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WHAT WE COVER TODAY

A safe, respectful workplace starts with awareness

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1

What is POSH?

The law, who it protects, why it matters

2

What counts as harassment?

Types, examples, and the 'unwelcome' test

3

Where can it happen?

Beyond the office – remote, travel, online

4

What should YOU do?

Reporting, timelines, IC / LC

5

Your protections

Confidentiality, non-retaliation, false complaint

6

Interactive Q&A

Test your understanding with scenarios

SECTION 1

What is POSH?

Understanding the law and who it protects

THE POSH ACT – IN PLAIN LANGUAGE

Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition & Redressal) Act, 2013

The POSH Act is India's law that protects every woman at work from sexual harassment. It makes it the employer's legal duty to prevent, address, and redress such harassment.

Year Enacted	2013 (based on Supreme Court's 1997 Vishaka Guidelines)
Who is Protected?	All women – employees, interns, trainees, contract staff, visitors
Who Must Comply?	Every employer with 10+ employees MUST have an Internal Committee (IC)
Does it Cover Men?	The Act protects women; many organisations extend policies to all genders internally
Penalty for employer	₹50,000 fine for first violation; repeated violations = ₹1,00,000 + licence cancellation

WHO IS COVERED?

The POSH Act has a very wide net

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As a fresher, YOU are covered from Day 1 – even during your internship or training period.

- ✓ Full-time employees
- ✓ Part-time employees
- ✓ Interns & trainees
- ✓ Contract / temp staff
- ✓ Gig / freelance workers
- ✓ Domestic workers
- ✓ Women from unorganised sector
- ✓ Visitors, clients, customers

⚠ **Who can be a RESPONDENT?**

Any person in the workplace – colleague, supervisor, manager, vendor, client, or even a visitor who causes harassment.

SECTION 2

What Counts as Harassment?

Recognising it – even when it's subtle

FORMS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Physical, verbal, written – all are covered

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PHYSICAL

- Unwanted touch, pat, hug, or kiss
- Blocking someone's path deliberately
- Invading personal space intentionally

VERBAL

- Sexual comments, jokes, or innuendos
- Complimenting physical appearance repeatedly
- Asking about someone's personal/sexual life

WRITTEN / DIGITAL

- Sending explicit messages / emails / memes
- Sharing pornographic content
- Social media messages of a sexual nature

VISUAL / NON-VERBAL

- Displaying explicit posters or screensavers
- Leering or making sexually suggestive gestures
- Staring in a way that causes discomfort

THE KEY TEST: IS IT 'UNWELCOME'?

Impact on the complainant matters – not the intent of the accused

"I was just joking" or "I didn't mean it that way" is NOT a valid defence under the POSH Act.

INTENT	IMPACT	'UNWELCOME'
Does NOT matter	**DOES matter**	**Means...**
→ What the accused meant	→ How the complainant felt	→ Conduct not invited or asked for
→ Whether it was 'just a joke'	→ Effect on work performance	→ Complainant showed discomfort (verbal or non-verbal)
→ Whether the accused apologised	→ Emotional / psychological impact	→ Continuing after being told to stop
→ Accused's cultural background	→ Creating a hostile atmosphere	→ Power imbalance making refusal hard

IS THIS HARASSMENT? – REAL EXAMPLES

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Use the 'unwelcome' and 'impact' test

Your manager says 'Nice outfit!' once in a professional setting.

Likely NOT

→ **Context matters. A single professional compliment is generally not harassment.**

Your senior sends you memes with sexual jokes every day on WhatsApp.

YES

→ **Repeated, unsolicited sexual content is workplace harassment – digital platforms are covered.**

A colleague hugs you at the office party without asking.

LIKELY YES

→ **Unwanted physical contact – even social – counts. Consent matters in every setting.**

You and a colleague mutually joke about relationships and enjoy it.

NOT (if mutual)

→ **Consensual interaction is not harassment. It becomes harassment if either person becomes uncomfortable.**

Your boss implies your appraisal depends on whether you join him for dinner.

YES

→ **This is classic Quid Pro Quo – professional benefits tied to sexual compliance. Clear violation.**

A client repeatedly messages you on LinkedIn about your appearance.

YES

→ **Clients and vendors are covered. Harassment from outside the company is still workplace harassment.**

SECTION 3

What Should YOU Do?

Reporting, timelines & the complaint process

HOW TO REPORT – STEP BY STEP

Your complaint, your choice, your rights

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1

Document the Incident

Write down what happened – date, time, location, what was said or done, any witnesses. Keep records of messages or emails.

2

File a Written Complaint

Submit a written complaint to the Internal Committee (IC) of your organisation. If you need help, IC members must assist you in recording it.

3

Within 3 Months

File within 3 months of the incident. Extension up to 3 more months is possible for valid reasons. Don't let time lapse.

4

IC Investigates

The IC forwards your complaint to the respondent within 7 working days. Inquiry is completed within 90 days. You are kept informed.

