

# Preventing Workplace Harassment

Creating a Safe and Respectful Retail  
Environment

Annual Compliance Training

ProService Hawaii



# Why We're Here Today



## Create a Safe Workplace

Building an environment where everyone feels secure and respected



## Understand Legal Responsibilities

Learning about our obligations under harassment laws



## Build Practical Skills

Developing tools to recognize and address inappropriate behavior



## Protect Everyone

Ensuring all team members can thrive in our workplace



**Remember:** 1 in 4 retail workers experience harassment

Today, we change that.

# Section 1

## Understanding Workplace Harassment

### Definitions, Protected Classes, and Types



# What Is Workplace Harassment?

## Definition:

**Unwelcome conduct based on a protected characteristic that creates a hostile work environment or results in adverse employment decisions**

⚠ ONE severe incident can be enough  
A single serious occurrence may constitute harassment

📊 Many small incidents can add up  
Multiple minor incidents can create a hostile environment over time

🎯 It's about impact, not intent  
How behavior affects others matters more than what was intended

# Protected Classes in Hawaii

Every person is protected based on:



Age

40 and older



Race & Color

All races and skin colors



Gender & Identity

Gender, gender expression/identity



Disability

Physical and mental disabilities



Religion

All religions and beliefs



National Origin

Ancestry, birthplace, culture



Marital Status

Single, married, divorced



Pregnancy

Pregnancy and lactation



Sexual Orientation

All orientations



Veteran Status

Military service



Credit History

Financial status



Health Decisions

Reproductive health choices

Everyone has protected characteristics

# Types of Harassment



## 💬 Verbal

- Offensive jokes or comments
- Slurs or degrading nicknames
- Threats or intimidation
- Intrusive personal questions

## ✉️ Written

- Inappropriate emails/texts
- Offensive notes or graffiti
- Social media posts
- Exclusionary group chats

## 👁️ Visual

- Offensive posters/images
- Inappropriate gestures
- Offensive clothing
- Inappropriate screensavers

## 👋 Physical

- Unwanted touching
- Blocking someone's path
- Standing too close
- Physical intimidation

# Who, Where, and When?

## WHERE It Can Occur

- Store floor
- Break rooms
- Company events
- Work social media
- After-hours gatherings

## WHO Can Be Involved

- Employee ↔ Employee
- Supervisor → Employee
- Customer → Employee
- Vendor → Employee
- Employee → Customer



**Remember:** Harassment can happen anywhere, anytime, between anyone

## Section 2

### Recognizing Behavior

Appropriate vs. Inappropriate Actions

# The Behavior Spectrum

## GREEN ZONE - Always Appropriate

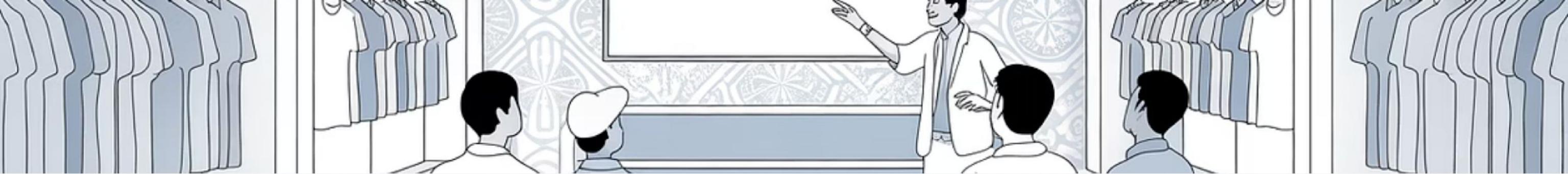
- Work performance compliments
- Inclusive celebrations
- Professional disagreements
- Offering work help
- General greetings

## YELLOW ZONE - Use Caution

- Appearance compliments
- Politics/religion talk
- Personal questions
- Physical contact
- Jokes and humor

## RED ZONE - Never Acceptable

- Body comments
- Protected class jokes
- Romantic advances
- Inappropriate content
- Exclusion/discrimination



## Real Retail Scenarios

### Scenario 1: "The Compliment"

"Maria, that dress really shows off your figure! You should wear things like that more often."

**✗ RED ZONE:** Comments about someone's body, sexual undertones

**✓ BETTER:** "Maria, you look very professional today" or say nothing

### Scenario 2: "The Age Joke"

"We need someone young and energetic for this project. Sorry Bob, but at your age..."

