall, within a period of 10 (Ten) days from the date of receipt of Complaint from the Internal Committee, file his reply to the Complaint along with his list of documents, names and addresses of witnesses.
- (iv) The Internal Committee shall investigate the complaint and provide its report to UDL as promptly as possible, no later than 90 (Ninety) working days from the date of the Complaint. Further, if the Complainant informs the Internal Committee that any term or condition of a settlement arrived at under Clause 6.2 (A) has not been complied with by the Respondent, the Internal Committee shall proceed to make an enquiry into the Complaint.
- (v) The Internal Committee shall follow principles of natural justice in all its proceedings and subject thereto, shall maintain confidentiality of the identity of the Complainant, and the witnesses, as also the contents of the Complaint. Where the Respondent is subject to any applicable service rules of UDL, the proceedings of the Internal Committee shall be conducted, as far as practically possible, in accordance with such service rules, and to the extent provided therein and in accordance with applicable law.
- (vi) A copy of the Complaint as recorded by the Internal Committee shall be given to the Respondent as well as the Complainant. The Respondent shall be required to submit her/his response to the Complaint as well as to indicate whether the Respondent wishes the Internal Committee to examine any witnesses or furnish any evidence. The Complainant shall also be required to indicate in writing whether the Complainant wishes the Internal Committee to examine any witnesses or furnish any additional evidence.
- (vii) The Respondent shall not be permitted to compel the Complainant to be a witness, although the Complainant may choose to give evidence in relation to the alleged



act of Sexual Harassment. In the event the Respondent wishes to question the Complainant, any such questions which the Respondent wishes to ask of the Complainant shall be submitted to the Internal Committee in writing, and it shall provide them to the Complainant, with such edits as it deems necessary.

- (viii) Upon receipt of the responses from the Respondent and the Complainant, the Internal Committee shall conduct a hearing at such venue or venues as are convenient to the Complainant, where both the Complainant and the Respondent shall be heard in person. The Internal Committee shall notify both the Respondent and Complainant (as well as the witnesses, if any) of the time and venue of each hearing. Any records of the proceedings of such or any other hearings or meetings of the Internal Committee shall be maintained strictly confidential.
- (ix) In the event the Respondent is not present in person at a hearing of the Internal Committee, the hearing shall be adjourned to a date not later than 3 (Three) days from the date of the original hearing, to be held at a time and venue convenient to the Complainant. The hearing shall be conducted on such adjourned date irrespective of whether the Respondent is present or not. Provided that nothing contained herein shall preclude the Internal Committee from adjourning such hearing for a longer period subject to recording its reasons for such adjournment.
- (x) The IC shall have the right to terminate the inquiry proceedings and to give an ex-parte decision should the Complainant and/or the Respondent fail, without valid ground, to present herself/himself for 3 (Three) consecutive hearings convened by the IC. Provided that such termination or ex-parte order may not be passed without giving a notice in writing, 15 (Fifteen) days in advance, to the party concerned
- (xi) The Internal Committee shall be empowered to call upon such of the Employees who may have been witness to the incident(s) of Sexual Harassment and/or connected in any manner thereto.
- (xii) The parties shall not be allowed to bring in any legal practitioner to represent them at any stage of the inquiry proceedings.
- (xiii) All Employees shall extend their fullest co-operation to the Internal Committee and any failure to co-operate, or the giving of wrong or misleading information, or withholding information shall be a violation of this Policy and shall be dealt with appropriately by UDL. Such failure to co-operate or willful or deliberate giving of wrong or misleading information or withholding of information may also constitute misconduct under applicable policies and codes of conduct, etc. of UDL.

- (xiv) UDL shall provide necessary facilities to the Internal Committee for dealing with the Complaint and conducting the inquiry. It shall assist in securing the attendance of the Respondent and witnesses before the Internal Committee and shall make available such information to the Internal Committee as it may require having regard to the Complaint.
  - (xv) The IC may forward the Complaint to the police for registering the Complaint under Section 509 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 and any other relevant provisions within 7 (Seven) days of receipt of Complaint.
- C. Upon completion of the hearing, the Internal Committee shall prepare its written report which shall include a summary of the proceedings, the evidence adduced by the parties and the witnesses, and shall submit the same to UDL and the parties, within 10 (Ten) days from date of completion of inquiry. The said report shall further set out the Internal Committee's conclusions on whether an offence of Sexual Harassment, or any other violation of this Policy, has been committed or occurred, or whether the Complaint made by the Complainant is either false or unproven, as also the reasons/ rationale for the Internal Committee's arriving at such conclusion. The said report shall further set out the Internal Committee's recommendations on the disciplinary action(s) to be taken. All members of the Internal Committee shall sign the said report.
- D. During the pendency of the inquiry, on a written request made by Complainant, the Internal Committee may recommend UDL to:
  - (i) Transfer the Complainant or the Respondent to any other office of UDL; or
  - (ii) Grant leave to the Complainant up to a period of three months; or
  - (iii) Restrain the Respondent from reporting on the work performance of the Complainant or writing the Complainant's confidential report, and assign the same to another officer.
- E. Where the IC arrives at a conclusion that the allegations against the Respondent have been proved, it shall recommend the following to UDL:
  - i. To take action for sexual harassment as an act of misconduct in accordance with the rules/regulations of UDL governing 'conduct and discipline' as applicable to the Respondent; and/or

- ii. To deduct such amounts from the salary or wages of the Respondent as may be considered appropriate to be paid to the Complainant as per this Policy.

