



Sample Employer Notification Letter 1: Reporting Sexual Harassment to Your Employer

If you choose to report the sexual harassment to your employer, it will be helpful to you to write down your complaint. By writing it down, you can make sure that your complaint is clear and says everything that you want it to. It also creates a record that you reported, which can be important if your employer does not immediately fix the problem. For instance, if you write down your complaint, it is much harder for your employer to say later that it did not know about the harassment.

Your complaint should describe the harassment in as much detail as possible. It is important to include who was involved, what happened, when it happened (even approximately), and where it happened. The more specific you can be, the better. If you are comfortable, describe how these events made you feel (angry, disgusted, afraid, embarrassed, etc.) and your thoughts about what happened. If you know, include how you want your employer to respond to your complaint.

Do not forget to keep a copy of your complaint!

The Sample Letter to Report Sexual Harassment (First Notification) is a fill-in-the-blank example of how to report sexual harassment to your employer. There are also two example letters that use the Sample Letter in different situations: one where the harassment happened more than once and one for a single event of harassment.

First, answer these questions to collect the information that you should include in your letter to your employer. Next, you will use your answers to fill in the letter on the following pages.

Reporting Sexual Harassment to Your Employer

- 1) What is your position? _____
- 2) What is the name of the business you work for? _____
- 3) What is your harasser's name? _____
- 4) What is your harasser's relationship to you? (For example, boss, co-worker, customer, a contractor hired by your company) _____
- 5) Who are you writing your complaint to? _____

Harassment

In this section, you will describe the harassment that you have experienced. Please be as specific as possible about what happened and when it happened. Although there are many kinds of harassment, you may report to your employer if you have faced just one type of harassment or many types.

Verbal Harassment includes unwelcome sexual comments; questions to or about you, your activities and your body; jokes; insults; name-calling; repeatedly asking you out on dates; and sending you unwelcome and repeated text messages.

Have you experienced verbal harassment? YES NO

6) If no, please go to the next section. If yes, please describe what happened. Please be as detailed as possible. If what your harasser's comment really meant would not be clear to an outsider, be sure to explain it. (For example: At least every week, he told me that I should be nicer to him or else he would tell them I was coming in late to work. He would say this while touching my leg or my arm. I knew that "them" meant my supervisors because he had told me before that he was friends with my supervisors and that they would trust him over me.)

7) When did this happen? Did it happen once, more than once, or often? Do you remember the date or approximate date(s) that it happened?

Visual Harassment includes possession or display of derogatory or graphic materials, exposing their intimate body parts to you, etc.

Have you experienced visual harassment? YES NO

8) If no, please go to the next section. If yes, please describe what happened. Please be as detailed as possible.

9) When did this happen? Did it happen once, more than once, or often? Do you remember the date or approximate date(s) that it happened?

Physical Harassment includes unwelcome touching or physical contact, pulling of hair, and groping.

Have you experienced physical harassment? YES NO

10) If no, please go to the next section. If yes, please describe what happened. Please be as detailed as possible. If applicable, describe individual incidents of harassment (including sexual assault) that are particularly severe.

11) When did this happen? Did it happen once, more than once, or often? Do you remember the date or approximate date(s) that it happened?

Harassment in exchange for a benefit includes sexual conduct the harasser required you to perform to receive an employment benefit (e.g., promotion, raise, bonus), avoid the denial of an employment benefit, or avoid an adverse employment consequence

(e.g., warning, suspension, demotion).

Have you experienced harassment in exchange for a benefit? YES NO

12) If no, please go to the next section. If yes, please describe what happened. Please be as detailed as possible. (For example: "On Thursday after work, he told me that he would not promote me if I did not have sex with him.").

13) When did this happen? Did it happen once, more than once, or often? Do you remember the date or approximate date(s) that it happened?

Your Responses to the Harassment So Far

It is ok if you have not yet told your harasser to stop. However, if you have, that information is important.

Have you asked your harasser to stop? YES NO

14) If yes, describe any times you have told the harasser(s) not to make the unwelcome comments, touch you, etc. and when you spoke to them.

Your Feelings

15) How has the harassment made you feel? (For example: scared, embarrassed or humiliated).

Resolving the Problem

You have the opportunity to describe what you would like to happen to fix this problem. "For example, you can request that your employer investigate the harassment, schedule your harasser on different work shifts than you, discipline the harasser, assign you a new client or work team, implement anti-harassment trainings for all employees, and / or correct a negative performance evaluation you received due to harassment.

16) What would you like your employer to do to fix the problem?

17) When would you like your employer to respond to your letter? (For example: "soon" or "in 1 week").



Sample Letter 1: Reporting Sexual Harassment (First Notification)

Using your answers to the questions above, write your letter using this template. When you see *blue italicized text*, replace it with the answers you wrote.

