

# HUMAN RESOURCE SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY FOR AWAKENING SMILES INITIATIVE (ASI)

## 1.1 Policy statement:

The **Awakening Smiles Initiative** is committed to creating and maintaining a work culture in which all employees can work together in an atmosphere free of all forms of sexual harassment. Specifically, every member of the **Awakening Smiles Initiative** should be aware that **Awakening Smiles Initiative** is strongly opposed to sexual harassment and that such behaviour is prohibited both by law and by the **Awakening Smiles Initiative's** policy. It is the intention of **Awakening Smiles Initiative** to take whatever action may be needed to prevent, correct and, if necessary, discipline behaviour that violates this policy.

## 1.2 Interpretation of Sexual Harassment:

a) Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is construed to mean unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which directly or indirectly subjects the employee to behaviour that is unwelcome or offensive to that employee and by its nature or through repetition has a detrimental effect on the employees performance and job satisfaction. It includes but is not to: -

- i. Requests for sexual favours in exchange for actual or promised job or benefits leading to;
  - Implied or express promise of preferential treatment in employment
  - Implied or express threat of detrimental treatment in employment
  - Implied or express threat about the present or future employment status of the employee
- ii. Physical assault intended to gain sexual advantage over another;
- iii. Sexually explicit language, statements, comments, questions, jokes, innuendoes, anecdotes, or gestures;
- iv. Unnecessary touching, patting, hugging, or brushing against a person's body or other inappropriate touching of an individual's body;
- v. Remarks of a sexual nature about a person's clothing or body;
- vi. Use of visual material, electronic mail or computer dissemination of sexually oriented, sex-based communications;
- vii. Sexual advances, whether or not they involve physical touching;
- viii. Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, magazines, cartoons, or screen savers;
- ix. Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report sexual harassment.
- x. Unbecoming and/or provocative dress codes or habits exposing unduly otherwise private body parts of an individual contrary to general office norms and pertinent **Awakening Smiles Initiative** policy.

In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment, consideration shall be given to the record of the incident as a whole and to the totality of the circumstances, including the context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

b) The above actions are offensive when carried out by either male or female employees.

### **1.3 Sensitization/Awareness**

All employees shall be given a copy of this policy and explanations as to what it means and the disciplinary action that it attracts will be explained in the Staff Policies, Terms and Conditions of Service.

### **1.4 Procedure**

- a) An employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment by anyone is encouraged to promptly tell the person that the conduct is unwelcome and ask the person to stop the conduct. A person who receives such a request must immediately comply with it. S/he must not retaliate against the employee for rejecting or expressing dissatisfaction with the conduct.
  
- b) The employee may also choose to report the incident through filing a complaint with his or her immediate supervisor, who will in turn immediately contact their supervisor, head of division/department or the Human Resource officer for advice on the matter.
  
- c) If the employee feels uncomfortable about discussing the incident with the immediate supervisor, the employee should feel free to bypass the supervisor and report the incident to or file a complaint with the GMHR.
  
- d) The GMHR shall ask the accused party to give an explanation of their actions in writing, after which he will determine the course of action to be taken to resolve the issue.
  
- e) Proven cases sexual harassment of either female or male employee is a serious offence. It shall be handled like any other offence in line with the provisions of the disciplinary code.