

Document Name	Harassment Investigative Interview Questions Form
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Purpose	To elicit evidence or information from a person (i.e., witness, victim, complainant, or suspect) during the process of an investigation.
Connecting Documents	7020p
Connecting Forms	H7021f, H7022f, H7023f
Connecting Systems	Not applicable

Harassment Investigative Interview Questions

Intent

Harassment can have serious consequences. Behaviors such as emotional and psychological intimidation and harassment can be disruptive and harmful to the victim and can quickly turn into physical violence. This document has been created to outline best practices and provide some helpful questions to ask while interviewing an employee about potential harassment. Employees who come forward with allegations of harassment must not face any form of reprisal if they have done so in good faith.

Best Practices

- The conversation with the employee should be held by a member of the human resources department, a manager or supervisor whom the individual is comfortable with, a union representative (if applicable), or a workplace coordinator.
- Be sure to hold the conversation in a private area to maintain confidentiality and be respectful of the employee's privacy.
- Take a supportive approach.
- Assure the individual that you are available to talk anytime, and that support is available.
- If your company has an Employee Assistance Program, be sure to discuss the available benefits and provide the information to the employee so that they can contact your provider if they choose to do so.
- If the employee discloses that there has been an incident of harassment, be sure to fully investigate the claims.

Interview the Complainant

- Obtain a full account of the incident, and document all details provided.
- Determine any potential pattern involved, or if the incident was a singular occurrence.
- Determine if the incident was influenced by any contextual factors.
- Identify any reporting relationships or hierarchical structures that may have influenced the incident.
- Determine a timeline of events associated with the incident, what the job duties of each party were at the time of the incident, and what their expected locations were.
- Examine the potential of a charge made under false pretenses, and any motivating factors that may be involved. Work to rule out these potential elements.

- Inform the complainant that a thorough investigation will take place.
- Obtain a written, signed, and dated statement from the complainant.
- Ensure that the employee is free from retaliation because of their coming forward.

Interview the Respondent

- Describe the details of the accusation and ask for clarification on any discrepancies between the two stories.
- Identify any reporting relationships, or hierarchical structures that exist between the parties.
- Determine a timeline of events associated with the incident, what the job duties of each party were at the time of the incident, and what their expected locations were.
- Determine any potential for retaliation or reprisal and inform the accused that this would be unacceptable.
- Document all pertinent details of the interview, including observations of behavior displayed and their account of the incident.

Interview Witnesses

- Obtain written, dated, and signed statements from any witnesses.
- Ensure that the employee is free from retaliation because of their coming forward.

Interview Questions

1. Where and when did the incident occur?

2. Who was involved in the incident?

3. What happened before the incident occurred?

4. What happened during the incident?

5. Did anyone else witness the incident? If so, please provide their names.

6. If the incident was witnessed by someone else, what was their role in the incident?

7. How did you react to the incident?

8. If applicable, describe any previous incidents.

9. Is there anyone else who may have relevant information regarding this?

10. Have you talked to anyone about the incident? If so, please provide their names. What did you tell them?

11. How would you like to see the situation resolved?

12. Is there anything else you want to tell me that I haven't asked you about?

Follow-Up

Harassment investigations are fluid and follow-up interviews may be required if additional clarification is necessary. Before concluding the initial interview with the interviewee, ensure that the individual is aware that they may be asked to provide additional information as necessary to support your investigation later in the process.