

Sexual Harassment Info Sheet for Referees



Volleyball
Canada

WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual communication or conduct that is offensive, intimidating, or humiliating. It may be expressed in many ways, from subtle to very obvious. Some types of comments or behaviour are unwelcome based on the response of the person subjected to the behaviour, even when the person does not explicitly object.

WHAT CONSTITUTES SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Sexual harassment can occur anywhere that a referee represents his/her association. This includes parties, meetings, court side, and may be perpetrated or experienced by fellow referees, athletes, coaches or spectators.

Any of the following *may* constitute sexual harassment:

Physical:

- Unwanted or unnecessary physical contact, including touching, hugging, shoulder massages, patting or 'accidentally' brushing against a person.
- Unnecessary leaning over or invading an individual's space
- Impeding or blocking an individual's movements
- Long stares or sexually suggestive looks
- Unwanted flirting

Verbal:

- Using rude or offensive language
- Repeated requests for dates or inappropriate invitations
- Remarks that make others uncomfortable
- Telling sexist jokes
- Making comments about a person's physical attributes or appearance
- Tales of sexual exploitation or spreading sexual rumours
- The use of demeaning or offensive names such as honey, sweetie, baby, girl, boy or hunk.
- Behaviour based on gender, which a person feels undermines their status or position of responsibility

Online:

- Sending sexually explicit messages or posting sexually based passages, links or pictures

Note: The level of tolerance for sexual harassment varies from culture to culture.

WHO IS AFFECTED?

Surveys show that roughly 70% of women and 15% of men have experienced sexual harassment.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT SEXUAL HARASSMENT

If you are being sexually harassed, clearly express that the conduct is unwelcome and tell the harasser to stop, if it is safe to do so.

If a person is not comfortable confronting the harasser or the harassing behavior continues, he/she may contact a fellow referee that they are comfortable talking with. This harassment should be reported to a senior referee and further to Volleyball Canada.

Only the person being harassed can decide what the best response is for them. Tell someone! Should a referee witness someone being harassed, it is his/her responsibility to speak up as well.

CONSEQUENCES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual Harassment is illegal and can result in serious consequences!

An individual named in a Sexual Harassment complaint could result in written warnings, suspension and even termination. In certain serious cases, charges may be laid.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREVENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

- Think before speaking
- Leave sexually based behaviour at the door
- Ignorance is no excuse
- Be aware of others' personal space.
- **NO** means **NO** the first time
- Treat everyone with respect

It's up to all of us to do our part - harassment ends when we SPEAK UP!

Please also see Volleyball Canada's website for *Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy*

<http://www.volleyball.ca/en/about/governance/policies>