In addition to the above, the recommendations to UDL may also include one or more the following:

- Written apology;
- Warning;
- Reprimand or Censure;
- Withholding of promotion;
- Withholding of pay rise or increments;
- Termination of service of the Respondent.

UDL shall take action on the recommendations of the IC within a period of 60 (Sixty) days. The report of such implementation shall be sent by UDL to the IC.

- F. If UDL is unable to deduct salary or wage of the Respondent for reasons such as his absence from duty or cessation of employment, he may direct the Respondent to pay the said amount of money to the Complainant directly.

If the Respondent fails to pay the amount referred to above, the IC may forward the order for recovery of the said amount as an arrear of land revenue to the District Officer.

- G. IC shall keep in mind the following while deciding the amount to be paid to the Complainant:

- The mental trauma, pain, suffering and emotional distress caused to the Complainant;
- The loss in the Complainant's career opportunity due to the incident of sexual harassment;
- Medical expenses incurred by the Complainant;
- The income and financial status of the Respondent; and
- Feasibility of such payments in lump sum or installments.

**Note:** the leave granted to the Complainant under this section shall be in addition to the leave the Complainant would be otherwise entitled to.

### 6.3 Confidentiality

All parties involved in any Sexual Harassment matter must keep all aspects of the matter confidential. Non-compliance by any person shall attract a penalty of Rs. 5000/-..

### 6.4 Time period

The Internal Committee shall complete the inquiry within a period of 90 (Ninety) days from the date on which the Complaint is lodged.

### 6.5 Appeal:

It is important to understand that an act of Sexual Harassment may also be a criminal offence. Any person aggrieved from the recommendations made by the IC or non- implementation of such recommendations may prefer an appeal within a period of 90 (Ninety) days to the appellate authority as prescribed under clause (a) of Section 2 of the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946 .

### 6.6 Records

A copy of the final inquiry report, notes of meetings and interviews, details of all proceedings in writing, evidence and documentation relating to any action taken as a result of an investigation will be retained by the Internal Committee. These records should not be placed on personnel files unless the Complaint results in disciplinary action against one or more of the parties involved in the Complaint, in which case any appropriate records may be placed on the disciplined Employee's file.

### 6.7 Malicious or false complaints

If Complainant is found to have raised a malicious or false Complaint against the Respondent in order to prejudice that person, the Complainant may also be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment, engagement or relationship with UDL, as the case may be.

However, a mere inability to substantiate a Complaint or provide adequate proof/evidence need not attract action against the Complainant.

## **7 PREVENTIVE STEPS**

UDL shall undertake the following preventive measures to ensure that Sexual Harassment does not occur:

- a) Provide a safe working environment at the workplace which shall include safety from the persons coming into contact at the workplace;
- b) Providing a copy of the Policy to all the Employees and to communicate the process of reporting Sexual Harassment to all the Employees; and
- c) Sensitizing the Employees and provide training related to Sexual Harassment issues to its Employees.
- d) Display at any conspicuous place (like notice boards) in the workplace, posters against Sexual Harassment with the contact details of the Internal Committee members and the penal consequences of Sexual Harassments.
- e) Allowing Employees to raise their concerns and issues on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace at appropriate forum for affirmative discussion from time to time.

## **8 MISCELLANEOUS**

- 8.1 UDL shall in consultation with the IC periodically review the provisions of this Policy and its implementation (taking into account practical problems, if any, faced by the IC and/or UDL in the implementation of this Policy). UDL reserves the right to amend the provisions of this Policy, from time to time, as it deems fit, subject to applicable law.
- 8.2 This Policy will not prejudice any rights available under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 or any other legislation.

## ANNEXURE 'A'

### SOME EXAMPLES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

#### A. Visual Conduct:

- Leering
- Making sexual gestures
- Displaying sexually suggestive or explicit objects, pictures (still or moving), cartoons, graffiti or posters in any manner, including as part of e-mail transmissions

#### B. Verbal Conduct:

- Whistling and catcalls
- Foul or obscene language
- Making or using derogatory comments which are sexual in nature
- Explicit discussions about sexual activities/behaviors
- Comments about physical attributes
- Spreading rumors about another person's sexual activities/conduct and/or partners
- Jokes which contain offensive, obscene or lascivious content
- Sexual advances / Sexual propositions
- Sexual innuendo or double entendres

#### C. Written Conduct:

- Suggestive, obscene or propositioning letters, notes, greeting cards or invitations, including but not limited to those transmitted via e-mail
- Displaying pictures (still or moving), cartoons, graffiti or posters in writing, including but not limited to e-mail

#### D. Physical Conduct:

- Unwelcome touching
- Sexual Assault
- Kissing / Hugging / Grabbing
- Coercing another person to participate in sexual intercourse or other sexual behaviors
- Impeding or blocking movements
- Any physical interference with normal work or movement.
- Sexual gestures

**ANNEXURE B**

**INDEX OF MEMBERS OF THE INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE**

(W.E.F. 14<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2019)

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>NAME OF MEMBERS</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>CONTACT DETAILS</b>
1.	Ms. Parul Satyan Bhatt	Presiding Officer	Tel. No. 9841014925 Email ID: psbhatt62@gmail.com
2.	Ms. Subhashree A	Member	Tel. No. 9884704712 Email ID:subhashree@uniply.in
3.	Mr. Srinivasan Sethuraman	Member	Tel. No. 8939211188 Email ID: ss@uniply.in
4.	Ms. Anju Gandhi	External Member	Tel. No.9967055763 Email ID: anju_gandhi@sngpartners.in