**✗ RED ZONE:** Age discrimination, even as a "joke"

**✓ BETTER:** "Who has the availability to commit to this project?"

# Common Questions & Misconceptions

**"But I didn't mean anything by it!"**

**Reality:** Intent doesn't erase impact. The damage is done regardless of your intentions.

**"It was just a joke!"**

**Reality:** Humor at someone's expense is risky. If you wouldn't say it in court, don't say it at work.

**"They didn't mind before."**

**Reality:** People often hide discomfort. Silence doesn't mean consent.

**"It's not about a protected class."**

**Reality:** All unprofessional behavior should be addressed, even if not legally harassment.



# Section 3

## Your Role in Prevention

Taking Action and Creating Respect

# The Bystander's Power

If You See Something, Say Something



## DIRECT - Speak up immediately

- "That's not appropriate"
- "Let's keep it professional"
- "That makes me uncomfortable"



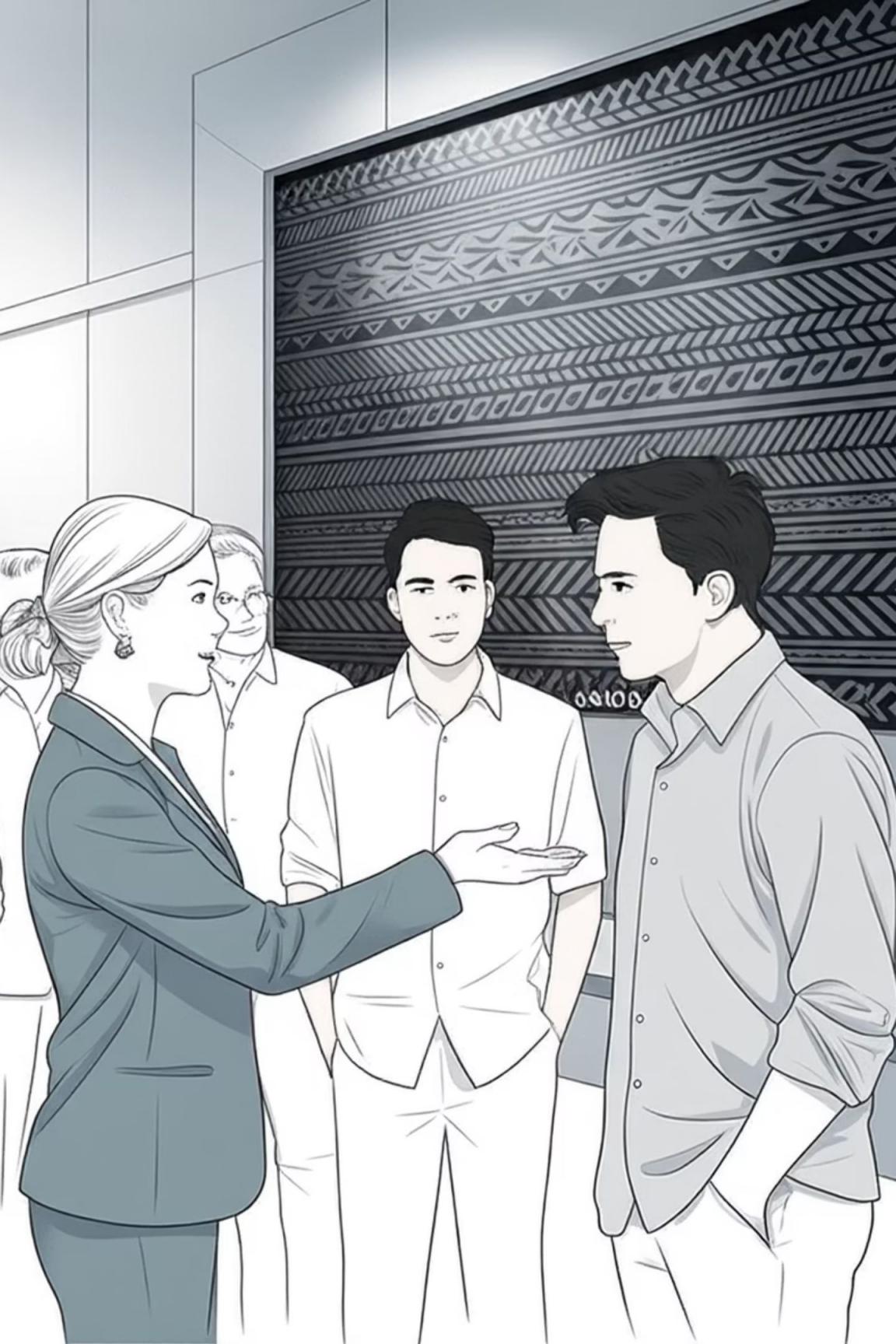
## DISTRACT - Redirect the situation

- Change the subject
- Ask for help with a task
- Create an interruption



## DELEGATE - Get help

- Report to supervisor
- Contact HR
- Document what you witnessed



# Our Reporting Procedure

## Step 1: Make the Report

Multiple channels available:

- Your direct supervisor
- Any manager you trust
- HR Department
- ProService Hawaii HR Consultant
- Anonymous reporting option

## Step 2: Investigation Process

- Report received within 24 hours
- Confidential investigation begins
- Temporary separations if needed
- Interviews with all parties
- Decision within 5-7 business days

## Step 3: Resolution

- Separate meetings with parties
- Findings explained
- Corrective action if warranted
- Follow-up to prevent retaliation



# Creating Everyday Respect

## Morning Habits

- Greet everyone equally
- Use preferred names and pronouns
- Include everyone in coffee runs

## During Work

- Celebrate diverse holidays
- Give credit where due
- Avoid gossip and rumors
- Speak up against inappropriate behavior

## Communication Style

- Listen more than you speak
- Ask before assuming
- Apologize when you make mistakes
- Thank people for feedback

## Team Building

- Plan inclusive activities
- Consider dietary restrictions
- Respect religious observances
- Make accommodations visible

# Your Personal Action Plan

1

## Starting Today:

- ✓ Review your own behavior honestly
- ✓ Commit to one positive change
- ✓ Support colleagues who speak up
- ✓ Model respectful behavior

2

## This Week:

- ✓ Notice exclusionary patterns
