



Exide Industries Limited (EIL)
Sexual Harassment Avoidance Redressal Policy



I. Preface

Exide Industries Ltd (EIL/Company) follows the philosophy of respecting the dignity of all individuals as enshrined under the constitution of India. More so, we strive to foster a work environment that is conducive to the professional growth of our women employees and encourages equality of opportunity. Sexual harassment of woman at work seriously undermines her right to live with. Such conduct is wholly incompatible with the policy of the company to provide a work environment free of harassment, discrimination, intimidation, and insult in any form.

EIL will not tolerate any form of sexual harassment against any woman within its premises and is committed to take all necessary steps to ensure that women are not subjected to any form of harassment.

II. Objective

The main objective of creating this policy document is to establish an easily accessible complaint redressal mechanism within the legal framework to effectively deal with incidents of sexual harassment of woman and to ensure redressal of such complaints in a fair, confidential and timely manner.

III. Applicability

This policy is applicable to all women working at any or all office(s) or premises of EIL and/or any other place defined as “workplace” under the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.

It covers-

- (i) employees, whether full-time, part-time, temporary, and contractual personnel, trainees, persons on probation and apprentices while on an engagement with the Company in India.
- (ii) customers, vendors and their employees, consultants, and anyone else doing business at the Company’s Workplace or interactions arising from any work being carried out by or on behalf of the Company.
- (iii) anyone who is present in the Workplace such as candidates, visitors, guests, etc.
(together referred to as Personnel)

Any other term not defined herein shall have the same meaning as defined in the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. and the Rules thereunder, to the extent applicable to the Company.

This policy has been framed in accordance with the provisions of “The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013” and the rules thereunder. Accordingly, while the policy covers all the key aspects of the act, for any further clarification reference shall always be made to the Act.

The workplace includes:

1. All offices and/ or other premises where the Company's business is conducted.
2. All Company-related activities performed at any other place/ site away from the Company's premises.
3. Any social, business, or other functions or any place visited by the employee arising out of or during the course of employment including transportation provided by the employer for undertaking such journey.

IV. Statement of Principles

1. The Policy bestows the responsibility and obligation on the organization as well as on every employee in maintaining a non-hostile and a pleasant working environment. All employees should respect the dignity and personality of other employees.
2. The policy recognizes the right to complaint of every woman who has suffered sexual harassment at any office or premises of EIL and /or any other place defined as a "workplace" under The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 It is in the self-interest of the complainant to make the complaint promptly available under the compliant redressal mechanism.
3. The policy seeks to encourage employees to express freely, responsibly and in an orderly manner opinions and feelings about any problem or complaint of sexual harassment. Retaliation against any employee who report or provide information about sexual harassment or unwelcome or unacceptable behaviour that might constitute sexual harassment is strictly prohibited. An offer to grant any advantage in return of sexual favours (quid pro quo) is strictly prohibited. Any act of reprisal, including internal interface, coercion and restraint by an employee or one acting on his/her behalf violates this policy and will result in appropriate disciplinary action.
4. The Policy envisages appropriate disciplinary action against any employee who indulges himself/herself or encourages the activities of sexual harassment or the acts of victimization or retaliation against complainant or employee involved in the process of redressal of complaints of sexual harassment in whatsoever manner.
5. Any employee who engages in any conduct amounting to be harassment, or who encourages such conduct by others, or who indulges in victimisation of or retaliation against the complainant or the complainant's witnesses or the complainant's confidential counsellor or any other employee who supported or supports them shall become liable for corrective action including appropriate disciplinary action, which may even include termination from service.
6. The policy recognizes the right of privacy of every individual and will strive to protect the privacy of the individuals involved /mentioned in the complaint of sexual harassment and ensure that the complainant and the accused /s are treated fairly. Information about individual complaints and the disposition are considered confidential and will not be shared or communicated or made known to public, press and media.
7. The Policy ensures that the career interests of both the parties will not be adversely affected merely on account of the complaint made to the Redressal Committee.
8. This Policy can't be used to bring frivolous or malicious complaint against any employee

of the organization. If a complaint is made in bad faith, as demonstrated by clear and convincing evidence, disciplinary action may be taken against the person bringing the false or frivolous or malicious complaint.

