

## **ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

### **1. Introduction to the policy**

Pervasive Commodities Limited believes in equal employment opportunity. We do not tolerate verbal or physical conduct creating an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment for employees. Harassment of any kind including sexual harassment is forbidden in the Company and every employee has the right to be protected against it.

We are committed to creating a healthy working environment that enables employees to work without fear of prejudice, gender bias and sexual harassment. The Company believes that all employees of the Company have the right to be treated with dignity.

The Sexual Harassment Policy has been formed under the provisions of The Sexual Harassment of Women at workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, to prohibit, prevent or deter the commission of acts of sexual harassment at workplace and to provide the procedure for the redressal of complaints pertaining to sexual harassment.

### **2. Scope**

2.1 This policy is applicable to employees, workers, volunteers, probationer and trainees including those on deputation, part time, contract, working as consultants or otherwise (whether in the office premises or outside while on assignment). This policy shall be considered to be a part of the employment contract or terms of engagement of the persons in the above categories.

2.2 Where the alleged incident occurs to our employee by a third party while on a duty outside our premises, the Company shall perform all reasonable and necessary steps to support our employee.

### **3. What constitutes Sexual Harassment?**

3.1 Sexual Harassment means such unwelcome sexually determined behaviour (directly or through implication), like physical contact and advances by the employee(s) including:

- A. A demand or request for sexual favors, sexually colored remarks, showing pornography, any other unwelcome physical conduct of sexual nature, lurid stares, physical contact or molestation, stalking, sounds, display of pictures, signs;
- B. Eve teasing, innuendos and taunts, physical confinement against one's will;
- C. A demand or request for sexual favors, whether verbally or non-verbally, where the submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or promotion/evaluation of work thereby denying an individual equal opportunity at employment;

- D. An act or conduct by a person in authority which makes the environment at workplace hostile or intimidating to a person or unreasonably interferes with the individual's privacy and productivity at work;
- E. Verbal harassment of a sexual nature, such as lewd comments, sexual jokes or references, and offensive personal references; demeaning, insulting, intimidating, or sexually suggestive comments (oral or written) about an individual's personal appearance or electronically transmitted messages (Jokes, remarks, letters, phone calls);
- F. Any other behaviour which an individual perceives as having sexual overtones.

#### **4. Redressal system**

4.1 If you are working for our Company and in the course of your work, you have been sexually harassed by anyone through means which are mentioned in Section 3.1, we urge you to come forward with a written complaint as early as you can. Your complaint will be taken seriously and confidentiality would be maintained by us in the matter. We will have zero tolerance towards such practices once they are proven.

A complaint with respect to sexual harassment may be made by a written or electronic application addressed to ***the Internal Complaints Concerned Officer***. The Company may prescribe a format for filing complaints, which may be used by employees to make the process more efficient.

The Concerned Officer may administer a declaration form to verify that the contents of the complaint are true and genuine, before it proceeds further with the complaint. Where necessary (for example, when the complaint is incomplete), the complainant may be contacted to provide further details in relation to the complaint to enable the Internal Complaints Committee to appreciate the situation more comprehensively.

The complaint must be given to the persons specified above within 3 months of the occurrence (the complaint can be made within 6 months if the person is able to prove that there were some exceptional circumstances due to which complaint could not be made earlier) and we advise you to be vigilant and keep any document with you which can be used to substantiate an allegation. The redressal system will work based on other evidence if you cannot produce any documentary evidence.

If the complainant cannot make a written complaint because of physical or mental incapacity or death, the legal heirs can make the complaint on her behalf.

## 4.2 Redressal Mechanism:

Once the complaint is received by the Committee:

- i. The person who is accused by the complainant will be informed that a complaint has been filed against him (he will be made aware of the details of the allegation and also the name of the complainant as it would be necessary for proper inquiry) and no unfair acts of retaliation or unethical action will be tolerated.
- ii. The complainant has the opportunity to ask for conciliation proceedings by having communication with the accused in the presence of the Committee. Please note that in such conciliation the complainant cannot demand monetary compensation.
- iii. The Committee shall provide the copies of the settlement as recorded during conciliation to the aggrieved employee and the respondent. If the matter has been settled by conciliation but the respondent is not complying with the terms and conditions, the aggrieved party can approach the Committee for Redressal.
- iv. The Committee will question both the complainant and the alleged accused separately. If required, the person who has been named as a witness will need to provide the necessary information to assist in resolving the matter satisfactorily.
- v. The Committee shall call upon all witnesses mentioned by both the parties.
- vi. The Committee can ask for specific documents from a person if it feels that they are important for the purpose of investigation.
- vii. The complainant has the option to seek transfer or leave so that the inquiry process can continue smoothly and to prevent recurrence of similar situations or discomfort to the complainant. The leave can extend for a maximum period of 3 months. Leave granted under this provision will be paid leave and will not be counted in the number of leaves that the complainant is statutorily entitled to. The complainant may be required to work from home, if it is practicable, keeping in mind the nature of work of the complainant, health and mental condition. However, the complainant is under a good faith obligation and shall not abuse the process to request unjustifiably long periods of leave, keeping in mind the economic effects of the leave to the organization. The Committee shall have the discretion to grant leave of an appropriate duration, depending on the facts and circumstances of the case, or grant an alternate measure such as transferring the employee or the accused, as it deems fit.

Where leave is granted to the complainant, the Committee shall make best attempts to ensure speedy completion of the inquiry process and to minimize adverse economic consequences to the Company arising out of the absence of the complainant from the workplace.

- i. The complainant and the accused shall be informed of the outcome of the investigation. The investigation shall be completed within 3 months of the receipt of the complaint. If the investigation reveals that the complainant has been sexually harassed as claimed, the accused will be subjected to disciplinary action accordingly.

A. The report of the investigation shall be supplied to the employer (or the District Officer), the accused and the complainant within 10 days of completion of the investigation.

B. The employer or the District Officer will act on the recommendations of the Committee within 60 days of the receipt of the report.

viii The contents of the complaint made, the identity and addresses of the aggrieved employee, respondent and witnesses, any information relating to conciliation and inquiry proceedings, recommendations of the Internal Committee and the action taken by the employer shall not be published, communicated or made known to the public, press and media in any manner

C. Any party aggrieved by the report can prefer an appeal in the appropriate Court or Tribunal in accordance with the service rules within 90 days of the recommendation been given to the employer/ District Officer.

## **5. Disciplinary Action:**

5.1 Where any misconduct is found by the Committee, appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken against the accused. Disciplinary action may include transfer, withholding promotion, suspension or even dismissal. This action shall be in addition to any legal recourse sought by the complainant.

If it is found out through evidence by the Committee that the complainant has maliciously given false complaint against the accused, disciplinary action shall be taken against the complainant as well.

Regardless of the outcome of the complaint made in good faith, the employee lodging the complaint and any person providing information or any witness, will be protected from any form of retaliation. While dealing with complaints of sexual harassment, the Committee shall ensure that the complainant or the witness are not victimized or discriminated against by the accused. Any unwarranted pressures, retaliatory or any other type of unethical behaviour by the accused against the complainant while the investigation is in progress should be reported by the complainant to the Complaints Committee as soon as possible. Disciplinary action will be taken by the Committee against any such complaints which are found genuine.

5.2 This policy shall be disseminated to each employee of the company as well as new recruits who will have to acknowledge that they have read and understood the policy and that they shall abide by the policy.