

## **INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE**

Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) in the workplace were set forth by the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013, commonly known as the POSH Act. These guidelines apply specifically to organizations with ten or more employees and are designed to address and prevent sexual harassment at the workplace.

### **Definition of Sexual Harassment:**

“Sexual harassment” includes any unwelcome sexually inclined behaviour, whether directly or indirectly, such as:

- a) Physical contact and advances
- b) A demand or request for sexual favours
- c) Making sexually coloured remarks (including jokes)
- d) Showing pornography (books, photographs, paintings, films, pamphlets, packages, etc. containing ‘indecent representation of women’)
- e) Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature.

Under the Act, the following also count as sexual harassment:

- a) Implied or explicit promise of preferential treatment in her employment.
- b) Implied or explicit threat of detrimental treatment in her employment
- c) Implied or explicit threat about her present or future employment status
- d) Interference with her work or creating an intimidating or offensive work environment for her
- e) Humiliating treatment likely to affect her health or safety.

### **Guidelines**

#### **Composition of the Internal Complaints Committee**

Employers are required to constitute an ICC at each office or administrative unit of the organization with ten or more employees. The committee should be composed of the following members:

- a. Presiding Officer: A senior female employee of the organization.
- b. At least two other members: Employees who are committed to the cause of women's rights or have experience in social work or have legal knowledge.
- c. One External Member from amongst non-governmental organizations or associations committed to the cause of women or a person familiar with the issues relating to sexual harassment

The ICC must be independent and function impartially to ensure a fair inquiry into any complaints of sexual harassment.

### **Complaint mechanism**

Employers should establish an easy-to-access mechanism for filing complaints of sexual harassment. The complainant may prefer to make the complaint in writing, electronically, or verbally.

The ICC should ensure the confidentiality of all proceedings and the identity of the complainant and the respondent.

The ICC is required to complete the inquiry within 90 days from the date of the complaint.

If the ICC finds the accused guilty of sexual harassment, it can recommend appropriate action to the employer, which may include warning, censure, reprimand, withholding promotions, or termination.

The POSH Act also states that any complaint made with malicious intent or knowing it to be false shall be treated as misconduct, and appropriate action may be taken against the complainant.

### **Who can approach ICC for help?**

Any female employee (faculty member, student or non-teaching staff member) of Harimohan Ghose College.

### **If you think you are being harassed, what should you do?**

- Send an email to [\*phmgcollege@gmail.com\*](mailto:phmgcollege@gmail.com) or [\*icchmgc@gmail.com\*](mailto:icchmgc@gmail.com)
- Approach to any members of the committee.

### **DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE (ICC)**

- Taking all possible steps and measures to prevent sexual harassment in the institution and on the campus
- Creating a safe environment on the campus for women employees and students
- Conducting workshops, activities and lectures to create awareness among staff and students about
- What constitutes sexual harassment at the workplace
- The provisions of the POSH Act

- the ICC, its duties and how to file a complaint
- Dealing swiftly and effectively with any reported incidents of sexual harassment on the campus, fairly and in an unbiased manner, in accordance with the provisions of the POSH Act
- Submission of Annual Reports to the relevant authority in the prescribed format and within the prescribed time.

### **Committee Members**

1. Prof. Shehnaz Salahuddin (Presiding Officer)
2. Dr. Runa Chattopadhyay (Joint Convenor)
3. Prof. Peden Bhutia
4. Dr. Sk. Almas Hossain
5. Paramita Bhattacharya (Advocate)
6. Poulomi Chakraborty (Local NGO worker)