



TOWARDS SAFER, EQUAL SPACES

A guide to identifying
and dealing with sexual abuse
and harrasment



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#MeToo has caught the world by storm over the last year. “Me Too” was coined as the name for a campaign by a community social worker Tarana Burke in 2006 to use in workshops that deal with sexual abuse. The simple term lets a survivor know that he or she is not alone and that together we can work towards creating safer spaces free of sexual abuse.

In India, women, men and young people took to social media to speak the truth in order to empower and narrate stories of survival against inappropriate, unwelcome or violent sexual advances. What was shocking was that most of the offenders being called out were people from within trusted social structures in positions of power. The list spanned across prominent persons in various fields including cinema, journalism, politics, academics, and performing arts. Today, #MeToo has turned into a worldwide movement, giving voice to thousands of silenced sufferers.

This booklet is an effort to address the newly arriving collective conscience that demands accountability from the powerful and to address and educate the larger society, individuals and institutions towards making safer equal spaces in order to identify and deal with sexual harassment and abuse.



How can we identify a sexual offence?

Let's start with a few basic questions:

Do you think that women get sexually harassed?	☐ Y	☐ N
Should a person who harasses women be punished?	☐ Y	☐ N

Almost all of us are going to answer **yes** to questions A and B. So thus far, we are on the same page. However, we begin to differ once we start discussing more cases. Let's take a few examples:

A girl is walking down a street and a boy who is passing by her on a bicycle whistles at her. Should she file a complaint with the police and have action taken against him?	☐ Y	☐ N
X and Y are standing at Z's desk in office and discussing how the new intern is "super-hot" and that she is definitely going to be hired because hot girls always get their way with things. Their colleague P who is sitting at the next desk is disturbed by this. Should P file a complaint against them with the Internal Complaints Committee?	☐ Y	☐ N
An actress searching for work is invited to a hotel room by a film producer. When she enters the room she realizes that they are alone. She goes in anyway. During their discussion on the project, the producer makes multiple hints at how he is interested in her sexually and before she can leave he tries to touch her inappropriately, at which point she manages to escape. Should she file a complaint with the police against him for sexual harassment?	☐ Y	☐ N
A young woman becomes friends with a man at a party. He seems to be a nice and decent person and they share common interests. As the evening proceeds, he asks for her phone number and she gives it to him. Later that night, once she is home, he initiates a conversation with her via text messages. As they are chatting, he sends her a picture of his penis. She is shocked and disgusted and stops talking to him immediately. Should she report him to the police?	☐ Y	☐ N

These questions may not get a uniform response from all the readers in the way A and B did. This reflects one important problem: we differ in our understanding of various types and degrees of sexual harassment. In this section, we discuss (through law and a little bit of social theory) the concepts behind these situations in an attempt to draw a common understanding of the situation.

As a basic principle to measure any incident, we can look at two conditions:

a. Was the situation consensual?

How do we determine consent? We can use some of the following questions:

- Was consent ensured at every point?
- Was this consent given freely? That is, it shouldn't be conditional or an instance of abuse of power or forced or obtained through deceit and informed to both parties involved in that instance?
- Were all parties involved above 18 years? Remember, consent given by persons below 18 years does not hold strong before law and is considered as child sexual abuse.

Sex, conversation about sex, viewing sexual content or any form of intimacy that is non-consensual is inappropriate behaviour and redressal can be sought.

b. Was the incident discriminatory in nature?

Any situation, however harmless it may seem to you, might seem discriminatory for another person. So is your behaviour, conversation or action discriminating against a person on their gender, caste, body weight etc? These could be situations of harassment and redressal can be sought.

It is important to remember that since consent is subjective, a situation of harassment is also subjective. A situation that feels like harassment to one person need not be harassment to another. Hence we should try to create spaces – public, private, work or academic, both virtual and real – that are safe for persons of all gender to voice out their discomfort and remedy the situation.

