ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF
Human Rights

www.state.il.us/dhr
800-662-3942

Office Hours
Monday through Friday
8:30am – 5:00pm
(No Intake Interviews on Fridays)

Chicago
James R. Thompson Center
100 W. Randolph St.
Suite 10-100
Chicago, IL 60601
312-814-6200
217-785-5125 *(TTY)*

Springfield
222 South College St.
Room 101A
Springfield, IL 62704
217-785-5100
217-785-5125 *(TTY)*

Marion
2309 W. Main St.
Marion, IL 62959
618-993-7463
217-785-5125 *(TTY)*

A charge of sexual harassment must be filed with the Department within 180 days of the date you believe the harassment took place, even if you are using union or internal grievance procedures to solve the problem.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Illinois Human Rights Act, the Department of Human Rights will ensure that all programs are readily accessible to and usable by qualified individuals with disabilities. The ADA coordinator can provide additional information about compliance requirements, at (217) 785-5119 (voice) or (217) 785-5125 (TTY).

By the Authority of the State of Illinois
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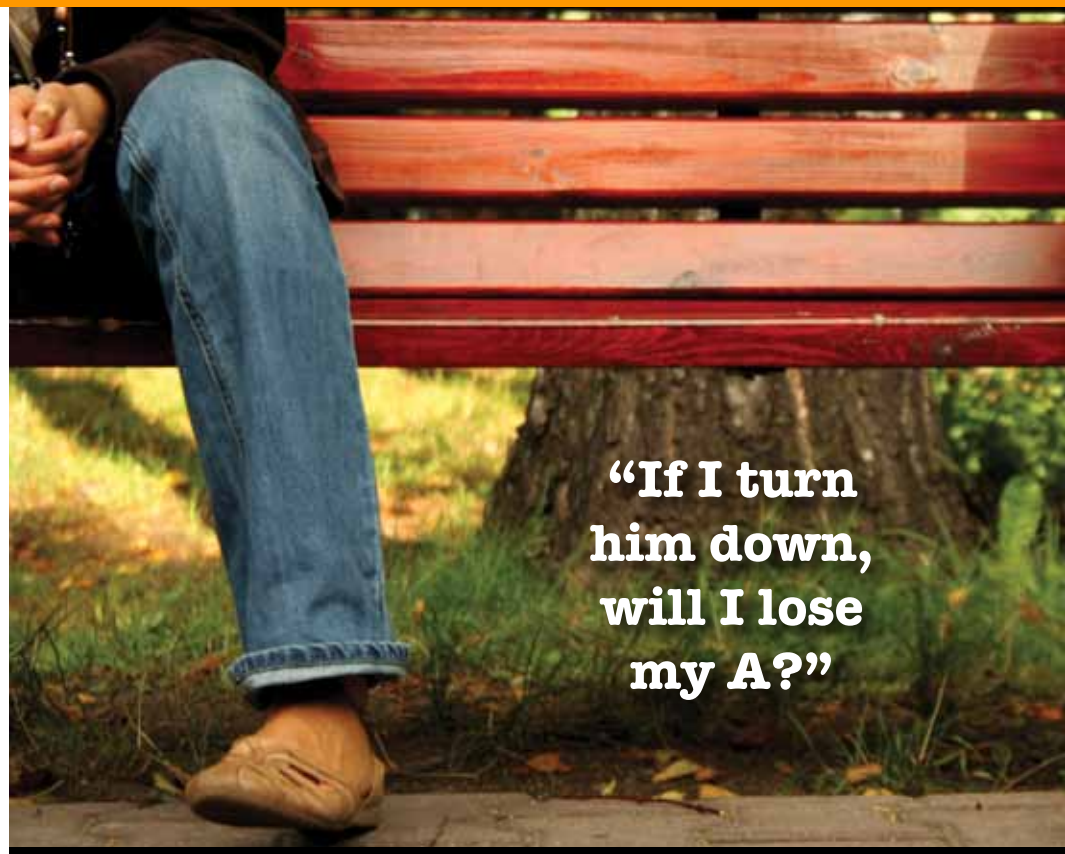
State of Illinois
Department of Human Rights



It's never okay.

Illinois Law Prohibits Sexual Harassment

If it feels like harassment, it probably is.
But how do you know for sure? And what are your rights?

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what is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is unwanted, deliberate or repeated sexual behavior. Sexually suggestive objects, signs, magazines, email, text messages, or pictures may be sexual harassment as well. The person hearing, seeing, or being touched does not want this attention. It is normal to feel embarrassed and angry by unwanted, unflattering attention or demands. However, you have a right to be free of sexual harassment in the work place or while attending an institution of higher education.

> **"It's just creepy.... She's my TA.... I wish she'd keep her hands off me."**

Sexual harassment can also be a form of unlawful sex discrimination if there is a subtle or direct threat that a sexual or social relationship is part of your job or your higher educational performance. The threat can be about any part of your job: wages, promotions, references, working conditions or your educational performance: grades, honors, course work, or scholarships. You have a right to be free of sexual harassment in the work place or while attending an institution of higher education.

> **"Why is he calling me like this? Isn't this wrong? He's my prof, for crying out loud....."**

definitions

The Illinois Human Rights Act defines sexual harassment:

In employment, as any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or any conduct of a sexual nature when 1) submission to such conduct is either overtly expressed or subtly suggested, and 2) submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions; or 3) such conduct interferes with the employee's job performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

In higher education, as any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors made by an executive, administrative staff or faculty member to a student, or any conduct of a sexual nature that substantially interferes with the student's educational performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

facts to be aware of...

Both males and females can be victims of sexual harassment.

The victim of sexual harassment and the harasser can be members of the opposite sex or of the same sex.

Sexual harassment in an employment setting can be perpetrated by a supervisor, coworker, or someone on the business premises at the invitation of the employer.

Sexual harassment in a higher education setting can be perpetrated by an executive, faculty or administrative staff member, or teaching assistant.

Sexual harassment is not limited to any employment level. Both harassers and victims can be found in all areas of the workplace.

Charges of sexual harassment can be filed against the individual harasser and the employer. Both parties can be found liable.

legal protections

The Illinois Human Rights Act protects Illinois employees and higher education students from sexual harassment. The law is enforced by the Illinois Department of Human Rights. Employers who are public contractors and bidders are required to have a written policy which states that sexual harassment is illegal and includes a legal definition of sexual harassment, a description of sexual harassment (including examples), and the vendor's internal procedures for investigation of complaints, including penalties.

what to do if you are sexually harassed...

- Let the harasser know that you are offended by this conduct and want it to stop.
- If a second incident occurs, again let the person know politely and firmly that you are not interested. Do not worry about being subtle.
- Write down what happened to you, when it happened, who was there and what was said by all the parties involved. Keep records of subtle or overt job or educational-related promises or threats.
- Consider writing a letter to the harasser stating the facts and asking him or her to stop. Indicate that a copy of the letter will be sent to a supervisor.
- Talk with other people in the department whom you trust. Often, the person who is harassing you may also be bothering others as well. These witnesses also may be willing to testify to the facts.
- Though not necessary, it would be a good idea to give your supervisor the facts about the incidents. If the supervisor is the sexual harasser, see his or her supervisor, and talk with the affirmative action officer and/or your academic advisor.