



INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE POLICY

Last reviewed : 3.11.2023

Issue: 4

Page: 1-8

Policy	With regard to the Supreme Court Judgment and guidelines issued in 1997 to provide for the effective enforcement of the basic human right of gender equality and guarantee against sexual harassment and abuse, more particularly against sexual harassment at work places, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has issued circulars since 1998, to all the universities, advising them to establish a permanent cell and a committee; to develop guidelines to combat sexual harassment, violence against women and ragging at the universities and colleges. Keeping the above guidelines in view Sri Venkateshwaraa Dental College has constituted a Committee against Sexual Harassment.
Purpose	Sri Venkateshwaraa Dental College has committed itself to provide a congenial and conducive atmosphere in which students, teachers and non-teaching staff can work together in an environment free of violence, harassment, exploitation, and intimidation. This includes all forms of gender violence, sexual harassment, and discrimination on the basis of gender. Every member is expected to be aware of the commitment to the right to freedom of expression and association; it strongly supports gender equality and opposes any form of gender discrimination and violence.
Scope	To promote a social and psychological environment that will raise awareness about sexual harassment in its various forms.



Members Of the Committee	MEMBERS OF THE INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE 1. Chairperson: Head of the Institution 2. Member secretary 3. Members (9) – 6 Teaching faculties & 1 Non teaching staffs. • The membership of such nominated members shall be for a period of two years. • The quorum for the meeting shall be two-thirds of the total number of members. • The agenda, minutes, and Action Taken Reports are to be documented with official signatures and maintained electronically in a retrievable format.
Objectives of Internal Complaints Committee	1. To fulfill the directive of the Supreme Court, as per UGC directives and the Pondicherry University in respect of implementing a policy against sexual harassment in the institution. 2. To evolve a mechanism for the prevention and redressal of sexual harassment cases and other acts of genderbased violence in the institution. 3. To ensure the implementation of the policy in letter and spirit through proper reporting of the complaints and their follow-up procedures. 4. To provide an environment free of gender-based discrimination. 5. To ensure equal access of all facilities and participation in activities of the college 6. To create a secure physical and social environment which will deter acts of sexual harassment 7. To promote a social and psychological environment that will raise awareness about sexual harassment in its various forms.



**Working Mechanism
of Internal Complaints
Committee**

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF INTERNAL COMPLAINTS
COMMITTEE:**

1. To ensure provision of a work and educational environment that is free from sexual harassment (Sexual harassment is defined by law from the perspective of the person who feels they have been harassed and it occurs if the person who feels they have been harassed feels offended, humiliated, or intimidated by the conduct and it is reasonable, in all the circumstances that the person who feels they have been harassed would feel offended, humiliated or intimidated).
2. To take all reasonable steps (active and preventive in nature) to prevent the harassment occurring; To address any oral/written complaint about: unwelcome sexual advances, unsolicited acts of physical intimacy, unwelcome requests for sexual favors or other unwelcome conduct of asexual nature. Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature includes oral or written statements of a sexual nature to a person, or in a person's presence.
3. Obtain high level support from the Management & College for implementing a comprehensive strategy:
 - Providing information to all students, Faculties & Non teaching staffs about what constitutes sexual harassment and about their responsibility not to sexually harass other staff and students.
 - Providing information and training to faculties, managers, supervisors and staff conducting teaching and learning activities on meeting their responsibilities in relation to maintaining a work and study environment free from sexual harassment.
4. Develop a written policy which prohibits sexual harassment. The Institution shall have an Internal Complaints Committee Policy. The policy outlines the Institute's key commitments and legal responsibilities and provides a definition of sexual harassment and behaviors that are not acceptable.
5. Regularly distribute and promote the policy at all levels of the



organization;

Ensure that the committee members discuss and reinforce the policy at faculties & students meetings. Provide the policy and other relevant information on sexual harassment to new staff as a standard part of induction; Periodically review the policy to ensure it is operating effectively and contains up to date information.

6. Display anti-sexual harassment posters on notice boards in common work areas and distribute relevant brochures; Conduct regular awareness rising sessions for all staff on sexual harassment issues.

7. Ensure that complaints processes

- are clearly documented
- are explained to all the Faculties, PG & UG students & non teaching staffs
- offer both informal and formal options for resolution
- address complaints in a manner which is fair, timely and confidential
- are based on the principles of natural justice
- provide clear guidance on internal investigation procedures and record keeping
- Give an undertaking that no faculties, PG & UG students & non teaching staffs will be victimized or disadvantaged for making a complaint.

Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)

Selection of the Internal Complaint Committee members is extremely important as in most cases the committee members, if in sub-ordinate position of power at workplace to that of accused, find it very difficult to diligently carry out the responsibilities bestowed on them as heads or members of the Committee, against the superiors.

The Internal Complaints Committee must remember:

- It needs extensive orientation for effective functioning.
- It cannot function like a criminal court.



- The complainant, when she complains, has at stake her personal life and career.
- The impact sexual harassment has on a woman.
- It is difficult for a woman to talk about anything sexual. Hence there can be long time interval between the harassment and the actual complaint.
- It needs to handle complaints in a confidential manner and within a time-bound framework
- It needs to submit an annual report on sexual harassment to the appropriate government authority.

FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

PREVENTIVE STEPS.

It will be the endeavor of the committee:

- a) To facilitate a safe environment that is free of sexual harassment;
- b) To promote behaviors that creates an atmosphere that ensures gender equality and equal opportunities.

REMEDIAL STEPS.

1. To ensure that the mechanism for registering complaints is safe, accessible and sensitive.
2. To take cognizance of complaints about sexual harassment, conduct enquiries, provide assistance and redressal to the victims, recommend penalties and take action against the harasser, if necessary.
3. To advise the competent authority to issue warnings or take the help of the law to stop the harasser, if the complainant consents.
4. To seek medical, police and legal intervention with the consent of the complainant.
5. To make arrangements for appropriate psychological, emotional and physical support (in form of counseling, security and other assistance) to the victim if so desires



PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE COMMITTEE

1. The Committee shall meet as and when any complaint is received by it. Complaint may be received by any member of the committee.
2. The Committee may direct the complainant to prepare and submit a detailed statement of incidents if the written complaint lacks exactness and required particulars, within a period of two (2) days from such direction or such other time period that the Committee may decide.
3. The Committee shall direct the accused employee(s) to prepare and submit a written response to the complaint / allegations within a period of four (4) days from such direction or such other time period as the Committee may decide.
4. Each party shall be provided with a copy of the written statement(s) submitted by the other.
5. The Committee shall conduct the proceedings in accordance with the principles of natural justice. It shall allow both parties reasonable opportunity of presenting their case. However, should the accused choose not to participate in the proceedings, the Committee shall continue ex parte.
6. The Committee shall allow both parties to produce relevant documents and witnesses to support their case. Documents produced by either party shall be affixed with that party's signature to certify the document as original / true copy.
7. The party against whom the document / witness is produced shall be entitled to challenge / cross-examine the same.
8. The Committee shall sit on a day-to-day basis to record and consider the evidence produced by both parties.
9. As far as practicable, all proceedings of the Committee shall take place in the presence of both parties.
10. Minutes of all proceedings of the Committee shall be prepared and duly signed by the members of the Committee.
11. The Committee shall make all Endeavour to complete its proceedings



Sri Venkateshwaraa Dental College

(Recognized by Dental Council of India ; Affiliated to Pondicherry University)

(A Unit of Ramachandra Educational Trust)

Ariyur, Puducherry - 605 102.



within a period of fifteen (15) days from the date of receipt of complaint.

12. The Committee shall record its findings in writing supported with reasons and shall forward the same with its recommendations, to the Principal/Management, within a period of five (5) days from completion of the proceedings before it. In case the Committee finds that the facts disclose the commission of a criminal offence by the accused person, this shall be specifically mentioned in the Committee's report.

13. If, in the course of the proceedings before it, the Committee is satisfied that a prima facie case of sexual harassment is made out against the accused employee(s)/student and that there is any chance of the recurrence of any such action, or that it is required to do so in the interests of justice, it may, on the request of the complainant or otherwise, disciplinary action could be initiated in the form of:-

1. Warning
2. Written apology
3. Bond of good behavior
4. Adverse remarks in the confidential report
5. Debarring from supervisory duties
6. Denial of membership of statutory bodies
7. Denial of re-employment/re – admission
8. Stopping of increments / promotion/denying admission ticket
9. Reverting, demotion
10. Suspension
11. Dismissal
12. Any other relevant mechanism

If, in the course of the proceedings before it, the Committee is satisfied that any person has retaliated against / victimized the complainant or any person assisting the complainant as a result of the complaint having been made or such assistance having been offered, the Committee shall report the same in writing, to the Principal/Management, with reasons and with

No. 13-A, Pondy - Villupuram Main Road, Ariyur, Puducherry - 605 102.

Tel : 0413 - 2644405 | Telefax: 0413-2644406 | E-Mail: principal@svdcpondy.ac.in | Website : www.svdcpondy.ac.in



Sri Venkateshwaraa Dental College

(Recognized by Dental Council of India ; Affiliated to Pondicherry University)

(A Unit of Ramachandra Educational Trust)

Ariyur, Puducherry - 605 102.



	recommendations of the action to be taken against such person. If, at the culmination of the proceedings before it, the Committee is satisfied that the complainant has knowingly brought false charges of sexual harassment against any person, it shall report the same in writing to the Principal/Management, with reasons and with recommendations of the action to be taken against such person.
--	--

Reconstitution of committee	Once in 2 years
Frequency of meeting	Twice in a year
Related/Supportive Documents	Circulars, brochures, Minutes of the meeting, photographs
Custodian	Member Secretary

Prepared by	Verified	Approved by
 Dr. Devameena.S, Reader, MEMBER SECRETARY	 IQAC Co-ordinator CO-ORDINATOR IQAC	 Dr. S. Senthinathan Principal PRINCIPAL Sri Venkateshwaraa Dental College, Ariyur, Puducherry - 605 102.

No. 13-A, Pondy - Villupuram Main Road, Ariyur, Puducherry - 605 102.

Tel : 0413 - 2644405 | Telefax: 0413-2644406 | E-Mail: principal@svdcpondy.ac.in | Website : www.svdcpondy.ac.in