Re: Reporting Sexual Harassment

Today's date

To *#5 Name of Human Resources director, supervisor, program director, or other manager*:

I work at *#2 Location* as a *#1 your position*. *#3 Harasser's Name(s)* is sexually harassing me. I am asking you to take prompt, corrective action to end the harassment and prevent it from recurring. If you are not the appropriate person to receive this request, please notify me immediately, and forward this letter to the person responsible for addressing sexual harassment in our workplace.

As you know, *#3 Harasser's Name(s)* is *#4 Harasser's relation*.

#3 Harasser's Name(s) has subjected me to:

- *#6 & 7 Describe any verbal harassment*
- *#8 & 9 Describe any visual harassment*
- *#10 & 11 Describe any physical harassment*
- *#12 & 13 Describe any harassment in exchange for a benefit*

I have asked **#3 Harasser's Name(s)** not to **#14 Describe any times you have told the harasser(s) not to make the unwelcome comments, touch you, etc.** on **Date**. However, **his/her/their** conduct has persisted.

The harassment makes me feel **#15 Describe how the harassment made you feel** and makes it difficult for me to do my job.

Under the law, an employer must take all reasonable steps necessary to promptly correct harassment and prevent its recurrence. In order to stop the harassment, prevent its recurrence, and remedy the situation, I would like you to **#16 Describe how you want your employer to respond to your complaint.**

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I expect to hear from you **#17 List when you would like a response.**

Sincerely,

Your name



Example Letter 1A: Reporting Repeated Sexual Harassment

This is an example of a completed complaint.

Re: Reporting Sexual Harassment

July 19, 2019

To **Human Resources Director**:

I work at the **XYZ Store in the clothing department. Charlie T. and David S.** are sexually harassing me. I am asking you to take prompt, corrective action to end the harassment and prevent it from recurring. If you are not the appropriate person to receive this request, please notify me immediately, and forward this letter to the person responsible for addressing sexual harassment in our workplace.

As you know, **Charlie T. and David S.** are **my coworkers**.

Charlie T. and David S. often subject me to harassment, including:

- **On many shifts that we worked on together in the spring, Charlie T. and David S. made sexual comments to or about me, like “hey baby,” “hey sexy,” or “you’re so fine.”**
- **On multiple occasions, Charlie T. and David S. have asked for my phone number. When I said no, David S. kept asking, saying “why not,” “come on honey,” and “don’t worry you can trust me.”**
- **On about four occasions, Charlie T. has asked if he could “take me out,” persisting even after I said “No, I have a boyfriend.”**

- The last time I said no, Charlie T. threatened to lie to my supervisor and say I was leaving early from my shifts if I did not “play nice.”
- About two-three times a month, Charlie T. has made comments about my appearance on photos I post on my social media, including “damn girl,” and “you’re so fine.”

The harassment makes me feel **embarrassed** and makes it difficult for me to do my job. **I now feel nervous going to work and am always on edge, worried about demeaning comments.**

Under the law, an employer must take all reasonable steps necessary to promptly correct harassment and prevent its recurrence. In order to stop the harassment, prevent its recurrence, and remedy the situation, **I would like you to discipline Charlie T. and David S. and, while the investigation is ongoing, ensure that I’m never on a shift with either of them.**

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I expect to hear from you by **next Friday, July 27.**

Sincerely,

Rosa B.



Example Letter 1B: Reporting a Single Incident of Harassment

This is another example of a completed complaint.

Re: Reporting Sexual Harassment

July 20, 2019

To **Human Resources Director**:

I work at the **XYZ Store in the clothing department**. **Charlie T.** is sexually harassed me. I am asking you to take prompt, corrective action to end the harassment and prevent it from recurring. If you are not the appropriate person to receive this request, please notify me immediately, and forward this letter to the person responsible for addressing sexual harassment in our workplace.

As you know, **Charlie T.** is my **weekend shift manager**.

Two weeks ago, everyone from our store went to a bar after closing the store. After most people had left, Charlie T. put his hand on my thigh and said, "Want to go over to my place?" I said "I have a boyfriend, I need to go home." Charlie T. became angry and said, "You don't want to make me mad. I control your shifts." I asked what he meant, and he said, "You know what I mean." I repeated that I had to go home and left the bar. Charlie T. followed me into the parking lot, and blocked me from entering my car, demanding that I come with him instead. When I told him to leave me alone, he started to kiss me and grope me. I tried to push him off, but I could not. Eventually, Brian J., who works in a different department, came to the parking lot. When Charlie T. saw Brian J., Charlie T. let me go, and I escaped into my car.

The harassment has made me feel **extremely afraid at work, especially on shifts that Charlie T. manages**, and makes it difficult for me to do my job. **I'm afraid that he will threaten me again or will cut my hours.**

Under the law, an employer must take all reasonable steps necessary to promptly correct harassment and prevent its recurrence. In order to stop the harassment, prevent its recurrence, and remedy the situation, **I would like you to discipline Charlie T. and ensure that he does not retaliate against me for rejecting him or making this report.**

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I expect to hear from you by **next Friday, July 27.**

Sincerely,

Rosa B.