With this basic principle in mind, let us discuss how we can identify sexual offences.

1. What constitutes instances of Rape and Sexual Assault?

As per the law in India, if a **man** does any of the following to a woman without her free and continued consent then it is considered rape:

- penetrates his penis, to any extent, into the vagina, mouth, urethra or anus of a woman or makes her to do so with him or any other person; or
- inserts, to any extent, any object or a part of the body, not being the penis, into the vagina, the urethra or anus of a woman or makes her to do so with him or any other person; or
- manipulates any part of the body of a woman so as to cause penetration into the vagina, urethra, anus or any part of body of such woman or makes her to do so with him or any other person; or
- applies his mouth to the vagina, anus, urethra of a woman or makes her to do so with him or any other person.

Further using force to assault a woman with the intention of rape or trying to disrobe a woman are offences under various sub-sections of 354 of the Indian Penal Code.

Remember that if any of these acts are done by people in positions of power or those who have the responsibility to protect, the punishment as per law is higher than for others.

2. Offences we teach women to ignore, avoid or walk away from.

Then there are the offences that we teach women to ignore, avoid or walk away from. Our attitude as a society to this is often that the woman should have been careful not to put herself in that situation or that, **“she escaped •…… before anything really happened”** so she

This attitude comes from a patriarchal social culture that believes that as far as a woman is not raped her ‘honour’ is intact. However, research from all over the world shows that women face PTSD from instances of sexual harassment which lead to long-term physical, economical and psychological effects. You can clearly see these in the case of many of the stories that are surfacing under #MeToo.

should just forget it. So much so that we often do not realise that these are criminal offences.

- All forms of sexual harassment, including
 - (i) physical contact and advances involving unwelcome and explicit sexual overtures; or
 - (ii) a demand or request for sexual favours; or
 - (iii) showing pornography against the will of a woman; or
 - (iv) making sexually coloured remarks,

are crimes under Section 354 A of the Indian Penal Code. This includes sexually coloured remarks as well, i.e., commenting on a woman's body, using sexual profanities in conversation, etc.

- Stalking – if a man follows a woman or repeatedly contacts her or attempts to contact her when it has been communicated to him that she is not interested in interacting with him. Or if a man monitors a woman's online or other activity (unless this is a police officer or some other officer on duty), this is a criminal offence under Section 354 D of the Indian Penal Code.
- Voyeurism – Watching or capturing an image or recording and then passing on such images of a woman in any private act when she is not expecting to be observed is an offence under Section 354 E of the Indian Penal Code.
- Similarly, it is an offence to do any obscene act or sing obscene songs etc. in public places as per Section 294 of the Indian Penal Code. So the next time someone is peeing in public or touching themselves, complain to the police, they are the ones who are doing an offence.
- In the same way, threatening to sexually assault a person is also considered an offence whether it be in person or online. The person can be charged with criminal intimidation under Section 506 of the Indian Penal Code or Section 67 A of the Information Technology Act. Online sexual harassment could be through private platforms like engaging in uncalled for sexual conversation or unsolicited "sexting" of any kind through messages or more public ones like sexualised abuses through online platforms etc.

Apart from these above-listed ones, monitoring a woman's internet, email or any other form of electronic communication, communicating over messages or chats with a sexual tone, and even staring with a sexual intent can fall under sexual harassment. Even though these may appear to be not so serious offences, these also fall under the ambit of sexual harassment. Let us ensure that these grave criminal offences are treated as such and not blame the victim for their experience of trauma.

3. Discussing the culture of sexual harassment

There are offensive comments/conversations/attitudes/unsaid social norms that build a culture of violence and discrimination against women. While it is impossible to make a list of what these might be, we would like to discuss a few.

Why are women coming out and speaking of their trauma after 1, 3, 10, or 20 years of these events taking place and why are some of them anonymous?