V. Sexual Harassment

At EIL, a woman shall not be subjected to sexual harassment which may include any unwelcome sexually determined act or behaviour, physical contact and advances, sexually-coloured remarks, Showing pornography, sexual demands, requests for sexual favours, Quid Pro Quo or any other unwelcome conduct of sexual nature whether verbal, textual, physical, graphic or electronic or by any other actions under a promise or preferential treatment in employment or by threat about present or future employment status or a conduct which interferes with work or creates an intimidating or offensive or hostile work environment.

VI. Roles & Responsibilities

1. Responsibilities of Individual:

It is the responsibility of all to respect the rights of others and to never encourage any kind of harassment. It can be by way of:

- a) Refusing to participate in any activity which constitutes harassment.
- b) Supporting the person to reject unwelcome behaviour.
- c) Acting as a witness if the person being harassed decides to lodge a complaint.

All are encouraged to advise others of behaviour(s) that is or are unacceptable or unwelcome. Often, some behaviours are not intentional, while this does not make it acceptable, it does give the person behaving inappropriately, the opportunity to modify or stop their offensive behaviour.

2. Responsibilities of Managers:

All managers at EIL must ensure that nobody is subjected to harassment and there is equal treatment meted to everyone. They must also ensure that harassment is not to be tolerated in any form; those complaints will be taken seriously; and that the complainant, respondent/s, or witnesses are not victimized in any way.

The owner of this policy is the Human Resources Department of EIL. Any queries on the application or interpretation of this policy must be discussed with the Human Resources Department.

Any complaints received under this policy will be handled by the Internal Committee of the respective location constituted, as per the guidelines provided.

VII. Misconduct

EIL shall treat commission of any act or behaviour amounting to sexual harassment, by an employee as a major disciplinary offence. Victimising or retaliating against an employee for bringing a complaint of sexual harassment in good faith, as well as the witness of the complainant or confidential counsellor shall also be treated equally as a major disciplinary offence.

VIII. Complaint Procedure

EIL shall provide easily accessible redressal system to the aggrieved woman and whenever the organization is made aware of such a case, the organization shall take prompt and effective action. Whether or not such conduct constitutes an offence under law or a breach of the service rules, an appropriate complaint redressal mechanism in the form of “**Internal Committees**” have been created in the company for time-bound redressal of the complaint made by the aggrieved woman. These committees have been formed in accordance with the provisions of The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. **The complaint redressal mechanism will prevail at Apex, Regional and Factory level to ensure effective deployment and implementation of the policy provisions across all locations within the stipulated time frame.** EIL has devised both informal as well as formal procedures for redressal of sexual harassment complaints.

Any aggrieved woman may make, in writing, a complaint of sexual harassment to the Internal Committee, so formed for the purpose, within a maximum period of three months from the date of incidence. In case of a series of incidents the complaint may be made within the stipulated three months’ time from the date of the last incident.

IX. Informal Procedure

The Internal Committee may, at the request of the complainant, take steps to settle the matter through conciliation between the parties. However, no monetary settlement is permissible based on the conciliation.

Where such a settlement, through mediation, has been arrived the Internal Committee shall record the settlement so arrived and forward the copies of the same to the employer, aggrieved woman, and the individual against whom the complaint has been made.

X. Formal procedure

It is not obligatory for a complainant to invoke the informal procedure. This is purely optional, and it is open to a complainant to invoke the formal procedure in the first instance itself, without resorting to the informal procedure.

