

Penal Consequences of Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace

The institution is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all women employees, students, and visitors. Sexual harassment is a serious violation of law, and attracts strict consequences under both the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act) and the Bhartiya Nyay Samhita, 2023 (BNS).

Any unwelcome act—physical, verbal, non-verbal, written, digital, or behavioural—constitutes sexual harassment and will lead to disciplinary and legal action.

1.1 Consequences Under the POSH Act, 2013

1.1.1 Institutional Disciplinary Action

Upon confirmation of misconduct by the Internal Committee (IC), one or more of the following actions may be imposed:

- Written apology, undertaking of good conduct
- Warning, reprimand, or censure
- Withholding of promotion, pay increments, or benefits
- Suspension from duties or academic activities
- Termination of employment or expulsion (in case of students)
- Mandatory counselling or community service

These actions are enforceable under Section 13 of the POSH Act.

1.1.2 Employer Liability

Failure to constitute an Internal Committee or non-compliance with POSH provisions may result in:

- Monetary penalties
- Cancellation or withdrawal of business licence for repeated violations

1.2 Penal Provisions Under the Bhartiya Nyay Samhita, 2023 (BNS)

The BNS replaces the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and strengthens legal consequences for offences relating to the dignity and safety of women.

- Section 74 – Sexual Harassment Punishable with imprisonment up to 3 years, fine, or both.
- Section 73 – Assault or Criminal Force to Outrage Modesty Punishable with imprisonment of 1 to 5 years and fine.
- Section 77 – Stalking (including digital stalking) Punishable with up to 3 years for first offence and up to 5 years for repeat offence.
- Section 79 – Insulting the Modesty of a Woman Punishable with imprisonment up to 3 years, fine, or both.

These provisions apply to all individuals on campus—employees, students, contractors, visitors, and third-party service providers.

1.3 Zero-Tolerance Policy

The institution follows a zero-tolerance approach toward sexual harassment. Every complaint is handled with:

- Confidentiality
- Sensitivity
- Impartiality
- Protection against retaliation
- A time-bound inquiry process

Women are encouraged to report any incident without fear. The Internal Committee is empowered to take immediate and appropriate action.