

Quick guide: Using evidence to improve workplace sexual harassment prevention and response

The collection and analysis of workplace sexual harassment prevalence information enables employers to identify trends and risks, and to tailor their responses to sexual harassment, enabling organisations to manage risks and to measure performance.

This quick guide outlines the steps employers should follow and practical considerations to be aware of. More information can be found in *Using evidence to improve workplace sexual harassment prevention and response: Guidance for employers*.

Collect evidence

To understand the prevalence of sexual harassment in your workplace, you will need information from a range of sources.

Examples include:

- Formal complaints
- Informal reports
- Whistleblower reports
- Anonymous disclosures
- Safety incidents
- Employee surveys

Analyse evidence

Consider various data points for analysis to yield insights into how your organisation can best prevent and respond to workplace sexual harassment.

Examples include:

- Gender
- Demographic data (this can be used for an intersectional analysis)
- Complainant and respondent employment characteristics, including by occupational category, employment level and status, whether they are third parties
- Complaint outcomes
- Mid- to long-term outcomes for complainants and respondents

Improve disclosures

Given few employers know the full extent of sexual harassment in their workplace, it's important to create and maintain a workplace culture where it's not only safe to disclose, but also clear that there is zero tolerance for sexual harassment. In addition to creating a safer workplace, this will help to improve the quality and reliability of the evidence you collect which can inform improved prevention and response activities.

Practical considerations

Employers are at different stages of collecting, analysing and reporting sexual harassment prevalence information. Your organisation's approach should be tailored for your workplace and reflect your approach to prevent and appropriately respond to sexual harassment in the workplace. To this end, you should keep the following things in mind as you collect and analyse the evidence.

- Person-centred responses
- Individual and organisational rights and responsibilities
- Training and awareness
- Confidentiality and privacy
- Systems and technology for data storage and management
- How you manage data from third parties (e.g. consultants, contractors, volunteers, customers or clients)

Interpret evidence

It is important to analyse your organisation's information, in the context for your industry or sector and of the drivers of sexual harassment. When reviewing complaints and disclosures data, consider:

- Trend analysis
 - Demographic and workplace data
 - Resolutions (for example, the use and impact of confidentiality clauses or non-disclosure agreements)
- Comparison with external surveys of workplace sexual harassment prevalence, including who is most at risk and who is more likely to perpetrate it
- Industry-specific factors
- How the underlying cause of sexual harassment – power imbalances – plays out in your workplace

Consider better practice

The positive duty to prevent workplace sexual harassment means Australian employers need to take proactive steps to improve safety and respect for employees.

Some examples of better practice measures are:

- Using a wide range of data sources, such as employee experience and/or engagement surveys or exit interviews
- Alternative grievance and dispute resolution mechanisms
- Regular reporting to governing bodies and executive on data analysis, risk management, prevalence and prevention