



What is Sexual Misconduct and Violence?

Sexual misconduct and violence encompass a broad range of behaviors that include rape, attempted rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, image-based sexual abuse (commonly known as “revenge porn”), and indecent exposure. These actions violate personal boundaries, dignity, and safety and are punishable under Indian law, including the **POSH Act, 2013** and relevant provisions of the **Indian Penal Code (IPC)**.

Definition of Sexual Misconduct and Violence

Sexual misconduct refers to any unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature, occurring in person, through letters, phone calls, text messages, emails, or via social media platforms. It includes, but is not limited to, the following actions:

1. Non-Consensual Sexual Acts

- Engaging in or attempting to engage in any sexual act without the consent of the other individual.

2. Sexual Touching Without Consent

- Intentionally touching another person in a sexual manner without their explicit agreement.

3. Sexual Harassment

- Conduct of a sexual nature, including verbal remarks, gestures, or physical behavior, that creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for the recipient.

4. Indecent Exposure

- Inappropriately exposing sexual organs to another individual.

5. Stalking

- Repeatedly following or attempting to contact someone without a legitimate reason, causing fear or distress.

6. Image-Based Sexual Abuse

- Recording, sharing, or distributing intimate images or videos of another person without their consent.

7. Degrading Social Events

- Arranging or participating in events or activities that cause humiliation, degradation, or harm to individuals who have experienced sexual violence (e.g., inappropriately themed events or initiations).

Key Legal Protections in India

- **The POSH Act, 2013** addresses sexual harassment in the workplace, ensuring a safe environment for employees and students.
- **IPC Sections** such as **375** (rape), **354** (assault or use of criminal force on a woman intending to outrage her modesty), **354A** (sexual harassment), **354C** (voyeurism), **354D** (stalking), and **509** (insulting modesty of a woman) provide comprehensive legal protections.
- **IT Act, 2000** provisions address cyber harassment and the misuse of digital platforms.

The Importance of Consent

Consent must be:

- Freely given without coercion, intimidation, or pressure.
- Informed, meaning the individual understands the nature of the act.
- Revocable at any time, even during a previously consensual interaction.

Encouraging Reporting and Support

We strongly encourage individuals to report incidents of sexual misconduct or violence. By reporting, you enable institutions to take action, provide support, and foster a culture of accountability and safety. Reports can be made anonymously or with identifying details. Please note that while anonymous reports contribute to tracking trends, they may limit the ability to take direct corrective actions.

Together, we can create an environment that respects boundaries, dignity, and equality for all.