Would you ask the same questions if it was a story of murder or of a political crime or if some person who worked in a Government position was revealing their corrupt practice 20 years hence? You might, in these cases, understand the pressure and threat they faced and you would be glad it came out (at least now). Women face similar pressure when it comes to reporting men in positions of power: hence they decide to voice their problems anonymously, many of them have done it through other people and sometimes many years later.

There could be many factors affecting women in these situations, such as women from a young age are socialised to avoid and appease conflicts so they find it difficult to speak up. Women are not allowed to speak of anything that discomforts them, whether it be menstruation, body hair or anything else that is similar. There is a conspiracy of silence that women are taught to practice, making it difficult for them to discuss something as uncomfortable as sexual harassment. As discussed in point 2, women are taught to ignore or move on from criminal offences that take place in their life so that while they have experienced trauma, there has never been an environment where they can

report this. The #MeToo movement has provided these women with the much-needed support to speak about these personal horrors, albeit 10 or 20 years after, in person or anonymously. Remember, women have not only been victims of abuse but also victims of the violence of silence.

Why was she out at night? Why was she dressed like that? Why was she drunk?

As equal citizens, women have the right to go to any place and enjoy all the freedom that men experience. It is men who engage in criminal acts mentioned in points 1 and 2 who are committing the offence. Yet, as a society, we allow men to commit the criminal offence and blame the woman for exercising her equal right. This further perpetuates the feeling among men that a woman in a place where she is "not supposed to be" is "fair game" and can be exploited. Moreover, it is a myth to think that it is the women who are out late and dressed a certain way who are abused. **In reality, most abuse happens from people we know.**

Have you thought of the slurs you use on a daily basis?

If you give it a thought for a moment, many of the slurs used commonly in any language are in reference to a morally corrupt woman or refers to abusing another person's mother or sister or it is a genital (male or female) body part. This way we even curb the vocabulary of a survivor who wants to explain the details of the abuse. Similarly, a woman who dresses a certain way is a "slut" and a woman who dresses in another way is a "prude". Our comments on their personal style of dressing is often sexualised and based on their gender. This contributes to creating unsafe spaces for women.

These are a few examples that we hear around us often. For other real life situations, we suggest that you use the basic principles of consent and discrimination to ensure that you contribute to a safe environment for the women around you.

Sexual Harassment at Workplace

Workplace Sexual Harassment is one of the many gender discriminations faced by women at work. The #MeToo campaign has been an eye-opener as to the scale of the issue and the audacity with which the harassment is being perpetuated.

So, what is sexual harassment at workplace? The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 requires three elements to be present for an abuse to be considered workplace sexual harassment. They are

- An aggrieved woman
- Sexual harassment
- Workplace

The aggrieved woman can be an employee (temporary/ad hoc/daily wage), a volunteer, a probationer, an intern, a student or a domestic worker. The definition is wide enough to include even a customer or client or visitor who may be sexually harassed at the workplace.

Sexual Harassment is defined, in the Act, as detailed above and is as per the Vishaka guidelines. Any or all of the above-mentioned behavior when it happens in the context of the following scenarios constitute sexual harassment:

Quid Pro Quo (literally means “this for that”)

- Promise (implicit/explicit) of preferential treatment in the employment or future employment status. The Boss/Supervisor promises the employee that she will have greater work opportunities or will secure a promotion or get a good performance appraisal if she were to do him a sexual favour.
- Threat (implicit/explicit) of detrimental treatment in the employment or future employment status. On the flip side of the coin, the Boss/Supervisor threatens to destroy the employee's career or take her off a great project or give bad performance appraisals if his demand for a sexual favour is not fulfilled.

Hostile Work Environment

- Creating an intimidating, offensive or hostile work environment
- Humiliating treatment that is likely to affect the health and safety of the woman

For detailed examples and scenarios of workplace sexual harassment, please refer to the Handbook by the Ministry of Women and Child Development: <http://wcd.nic.in/act/handbook-sexual-harassment-women-workplace>.