1. To invoke the formal procedure the complainant needs to make a formal complaint along with supporting documents and the names and addresses of the witnesses against the alleged accused to a member/s of the Internal Committee. The complaint must be lodged within three (3) months from the date of incident/ last incident. The Committee can extend the timeline by another three (3) months for reasons recorded in writing, if satisfied that these reasons prevented the lodging of the complaint.
2. On receipt of such formal written complaint, the Internal Committee in question shall conduct a preliminary investigation into the complaint in order to determine whether a prima facie case is made out against the alleged accused. For this purpose, the Internal Committee may constitute a sub-committee from amongst its members or nominate any individual member to conduct such investigation. The preliminary investigation would ordinarily be concluded within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the formal written complaint by the Internal Committee.
3. If the aggrieved woman is unable to lodge the complaint on account of her incapacity, the following may do so on her behalf, with her written consent.

- Legal heir, relative or friend
- Co-worker
- Any person having the knowledge of the incident

XI. Enquiry Methodology

If as a result of the preliminary investigation, a prima facie case is made out against the accused, the Presiding Officer shall advise the Internal Committee/ Local Committee will conduct the enquiry into the complaint received and follow the procedure as detailed:

1. The Committee shall make a copy of the complaint received from the aggrieved woman available to the respondent (accused) within a period of seven (7) working days.
2. The aggrieved woman shall file a list of witnesses, with their addresses and supporting documents to the enquiry officers for records and purpose of conducting the inquiry.
3. On receipt of the complaint the respondent shall file his reply to the enquiry officers along with list of documents and names of witnesses with their respective addresses, within a period of ten (10) working days from date of receipt.
4. In conducting the inquiry, a minimum of three (3) members of the Internal Committee including the Presiding Officer or the Chairperson, as the case may be, shall be present.
5. In the event, where either the victim or the accused is a member of any Internal Committee, they shall not be included in the proceedings of the enquiry and decision making for the incident in question. A replacement shall be made to ensure the constitution of the Committee remains within the purview of the law.
6. For the purpose of conducting the enquiry, as provided in The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 Act under reference, the Internal Committee is vested with the same powers as a civil court under the Code of Civil Procedure in respect of:
 - a) Summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person and examining him/her on oath;
 - b) Requiring the discovery of any production of documents
 - c) Any other matter which may be prescribed
7. The Presiding Officer or the Chairperson, as the case may be, being the convener of the inquiry hearings shall notify the parties about the date time and venue of the inquiry. The Internal Committee will then forward the reply to the aggrieved woman and call both parties for hearing.
8. The Internal Committee shall conduct the inquiry in accordance with the principles of natural justice.
9. Subject to the point # 6, the Committee reserves the right to either terminate the inquiry proceedings or give an ex parte decision on the complaint if the parties concerned fail to be present for three consecutive hearings without sufficient cause as determined by the convener of the hearings, provided that such termination or ex parte order may not be passed without giving a notice in writing 15 days in advance to the parties concerned.
10. The parties shall have the right to be assisted and/or represented in the inquiry by an employee representative of their choice.

11. The inquiry shall be completed within a period of ninety (90) days.
12. On completion of the inquiry, the Presiding officer of the Internal committee shall provide a report of the findings to the organization within a period of ten (10) days along with its recommendation.
13. In case the complaint is not established, and the Internal Committee comes to a conclusion that the compliant is malicious or the complainant has made the complaint knowing to be false or produced any forged or misleading document, The Internal committee may recommend the management that no action is required against the person against the whom the complaint is made and to take action against the woman or the person who has made such malicious complaint .
14. In case the complaint is upheld or established, the Internal committee shall recommend to the organization to act upon the recommendation within sixty (60) days of its receipt and send the report of such implementation to the Committee.
15. If the complainant or the respondent is not satisfied by the recommendations or non-implementation of such recommendations, either party can appeal to the tribunal or court within 90 days.

XII. Action during pendency of Inquiry

During the pendency of the inquiry the aggrieved woman may submit a written request to the internal committee based on which the internal committee may recommend to the organization:

1. Transfer the aggrieved woman or the respondent to any other work place;
2. Grant leave to the aggrieved woman up to a period as deemed appropriate provided such leave shall be over and above what she is otherwise entitled to;
3. Restrain the respondent from reporting on the work performance of the aggrieved woman or and assign the same to another officer.

