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**Employment Anti-Harassment Polices and Training**

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The United States Supreme Court has addressed the importance of the language of employer policies and handbooks as it relates the issues of discrimination, harassment and retaliation. A written policy against harassment can help to protect the employee and employer in certain cases involving discrimination and harassment. Specifically, in accordance with the guidelines provided by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, employers should have an anti-harassment policy that is properly worded and distributed to all employees. The policy should inform the employee as to what constitutes illegal discrimination and where to make a complaint if they are a victim of discrimination or harassment.

While a written anti-harassment policy is the first step, providing employee training is an excellent way to educate employees as to the provisions of the anti-harassment policy. An individual knowledgeable about the laws against harassment and discrimination should train all employees including supervisors as the provisions of the policy including the legal definition of harassment, discrimination and retaliation. The training should also include a discussion of the written policy, advice to employees regarding the complaint process and assurance that the complaint will be investigated without fear of retaliation. The training should include both identifying the discriminatory behavior and instruction to those charged with the duty to conduct a proper investigation and to stop the discriminatory or harassing conduct. If the policy is properly prepared and distributed to employees, in some situations the anti-harassment policy can be used to defend the employer where the employee legally pursues a claim for harassment but fails to inform the employer of the complaint as directed by the policy. To the contrary, if the employer fails to appropriately respond to the employee complaint of harassment or retaliates against the employee for making a complaint, the employer can be subject to liability under state and federal statutes. For additional information regarding discrimination, please visit our web site at [www.joettedoran.com](http://www.joettedoran.com).

*\*This article is not intended as legal advice. You should consult with an attorney for individual advice regarding your own situation.*

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