

**Q: What if the harasser retaliates?**

Report it immediately! Retaliation is against the law. Even if the incident that you initially reported is not found to be sexual harassment, it is against the law for anyone to retaliate against you because you reported, in good faith, a situation that you thought was sexual harassment.

**Q: Can I trust the School Board to help me?**

In Wakulla County, we are committed to the strongest policy possible against sexual harassment. No employee or student should be subject to unwelcome comments, gestures or behavior. If you are concerned that your complaints are not being taken seriously, call the school district's Equity Coordinator, Karen J. Wells, Executive Director of Human Resources at 850.926.0065 or [wellsk@wakulla.k12.fl.us](mailto:wellsk@wakulla.k12.fl.us).

**Q: What happens if I complain?**

Complaints of sexual harassment will be investigated by the proper authorities. It will be necessary for you to be able to tell exactly WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE and HOW the incidents occurred. Every effort will be made to keep the matter confidential and settled between the parties involved.

If necessary, the harasser will be disciplined according to the nature of the offense.



**Sexual harassment** is a form of discrimination. It is prohibited by federal and state laws.

The Florida Educational Equity Act, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Civil Rights Act of 1991 all prohibit discrimination against students and employees in the state system of public education.

These laws are in place to protect you, but you must take advantage of them. Any behavior that makes you feel pressured, threatened or intimidated within a sexual connotation may be unlawful sexual harassment. Filing a complaint may make you feel uncomfortable, but it is your legal right.

Sexual harassment can cause serious psychological problems for some people. It is important that we be considerate of the feelings of others. If you are told that something you do makes someone uncomfortable, you should stop immediately.

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FOR EDUCATION AND  
EMPLOYMENT

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# A Guide to Combating Sexual Harassment

**Committed to Success  
Wakulla County School  
District**



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FOR EDUCATION AND  
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Telephone: 850.926.0065  
[www.wakullaschooldistrict.org](http://www.wakullaschooldistrict.org)

# Combating Sexual Harassment



## Q: What is sexual harassment?

State and federal laws say that sexual harassment is a form of discrimination. The EEOC has published the following guidelines to define sexual harassment:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's grade or employment;
- (2) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for educational or employment decisions affecting the individual; or
- (3) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of (a) interfering unreasonably with an individual's work/academic performance, or (b) creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or school environment.

## Q: What are some specific examples of sexual harassment?

Examples include any unwelcome comment or behavior, including but not limited to:

- Threatening action against someone to gain sexual favors
- Whistling, cat calls

- Sexual jokes, questions or stories
- Lies or rumors about a person's personal sex life
- Sexual cartoons, calendars or posters
- Looking a person up and down
- Staring or leering
- Following or hanging around a person
- Giving personal gifts
- Suggestive letters or telephone calls
- Making facial expressions such as winking, throwing kisses, licking lips
- Making sexual gestures with hands or through body movements
- Touching a person's clothing, hair, or body
- Continually asking for dates when the person has said no
- Hugging, kissing, patting, pinching or stroking
- Suggesting a desire for sexual relations or physical contact

## Q: What should I do if I think I am a victim of sexual harassment?

If you are a student:

- Clearly communicate to the harasser that the

"attention" is unwelcome, unwanted, and uninvited.

- If the harassment continues, talk to your principal, guidance counselor, a teacher you trust or your parents. These persons can assist you in the complaint process or contact the EEOC Officer, *Karen J. Wells*.

If you are an employee:

- Let the harasser know that the "attention" is unwelcome, unwanted and uninvited.
- If the harassment consists of offensive pictures displayed in the workplace, let the owner know the pictures are offensive.
- The next step, if the harassment continues, would be to inform your supervisor or the EEOC Officer, *Karen J. Wells*.

When an explicit request has not worked, keep a written record of what happens, including:

- Who said what, did what, when
- Were there witnesses?
- What was your response?
- How did you feel about the harassment (for example—angry, humiliated, sick)

Make a record ASAP after anything occurs, when the incident is fresh in your memory. Keep the record at home, not in your desk, or locker at work or school.