



## What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual attention that is offensive, humiliating or intimidating.

### Sexual harassment may include:

- Unnecessary familiarity, such as deliberately brushing against another person
- Offensive gestures, ogling or leering
- Sexual propositions or continual requests or invitations
- Physical contact such as touching or grabbing
- Displays of sexually graphic material
- Crude or suggestive jokes
- Being followed home from work
- Unwelcome comments about a person's personal/sex life
- Physical intimidation such as invading another person's space or blocking the way
- Belittling comments based on sex-role stereotyping.

### Sexual harassment is not:

- Paying genuine compliments
- Behaving with common courtesy
- Expressing friendship.

### Sexual harassment may involve:

- Adults
- Children (under the age of 18)
- Both adults and children.

Anyone can be sexually harassed, but it is much more likely to happen to women than to men.

Sexual harassment is against the law. However, most people do not want to take any action - they just want the offensive behaviour to stop.

## Rotary's Commitment

Rotary is committed to providing a safe and harmonious club environment that enhances the achievement of *The Object of Rotary*. In this environment, all members and participants in Rotary activities have the right to be treated fairly and with respect. Accordingly, sexual harassment in Rotary will not be tolerated.

Disciplinary action may be taken against a member engaging in such conduct.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Rotary members have a responsibility to:

- Understand what constitutes sexual harassment
- Refrain from this behavior
- Discourage any such behaviour of which they become aware

Rotary Club Presidents have a responsibility to:

- Listen and provide support to complainants
- Resolve the matter informally, locally, or
- Refer the matter to the District Governor, if unresolved.

The Rotary District Governor will address unresolved complaints referred from clubs or members.

## What can you do if you are being sexually harassed?

Doing nothing, generally, does not work. There is a range of possible responses, which could include:

- Approach the alleged harasser asking that the behaviour stop
- If you don't feel comfortable doing this, seek a friend's support or do it in writing or both
- If you are unable to do this or unsuccessful with it seek the support of the Club President or Committee Chair

- If you are unable or unwilling to discuss the matter with the Club President or Committee Chair, report the matter to the District Governor as soon as possible.

Enquiries or complaints will be taken seriously and be dealt with confidentially and promptly.

## Confidentiality

When dealing with complaints or inquiries about sexual harassment, Rotary is guided by:

- The responsibility to protect the rights of those involved, and
- The need to re-establish working relationships as soon as possible.

Confidentiality should therefore be maintained by all those involved, throughout any process of investigation and resolution.

## Victimisation

The Anti-Discrimination Acts make victimisation unlawful. Consequently it will not be tolerated in Rotary.

## The effects of sexual harassment

Sexual harassment has implications for all participants in Rotary activities.

The effects of this behaviour on **the individual** involved (or observers) may include feeling annoyed, embarrassed, intimidated, humiliated and/or distressed.

The effects of this behaviour in **a club** may include:

- Poor attendance
- Low retention
- Poor morale

Each of these is counterproductive to the achievement of *The Object of Rotary*.



## Does your behaviour cause offence?

Sexual harassment can be unintended. However, your behaviour must NOT be offensive, humiliating or intimidating to others.

If you are not sure about your behaviour, you can:

- Stop the behaviour
- Check your behaviour by asking if it is offensive or inappropriate
- Apologise and not repeat the behaviour
- Consider whether people really are comfortable with your behaviour or just trying to cover their embarrassment
- Talk the situation over with someone who has an understanding of the issues.

## Can people be the subject of a complaint even though their intentions were harmless?

Yes. Conduct of a sexual nature always runs the risk of offending people. We must ensure our behaviour is not offensive or humiliating to others. It is not good enough to say, "It was only a joke".

However, most people don't want any action taken, they just want the behaviour to stop.

## If you witness sexual harassment ...

Sexual harassment is both a challenging and sensitive issue. You need to consider that you may be colluding in or condoning inappropriate activity if you witness sexual harassment behaviour and do nothing about it. Commit yourself to breaking the cycle that can occur without any intervention taking place.

In this document:

**Rotary** includes the Rotary Clubs of District 9640, Australia and Rotary International in District 9640.

Sexual Harassment is addressed by legislation at both the Federal and State level. Further information is available from:

### Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission

[www.hreoc.gov.au](http://www.hreoc.gov.au)

### New South Wales Anti-Discrimination Board

[www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/adb](http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/adb)

### Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commission

[www.adcq.qld.gov.au](http://www.adcq.qld.gov.au)

Rotary International  
District 9640  
AUSTRALIA

The Four G's -  
Gold Coast to Goondiwindi to Glen Innes to Grafton

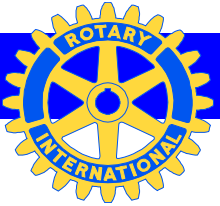
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Rotary International  
District 9640



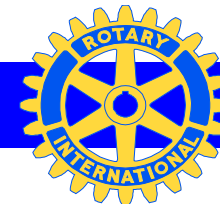
# Sexual Harassment

## Your rights and responsibilities

This brochure is produced for the use of the members of the Rotary Clubs of the Rotary International District 9640, Australia. It is a summary of parts of the relevant District Policy Document. The full District 9640 Sexual Harassment Policy document is available on the Rotary District 9640 website -

[www.rotary9640.org](http://www.rotary9640.org)

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Policy Statement  
Sexual Harassment