The definition of workplace is also very wide and includes any place visited by the employee for work. It also covers the concept of “extended workplaces” – for example, transportation provided by the employer to commute to and from work, company-sponsored retreats, outstation travel for meetings, conferences etc.

As a general rule of thumb, sexual harassment at workplace is any act or behavior, which is UNWELCOME, is SEXUAL in nature and is in the context of a WORK environment. There are no hard and fast rules as to what is unwelcome behavior as it is subjective and rightly so.

It is also important to remember that the actual intent of the perpetrator is not the determining factor. Rather, it is the impact of that behavior on you that determines whether something constitutes sexual harassment.

Understanding Sexual Harassment of Vulnerable Populations

To ensure effective response to sexual harassment of all people, specific consideration should be given to people who face increased vulnerabilities such as sex workers, dalit women, queer persons, people with disabilities (especially women), children etc. We would like to discuss two such groups as an example.

Women with Disabilities (WwD)

There are two main factors which make WwD more vulnerable to sexual harassment than others – institutional touching and physical dependence. The problem is further compounded as sexual predators assume that

- women with locomotor disabilities are easy prey due to their inability to run away from them
- women with speech and hearing impairment will not give account of their abuse or easily name them
- women with visual impairment will find it difficult/impossible to identify their aggressors
- women with intellectual impairment are easily manipulated and will have difficulty testifying later.

These crimes mostly go unrecognised, unprosecuted and unpunished; the abuser is free to abuse again. Police and prosecutors are often reluctant to take these cases because they are difficult to win in court.

Almost 80% of women with disabilities are victims of violence and they are four times more likely than other women to suffer sexual violence – committee report. Women with intellectual disabilities are sexually assaulted at a rate seven times higher than those without disabilities (Justice Department, USA).

Children

If you are someone who has even a glancing sight on the NEWS around you, you will know the name Asifa Bano – the little girl who was raped and killed in a religious/political battle in Kathua in Jammu and Kashmir. Support, horror and shock on the grave violence was pouring out on various platforms which led to pressure to ensure that action is taken against the offenders.

However, a young child being raped or sexually harassed is not as uncommon as we would like to believe. The difference is only that unlike this case where Asifa was abused by strangers, children are most often abused by people they know – grandfathers, uncles, neighbours, their gurus, their teachers, priests. Since these are people who the other adults respect and love, children are often alone in

the abuse they face and do not find the space to report such crimes.

India has one of the most progressive laws to protect children from sexual abuse, the **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012.** ♦.....

In the detailed list of offences within the Act,

- Any sexual act with a child
 - Any form of inappropriate touch
 - Any sexualised conversation or language
 - Any display of sexualised content or taking images of the child in a sexualised manner
- are all grave offences.

It is interesting to note that the POCSO Act came into existence following the 2007 survey conducted among adults by the Ministry of Women and Child that showed that 53% of the respondents faced sexual abuse when they were children, and of this, 57% was boys.

It was also found that more than 70% children were abused by known persons (NSPCC)

Remember

- **The consent of a child, however freely given, is no consent at all.**
- **Boys are as susceptible to this violence as girls.**
- **Children no matter how young might be abused.**

Further, the Act provides a mandatory reporting clause – so any adult who is aware of a child being sexually abused is to mandatorily report this or they will be considered complicit in the offence.

The Act also provides detailed guidelines for child-friendly investigation, time-bound trials and child-friendly court procedures. Remember that the child never has to come in contact with the perpetrator again, even in court. You can approach Childline (at 1098, Toll-free) number, the State or District Commission for Protection of Child Rights (S/DCPCR) or the Legal Aid Cell in your State or District for further guidance.

The perpetrators are rarely strangers. With their predatory nature, they usually come in a position of authority, trust and respect and use that position to their advantage.