- ✓ Include someone new in lunch or breaks
- ✓ Compliment someone's work, not appearance

3

## This Month:

- ✓ Attend additional training if offered
- ✓ Review company policies
- ✓ Share what you've learned with others

# Key Takeaways

## Remember These Five Points:

- 1 Harassment is about impact, not intent

How your actions affect others matters more than what you meant

- 2 Everyone has protected characteristics

We all deserve respect and fair treatment in the workplace

- 3 Bystanders have power to help

Speaking up can stop harassment before it escalates

- 4 Reporting protects everyone

A safe reporting system benefits the entire workplace

- 5 Respect is a daily choice

Small actions build a culture of dignity and inclusion



# Mahalo

A respectful workplace isn't just about avoiding lawsuits—it's about creating an environment where everyone can do their best work, feel valued, and go home feeling good about their day.

You have the power to make our workplace better for everyone.

It starts with each of us, every day, in small moments of choice.

A dark blue rectangular banner with white and yellow text. At the top is the ProService HAWAII logo. Below it, the text "The Employer Resource Center" is displayed in a large, bold, white sans-serif font. At the bottom, the text "Get tips and best practice advice for Hawaii employers." is shown in a smaller, yellow sans-serif font.

**The Employer Resource Center**

Get tips and best practice advice for Hawaii employers.

Questions?

## Appendix: Additional Scenarios for Discussion

### Scenario: "The Exclusion"

| A group of employees regularly goes to lunch together but never invites their coworker who wears a hijab, saying "She probably can't eat where we go anyway."

**Analysis:** Making assumptions and excluding someone based on religion.

**Better approach:** Invite everyone and let them decide. Ask about dietary preferences respectfully.

### Scenario: "The Friendly Touch"

| Sam, a supervisor, often puts his hand on employees' shoulders when talking to them. Sarah seems to stiffen when he does this.

**Analysis:** Even well-intentioned touch can be unwelcome.

**Better approach:** Maintain professional physical boundaries. No touching unless it's a handshake.

### Scenario: "The Nickname"

| A manager calls his youngest employee "kiddo" and frequently makes comments about "millennials" and their work ethic.

**Analysis:** Age-based stereotyping and potentially demeaning language.

**Better approach:** Use everyone's actual name and avoid generational stereotypes.