5

Outcome & Action

If harassment is proved, the IC recommends action – from written apology to termination. Employer must act within 60 days.

YOUR PROTECTIONS UNDER THE LAW

You are protected from Day 1 to the end of inquiry

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Confidentiality

Your identity and case details are kept STRICTLY confidential throughout the inquiry. Breach = ₹5,000 penalty on the person who leaks it.



No Retaliation

Your employer CANNOT victimise, demote, or take adverse action against you for filing a complaint. Any retaliation is itself a violation.



Interim Relief

While inquiry is on, you can request: leave, transfer, or restriction on respondent reporting on your work. You don't have to sit next to them.



False Complaint Protection

If your complaint is genuine but cannot be proved, it does NOT mean it was false. 'False complaint' needs proof of malice – not just an unproven case.

SheBox – FILE A COMPLAINT ONLINE

shebox.wcd.gov.in | Available 24/7, nationwide

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SheBox is the Government of India's online portal where any woman can file a workplace sexual harassment complaint – even if her organisation's IC is inactive or unknown to her.

How to file on SheBox:

1	Visit shebox.wcd.gov.in and click 'Register Your Complaint'
2	Fill personal details: name, mobile, email, work status
3	Select your organisation type (Government / Private)
4	Enter respondent details and describe the incident
5	Submit — you get a Complaint ID to track status

Key things to know:

★ **Free to use:**	No fee, no legal representation needed
★ **Safe & Confidential:**	Secure portal – your details are protected
★ **Works for private sector too:**	Not just government employees
★ **Track your complaint:**	Use your Complaint ID anytime to check status
★ **IC registration required:**	Organisations must register IC on SheBox (2024 update)

SECTION 4

Interactive Check!

Test your understanding – no wrong attempts, only learning

QUICK CHECK 01

What would YOU do?

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Priya, a new joiner, receives daily WhatsApp messages from her senior Ravi saying things like 'You looked amazing today' and 'I keep thinking about you.' Priya is uncomfortable but hasn't replied. What should she do?

A Ignore it – seniors sometimes behave this way, it'll stop eventually.

B Confront Ravi directly and warn him loudly in the office.

C Document the messages, stop responding, and file a complaint with the IC within 3 months.

D Only report it if the behaviour continues for more than 6 months.

ANSWER – Quick Check 01

✓ Correct Answer: C – Document & file a complaint with the IC

Priya, a new joiner, receives daily WhatsApp messages from her senior Ravi saying things like 'You looked amazing today' and 'I keep thinking about you.' Priya is uncomfortable but hasn't replied. What should she do?

Why this answer?

This is a textbook hostile environment harassment case. Priya has every right to report it immediately.

✓ DOCUMENT: Screenshot the messages with dates and save them. Written evidence is powerful.
✓ FILE WITH IC: She should file a written complaint within 3 months. The IC will take it forward.
✓ SheBox option: She can also file on shebox.wcd.gov.in if the IC is inactive or she doesn't trust the process.

Why not A? Silence or ignoring does not make it stop and does not protect her legally.
Why not B? Confrontation is not the formal channel – the IC process exists for a reason.
Why not D? There is NO 6-month waiting rule. File as soon as you're ready – within 3 months of the incident.

QUICK CHECK 02

What would YOU do?

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Arjun sees his colleague making repeated inappropriate jokes about a female teammate, Nisha, in team meetings. Nisha looks visibly uncomfortable but hasn't said anything. What is Arjun's best course of action?

A Mind his own business – it's between Nisha and the colleague.

B Laugh along so things don't get awkward in the team.

C Pull the colleague aside privately and ask them to stop. Separately, check in with Nisha and let her know she can report it.

D Immediately file an IC complaint on Nisha's behalf without asking her.

ANSWER – Quick Check 02

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✓ Correct Answer: C – Intervene thoughtfully; support Nisha, respect her choice

Arjun sees his colleague making repeated inappropriate jokes about a female teammate, Nisha, in team meetings. Nisha looks visibly uncomfortable but hasn't said anything. What is Arjun's best course of action?

Why this answer?

POSH is not just about victims and accused – bystanders have an important role too.

✓ INTERVENE: A quiet word to the colleague is often effective and prevents escalation.
✓ SUPPORT NISHA: Let her know you noticed and that she can report it. The choice to report must always remain hers.
✓ REPORT: If the behaviour continues, Arjun can also report it to the IC as a witness.

Why not A or B? Silence makes you part of the problem. A bystander who ignores harassment contributes to a hostile environment.
Why not D? You cannot file a POSH complaint on behalf of another adult without their knowledge or consent (except in cases of incapacity). Nisha must choose.

QUICK CHECK 03

What would YOU do?

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Meera has filed a POSH complaint against her manager Vikram. Vikram approaches Meera's skip-level manager and suggests she be moved to a less important project 'to avoid conflict.' Is this acceptable?