So remember the following:

- Teach your child that “No means No”. Teach them to respect another person’s “No” as well as to expect things to stop as soon as they say “No” and otherwise to come and talk to you about it.
- Teach your child when they are as young as 2 or 3 years to identify an unwanted touch.

Talk to them about sex when they are the **right age**, so that they are not surprised if they are abused and know that it is not their fault and that they can report the incident. Many young people tend to blame themselves for abuse, causing long and painful journeys of emotional trauma.

- Believe your child when they come and report an incident to you. No matter how respected or important the person is. Remember that your inaction might have lifelong implications for your child.

Right age is defined as an age when the parent/guardian/caretaker of the child feels that the child has started understanding body parts. It needs to be done regularly as small bits and pieces of information, till the child can have a full conversation about sex.

How to make Public, Private and Work spaces safe?

Public Spaces

In theory, public spaces need to be safe and accessible for all the people in the society. But in practice, there are spoken and unspoken restrictions/taboos – places that are unsafe to go to, times of the day when one does not venture out, types of clothing that are not acceptable, etc.

These perceptions or norms as to what one can or cannot do, in public, further feeds into the idea that a person who does not conform “can be punished/can be put in their place/is asking for it”. This limits their freedom of movement, their access to essential services, and their ability to attend schools/colleges/offices. It also disrupts their social and cultural life.

Therefore, the need is to change these basic discourses and assumptions. It is also necessary that effective deterrents be put in place to ensure the safety and well-being of all the people. The following are some of the ways to achieve this

goal:

- The implementation of the current laws needs to be strengthened. Police personnel and administrators, dealing with such issues, need to be specifically trained and sensitized. The police stations need to be made more people-friendly.
- Schools, colleges and universities should teach students about respectful gender relations, gender equality and safe spaces. For example, restricting access or having differential rules like curfew based on gender creates an environment of gender inequality.
- Safety audits of public spaces should be conducted at regular intervals.
- Online forums, social media platforms etc should be made safer for women. The cyber cells, to which complaints are made in case of online sexual harassment, should be better equipped to deal with this new and emerging form of sexual abuse. Website operators should be more responsive to complaints made about inappropriate content displayed online. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc have their own policies (Community Standards) to deal with harassment online. They have to be made more robust and region specific.
- Finally gender-sensitive planning and approach is key. This could mean something as important as increased participation of women in Parliament or something as simple as sufficient functional street lights on all streets. This will also include being mindful of the specific needs of people with increased vulnerabilities like people who live on the streets, persons with disabilities etc while planning and developing public spaces.

Private Spaces

- The most effective way to ensure that private spaces are made safe is to establish a culture of openness in your home. Children should be encouraged to talk and share their experiences – both good and bad. They should be taught about the importance of consent and boundaries.
- For example, children should be encouraged to ask for permission before showing physical affection. Also, never force your child to hug, kiss or touch somebody if they don't want it, even if it is a family member. Similarly, as

adults you should respect the fact that the child gets to define his/her personal space – if the child asks you stop tickling him/her, then stop! This will teach them to respect the word “No”. Older children should be told that consent means asking for and waiting for a “Yes” and that the absence of a “No” is not a “Yes”!

According to the National Crimes Records Bureau, in 2016, across all rape cases, **95%** of rapists were not strangers but family, friends and neighbours.

- Women/Men should feel supported enough to open up about any kind of harassment or abuse faced by them.
- Better implementation of Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 should be ensured. Early/forced marriages endanger the lives of girls: domestic violence, marital rape or early pregnancies.
- Marital rape should be criminalized. The argument that marital rape attacks the concept of family is untrue. Marriage and family, as institutions, are destroyed when the husband uses the Marriage license as a tool to rape his wife. Consent, as discussed above, needs to be a determining factor even in private interactions – even if it is your spouse! Recognizing and criminalizing marital rape gives the woman the autonomy to decide sexual interactions. It makes her less susceptible to sexual assault in her own home.

