

Statement on Sexual Harassment

CRC Churches International Australia

CRC Churches International Australia and organisations are committed to providing a workshop and work environment which is free from sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination which is unlawful under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984 and other various State Acts i.e. South Australian Equal Opportunity Act 1984.

All CRC Churches International church members, staff and voluntary workers have a right to be treated with respect and dignity and to this end the following information and process is made available.

1. WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Sexual harassment is uninvited and unwelcome attention of a sexual nature.

It is deliberate verbal or physical /sexual behaviour towards a person that is uninvited, unwelcome, humiliating or intimidating.

It may include actions such as:

1. Continual and habitual leering at a person with the express purpose of embarrassing and humiliating their personal dignity and which interferes in their capacity to carry out their work duties.
2. Touching or holding a person who has not given their permission and has clearly expressed that they do not want this to happen again.
3. Telling sexually suggestive or smutty jokes in a person's presence when they have clearly expressed their disapproval of this occurring again.
4. Unsolicited kissing on the lips, pinching a person's bottom or pressurising a person so as to force an embrace or a hug.
5. Continually asking a person to go out with them after they have definitely said "no".

6. When a pastor, leader, counsellor etc causes a person to become dependent on them for the express purpose of commencing a sexual liaison. Even if the counsellee is a willing partner, this behaviour is viewed as an abuse of spiritual authority, is a violation of trust and is deemed harassment from the person in the position of power and authority.

2. What can a person do if they feel they are being sexually harassed?

1. Tell the harasser straight away that one does not want him/her to behave in that way.
2. Immediately let a superior of both you and the perpetrator become aware of this incident, then record and date the incident and its reporting.
3. Any victim has the right to appeal to the respective officers or executive committees of the CRC Churches International, since together they provide an authority and accountability net for all members, leaders and officers of the CRC Churches International.
4. The accountability structures of the CRC Churches International are as follows
 - a. The Senior Pastor of the local church or the Oversight/Board of Elders of that local church.
 - b. The State Chairman or State Executive of the CRC Churches International in the State where the incident has occurred.
 - c. The National Chairman or the National Executive of the CRC Churches International of Australia.

Any sexual harassment victim is encouraged to make contact with the appropriate officer or executive committee depending on who is the offender and the location of the offence.
5. It is recommended that action be taken as quickly as possible after an offence has occurred. Sexual harassment is not only against the law of the land, as already stated, but it is strongly condemned in the Bible and in the ministerial and fellowship ethics of the CRC Churches International. Therefore, none of the people in our churches and work places should have to tolerate sexual harassment.

6. Our Christian witness and testimony before the world demands that every case of sexual harassment be handled in a responsible and just manner by the officers and committees of the CRC Churches International. Therefore the perpetrators need to be disciplined in accordance with our Guidelines on the Discipline and Restoration of Ministers and the victims must be cared for and lovingly ministered to.

Drafted by Pastor Bill Vasilakis.

Amended and endorsed by the National Executive in September 1993.

Updated by Peter Gillard April 2017

End Document.