XIII. Confidentiality

EIL recognises that recounting the experience of sexual harassment is traumatic and can damage the complainant's dignity. Therefore, a complainant should not be required repeatedly to recount the events complained of where this is not necessary.

XIV. Duties of the Internal Committee

1. Receiving complaints and creating awareness for prevention of sexual harassment at the workplace
2. Initiating and conducting inquiry as per the established procedure
3. Submitting findings and recommendations of inquiries
4. Coordinating with the employer in implementing appropriate action
5. Maintaining strict confidentiality throughout the process as per established guidelines
6. Submitting annual reports in the prescribed format
7. Issuing from time-to-time notifications, guidelines, and the like, for combating sexual harassment at work, as well as carrying out amendments in consonance with legislation and latest judgments on the issue;
8. The Internal Committee would keep a track of all cases pertaining to complaints of sexual harassment at various stages and facilitate closure of such cases as per the tenets of law;

9. The Internal Committee would also maintain records of all cases pertaining to complaints of sexual harassment at work and record the outcome of investigations or enquiries and the action taken thereon;
10. Contributing to the promotion of appropriate work conditions, leisure, health hygiene and ensure that there is no hostile discrimination at workplaces because of the gender of such person;
11. Ensuring policy compliance from all parties involved in the process, and;
12. Reviewing the policy every year and also processing compliance at such intervals as required by the provisions of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013

XV. Disciplinary Action

If the result of the investigation/inquiry holds the alleged accused guilty of an act constituting sexual harassment, the Management shall take appropriate disciplinary action against the accused after considering the recommendation made by the Internal Committee. The punishment imposed shall be commensurate with the gravity of the misconduct and other relevant circumstances.

XVI. Criminal Proceedings

Where such conduct amounts to a specific offence under the Indian Penal Code or under any other law, the Company shall initiate appropriate action, based on the recommendation of the Internal Committee, in accordance with law by filing a complaint with the appropriate authority.

XVII. Third-party Harassment

EIL also stands committed to take appropriate preventive and remedial action to prevent sexual harassment of its employees by non-employees. Where sexual harassment occurs as a result of an act by any third party or outsider, the Management would take all steps necessary and reasonable to assist the victim in terms of support and preventive action. Should any employee face sexually harassing behaviour at work from a third party, such as a client or customer of EIL, and its subsidiaries, the Management would take appropriate corrective or remedial action. However, it would be necessary for the complainant/recipient to promptly report such harassment to the organization or the designated officers so as to enable the Management to take appropriate action. Unless the employee reports the harassment to the Management, the latter in no case shall be responsible or liable in this regard.

XVIII. Decision and Escalation Matrix

The matrix given below mentions the key stakeholders for each step in the investigation, decision making process.

Investigation	Recommendation and Final Decision By
Regional Committee or Apex Committee	Apex Committee in discussion with EXCOM

XIX. Your Helpline

You may write to poshapexcommittee@exide.co.in and be assured of complete anonymity being maintained.

However, please note that for any sort of investigation to take place; your identity would have to be disclosed to the committee members and compliant procedure as detailed in this policy will need to be followed. Your personal information will be used strictly as per the law for the purpose of the Inquiry.

If there is a conflict between the terms under this Policy and the applicable local law/guidelines, the terms under the applicable local law/guidelines shall prevail over the terms under this Policy.

The management shall periodically monitor, review, and evaluate the working and efficacy of this policy. The present policy amends the earlier policy and shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of India.

Note:

EIL has a zero-tolerance policy against harassment for all Personnel irrespective of their gender and hence this policy will be treated as a gender-neutral Policy and shall apply mutatis mutandis to all Personnel irrespective of their sexual orientation or preferences.

All the references made above to ‘woman’ will be construed as ‘complainant of any gender’.

The Committees mentioned above will have the authority to deal with all the complaints in the same manner as mentioned above.

Version History

Version Number	Date of Enforcement
V1.0 – V5.0	2018 – 2022
V6.0	30 th October, 2023
V7.0	1 st April, 2024