Work Spaces

- The Employer is responsible for ensuring a work environment that is free of sexual harassment. The Employer is the Head or the Officer specified as such in Central/State Government, Local Authority/Body. In private organizations, he/she is the person responsible for management/supervision/control. In the context of a dwelling house, it is the person who employs or benefits from the employment.
- Every organization and branch of the organisation, having more than 10 employees, should constitute an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) . Your ICC might be known by names like Gender Committee or such.
- The employer should formulate an internal organizational policy on

prohibition, prevention and redressal of sexual harassment. Zero tolerance policy towards sexual harassment should be followed.

- The policy, the penal consequences of not following it and the composition of the ICC should be displayed prominently at the workplace.
- The Local Complaint Committee (LCC), at the district level, can be approached if your organisation has less than 10 employees or if you are a domestic worker or when the complaint is against the Employer himself.
- The Employer should also ensure that online sexual harassment is not perpetuated at the workplace. It should be made clear to the employees, through a clearly formulated online policy, that inappropriate use of internet and emails will not be tolerated.
- Workshops and awareness programs should be conducted at regular intervals to sensitize the employees.
- Induction programs for new employees to be used as platforms to raise awareness about workplace sexual harassment.
- The members of the ICC should be properly trained so that they can effectively implement the law.

Composition of the ICC

- The Presiding Officer of the ICC should be a woman working in a senior level at the organization.
- It should contain at least two members from amongst the employees.
- At least one external member, preferably from an NGO/association, committed to the cause of women.
- Not less than 50 percent of the members should be women.

Also, after the final ruling by the ICC if a woman feels that she is not satisfied, she may give a police complaint then too.

Some of the laws in place to prevent, redress and prohibit sexual harassment are gender specific. Strong policies that respond to the vulnerabilities of other gender groups should also be in place.

Who can you go to with your complaints?

We would always suggest that you tell a friend or a family member first. You can also approach an NGO who works on these issues or a psychologist for support. **Remember, your mental and physical health is most important and having a safety net** can take you a long way in ensuring this.

Once you think you are ready, patiently write down the incident to the best of your memory. Remember, no detail is unimportant. We realise this can be painful, so maybe you can ask friends or family to help you.

Then when you are ready you can approach one of the following authorities:

1. Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) in your workplace or academic institution or the Local Complaints Committee (LCC) in your District Office – Mandated by the **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.**

You can file a complaint with this committee at your workplace (every office with more than 10 employees should have one) or at the local district office.

This can be filed for anything that makes you feel uncomfortable: whether it is inappropriate sexual conduct or something that seems “normalized” like an offensive

However, in case of sexual assaults where physical injury or rape has happened, it is ideal to immediately get a medical examination done, and the report should be obtained from the hospital. This can help in having ample evidence for use at a later stage, when the survivor makes a complaint. This also reduces the chance of tampering medical evidence by external agencies.

You might have heard of this as the Vishakha Guidelines. These were framed based on a Supreme Court case (*Vishakha vs. State of Rajasthan*) which recognised the need to provide women with safe workspaces after a local social worker in Rajasthan, Bhanwari Devi was gang raped by men of a village because she stopped the child marriage of a one-year-old girl in 1992.

remark about women. After a short inquiry, depending on the gravity of the offence the committee can help you file an FIR or follow up with appropriate authorities in private or public sector for disciplinary action.

Remember to check our section on how an ICC in office should function or you can download this handbook by the Ministry of Women and Child Development – <http://wcd.nic.in/act/handbook-sexual-harassment-women-workplace>.

