

## Duty to prevent sexual harassment: six focus areas

To get ready for the new legal obligation to take reasonable steps to prevent workplace sexual harassment, employers need to review and strengthen their approach across a range of areas.

These are the six key areas that we think employers should consider. The specific steps you need to take will depend on your particular business and your size and resources.

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| <b>1. Policies/contracts</b>  | <b>2. Employee support and complaints/ investigations channels</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Harassment</li> <li>➤ Alcohol &amp; drugs</li> <li>➤ Social media</li> <li>➤ Non-disclosure clauses and agreements</li> <li>➤ Commercial contracts/supplier codes</li> <li>➤ Work travel (domestic and international)</li> <li>➤ Lone working (if applicable)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Channels for reporting concerns/complaints, including options to report anonymously</li> <li>➤ Trained supporters/guardians</li> <li>➤ Complaints database</li> <li>➤ Employee resource groups</li> <li>➤ Implementation of investigation outcomes/recommendations</li> </ul> |
| <b>3. Training/awareness</b>  | <b>4. Risk management</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Leadership – preventing sexual harassment</li> <li>➤ Respect in the workplace</li> <li>➤ Complaints channels</li> <li>➤ Allyship and being an active bystander</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Risk identification/assessment, bespoke to your particular business, including risks from third parties</li> <li>➤ Measures in place to control identified risks</li> </ul>   |
| <b>5. Leadership</b>  | <b>6. Other – if applicable</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Statements of policy/intent</li> <li>➤ Ownership at board level</li> <li>➤ Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of training, policies and risk control measures</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Regulatory expectations</li> <li>➤ Engagement, culture and employee experience surveys</li> <li>➤ Exit interviews</li> <li>➤ Signage, policies and contract clauses relating to clients or customers</li> <li>➤ Social events e.g. Christmas/annual party</li> </ul>          |

*The duty to prevent sexual harassment comes into force on 26 October 2024 and requires employers to take reasonable steps to stop sexual harassment from happening in their workplaces, shifting the focus away from redress towards prevention. For more details about the legal requirements, and for more information about how we can help, see [our article Taking reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment: what employers need to know about the new duty](#) and speak to your usual Lewis Silkin contact.*

**For more information, please contact:**



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