
Construction Steward Training

What Can Unions Do?

OFFER SUPPORT

It is important that all victims, both women and men, report cases of sexual harassment to their union and that they be given support and help once they have reported it. Sexual harassment victims must feel confident that their local union officials take the matter seriously and will deal with it effectively.

WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT

Labor and management need to create a climate in which sexual harassment will not be tolerated in the workplace. The issue needs to be discussed at labor/management meetings. Joint policy statements, brochures, training, resolutions and procedures should be developed to help all employees understand that harassment is inappropriate, unacceptable and illegal.

COMMUNICATE WITH MEMBERS

Some unions conduct confidential surveys to determine the extent of the problem in the workplace. The survey itself indicates to members that their union is concerned and interested in solving any problem that might exist with sexual harassment.

EDUCATION

Educational materials should be distributed to inform members of the nature of the problem and what to do if they become victims. Films, flyers and brochures on the subject are all available. Stewards and local union officials should receive special training in the handling of the sexual harassment cases.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Unions can negotiate special grievance provisions to handle the unusual circumstances of sexual harassment cases. The sensitive and potentially embarrassing situations can require unusual confidentiality and promptness in handling the case. Special procedures can be applied to just such cases.