2. You can walk into any police station and file a complaint.

While going to the police station to file an FIR, some key points to remember are:

- You can go alone to file a complaint, though it is easier to take someone else along if you fear you may feel intimidated. A lawyer is not required.
- The survivor need not go at all. You can get an FIR registered through someone who has witnessed the incident or even someone with knowledge of it.
- The police cannot refuse to register an FIR even if a considerable period of time has elapsed since the incident of rape or molestation. If the police tell you that they can't lodge your FIR since you didn't report it earlier, do not concede.
- A rape survivor can register her police complaint from any police station under the Zero FIR ruling by Supreme Court. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013 also has provisions for punishment of public servants who refuse to register complaints of sexual assault survivors.
- Under no circumstances can the identity of a rape survivor be revealed. Section 228 A of the Indian Penal Code makes the disclosure of a survivor's identity a punishable offense.
- The complaint can even be registered online or over the phone.
- If the complaint is narrated orally, make sure that the Police Officer then reads it back to the person, so that the individual can ascertain that the facts are recorded as stated and an FIR is registered on the basis of the same.
- Once satisfied with the details included, the person filing must sign the complaint.
- After recording, signing and registering the FIR, the Police Officer must necessarily give the individual a copy free of cost.
- There is no particular time to visit a police station to file a complaint.

3. National/State Commission for Women – Constituted for promoting and protecting the interests of women in India as per the National Commission for Women Act, 1990.

The Commission's Complaints and Counseling Cell receives complaints on various forms of violence and discriminatory practices against women at home, in the workplace or in public places. The Commission can receive this complaint orally, in writing, or can take *suo moto*

cognizance. •.....

Once you file a complaint they will begin an enquiry which will include hearing your version of the story, contacting the accused for their version, doing a spot examination and talking to witnesses (the inquiry committee usually has experts like

Legal Latin word for when the Commission can start proceedings of a case of violence or discrimination against a woman or group of women (that they are aware of) without actually receiving a complaint.

psychologists, lawyers, social workers etc). Based on their enquiry, they will issue a list of recommendations to ensure that appropriate authorities do what is necessary including response to a show cause notice for inaction, register a complaint, provide appropriate compensation, provide legal aid etc.

Things to note:

- They require some detailed information so that they can start the inquiry. You can find the guidelines here – <https://bit.ly/2Ctmi87>
- You can register and track the complaint online here – <http://ncw.nic.in/onlinecomplaintsv2/frmPubLogin.aspx> (you have to create a login ID)
- They don't take complaints that are *sub judice* before a court or tribunal, or one where they have already provided a ruling, or one which is already being heard by a State Commission, or which is **more than a year old**. •.....

You can find more on this here

- <https://bit.ly/1FEo0K0>

We obviously do not agree with a limitation clause like this and will be writing to them to change this condition. So keep checking and hopefully this clause will not stand.

4. If you are a child or know of a child who needs help you can always inform Childline through their toll-free number, 1098 (Read it as Ten-Nine-Eight as it is easier for a child to remember). Childline is a helpline network throughout the country supported by the Government of India.

You can expect them to send a professional to help the child in distress immediately. You might have to answer some of their questions, so that they can reach the child and be prepared to help the child. As a responsible citizen, it is best advised to stay with the child till the Childline coordinator reaches, about 30-45 minutes.

Remember to ask for a phone number from their office so that you can call and check back on the action they have taken.

5. You can also call the women's helpline number at 1091 or the police at 100 for immediate help if you feel that your safety or safety of anyone you know is threatened and they will send you help.

6. There are also applications (apps) that you can download on your phone that will send an SOS message to three to five phone numbers at the press of an alert button (this is the power button for some apps, the volume button for other, or some you just have to shake your phone twice). The app lets you pre-register the numbers of people you trust (make sure you give these people a heads-up and let them know that they are your safety numbers). The message will have your location so that they can use their map to track you.

7. Instances of Online Sexual Harassment can be reported to the Cyber cell in your city. You can also make an online complaint at <https://cybercrime.gov.in/cybercitizen/home.htm>

This is not an exhaustive list. There are other bodies in your state, local area, community or institution who can help you with your complaint.



Notes:





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