

Sexual Harassment Prevention Overview for Members

2019 NYS Amendments to Sexual Harassment Law

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As part of the 2018/2019 Budget, New York State signed into legislation comprehensive Sexual Harassment Prevention measures to be taken by employers for their employees. This new law applies to all NYS public libraries (association, municipal, school district & special legislative district).

The legislation requires the following of libraries (employers):

1. Adopt a Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy as part of the library's Policy Manual, and provide a copy to all library staff, trustees and volunteers.
2. Afford access to all library staff, trustees and volunteers a Complaint Form as part of the adopted Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy to report alleged incidents of sexual harassment.
3. Provide training each year to all library staff, trustees and volunteers using the NYS Department of Labor and NYS Department of Human Rights recommended training curriculum, or a similar curriculum that meets or exceeds NYS training standards.

Library boards and directors may use the recommended *Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy* and *Complaint Form* provided by New York State to meet legislative requirements.

1. *Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy:*

https://www.ny.gov/sites/ny.gov/files/atoms/files/StatewideSexualHarassment_PreventionPolicy.pdf

2. *Complaint Form:*

<https://www.ny.gov/sites/ny.gov/files/atoms/files/ComplaintformSexualHarassment.pdf>

*STLS recommends that library boards work with their library director to add an addendum to the policy that highlights specific reporting procedures, which are unique to each library's organizational structure. Feel free to contact STLS for further clarification.

3. *Sexual Harassment Prevention Training:*

All employers are required to offer *Sexual Harassment Prevention Training* each year to all library staff, trustees and volunteers. Components of training requirements can be found on the NYS website:

<https://www.ny.gov/sites/ny.gov/files/atoms/files/SexualHarassmentDRAFTModelTraining.pdf>

STLS has recently developed resources for member libraries to provide Sexual Harassment Prevention Training locally. These resources enable libraries to meet NYS requirements if utilized effectively. You can visit the STLS website to download your resource copies: <https://www.stls.org/director-resources/>

Training resources include:

Document #1: [Guidance on Providing Training](#)

Document #2: [Case Studies that include Questions & Answers](#)

Document #3: [Certification and Follow-up Question Form](#)

Some items to note about annual training:

1. All staff, trustees and volunteers must participate in one training each year. It can be based on your fiscal year, calendar year, anniversary date or whatever makes it easy for your library to track.
2. NYS initially indicated that employees must participate in one training prior to January 1, 2019. New information notes a first time training session for library staff, trustees or volunteers should be completed by October 2019. STLS suggests libraries do their best to meet this later deadline.
3. New staff, trustees or volunteers must complete training within 30-days of starting. So, if you hire, appoint or schedule someone new after October 2018, you should train them within 30-days.
4. Libraries should document training of all library staff, trustees and volunteers and retain for permanent record locally.

STLS has learned as much as possible about this legislation relative to delivery, expectations and compliance. We have also provided access to policy templates and training resources to help simplify the process. We will keep members updated as often as needed about this well-intended program.

In the meantime, please visit New York State's website to find additional information for employers, employees and answers to frequently asked questions.

<https://www.ny.gov/programs/combating-sexual-harassment-workplace>

Lastly, don't forget to call or write with your own unique questions. We are always happy to help.

Contacts:

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