A Yes – it makes sense to keep them apart from a project perspective.

B No – transferring the complainant without her consent to a less important role is retaliation and is illegal.

C Yes – the manager has full discretion over project assignments.

D It depends on whether the IC has given a finding yet.

ANSWER – Quick Check 03

✓ Correct Answer: B – This is illegal retaliation under the POSH Act

Meera has filed a POSH complaint against her manager Vikram. Vikram approaches Meera's skip-level manager and suggests she be moved to a less important project 'to avoid conflict.' Is this acceptable?

Why this answer?

The POSH Act strictly prohibits any form of retaliation against the complainant, respondent, or witnesses during or after the inquiry.

✓ RETALIATION is a separate violation: Moving Meera to a less important project because she filed a complaint is punishable, irrespective of the IC outcome.
✓ INTERIM RELIEF: If Meera wants a transfer, she can REQUEST it through the IC – on her terms, not the respondent's manager's terms.
✓ What should happen: The IC can recommend restricting Vikram from reporting on Meera's performance during inquiry. Not the reverse.

Key principle: Filing a complaint must NEVER result in career or professional harm to the complainant. Ever.

QUICK CHECK 04

What would YOU do?

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Kavya works from home. During a video call team meeting, her colleague Suresh makes a comment about her appearance in front of the whole team saying 'You always dress so well – I could stare at you all day.' Kavya is mortified. Is this workplace harassment?

A No – video calls are not a physical workplace, so POSH doesn't apply.

B No – it was a compliment, not harassment.

C Yes – virtual workplaces and online meetings are fully covered under POSH. This is harassment.

D Only if Suresh repeats it a second time.

ANSWER – Quick Check 04

✓ Correct Answer: C – Yes, virtual spaces are fully covered under POSH

Kavya works from home. During a video call team meeting, her colleague Suresh makes a comment about her appearance in front of the whole team saying 'You always dress so well – I could stare at you all day.' Kavya is mortified. Is this workplace harassment?

Why this answer?

The definition of 'workplace' under the POSH Act includes virtual platforms, online meetings, and any digital medium through which work is conducted.

✓ TN POSH SOP 2025 specifically includes online spaces and virtual meeting platforms in the definition of workplace.
✓ This statement – publicly making a sexual/physical remark in front of colleagues – creates a hostile environment and is humiliating.
✓ The fact that it happened once does not make it acceptable. A single serious incident can constitute harassment.

Key takeaway for freshers: Your protection does not disappear because you are working from home, on a video call, or communicating on a messaging platform. The law follows you wherever your work takes you.

QUICK CHECK 05

What would YOU do?

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Deepak is worried: 'What if someone files a false complaint against me? I could lose my job even if I didn't do anything!' Is Deepak's fear justified?

A Yes – anyone can file a complaint and you'll be immediately suspended.

B No – POSH has safeguards. The IC must conduct a fair inquiry. If the complaint is not proved, no action is taken against the respondent.

C Yes – the complainant always wins in POSH cases.

D No – but the respondent has no right to defend themselves.

ANSWER – Quick Check 05

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✓ Correct Answer: B – POSH has built-in fairness safeguards for the respondent too

Deepak is worried: 'What if someone files a false complaint against me? I could lose my job even if I didn't do anything!' Is Deepak's fear justified?

Why this answer?

POSH is not one-sided. The law is designed to be fair to both the complainant and the respondent.

✓ NATURAL JUSTICE: The respondent receives a copy of the complaint and is given up to 10 working days to file a written reply.
✓ FAIR INQUIRY: The IC applies the 'preponderance of probability' standard – not 'guilty until proved innocent.'
✓ NOT PROVED ≠ FALSE: If the IC cannot establish the complaint, it closes the case. No action is taken against the respondent.
✓ FALSE COMPLAINT PROVISION: Action is taken against the complainant ONLY if the IC finds deliberate malice and fabricated evidence (Section 14). A genuine complaint that fails to be proved is never treated as false.

Bottom line: File genuine complaints without fear. Defend yourself with facts if accused. The process is designed to be fair.

Aureliano Fernandes v. State of Goa and Others (2023) SC 622 OnLine

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Facts

Aureliano Fernandes, a professor at Goa University, was accused of sexual harassment by a female colleague. The university formed an **Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)** under the UGC (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of Sexual Harassment of Women Employees and Students in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2015, framed under the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act).The ICC found prima facie evidence of misconduct against Fernandes. Based on the report, disciplinary proceedings were initiated, and he was dismissed from service.

Fernandes challenged the composition and functioning of the ICC and claimed violation of natural justice. The matter escalated through the courts, eventually reaching the Supreme Court.

Issues

- Whether the constitution and functioning of the ICC under the POSH Act and UGC Regulations was proper and valid?
- Whether there was a violation of the principles of natural justice in conducting the inquiry?
- Whether educational institutions and other workplaces are adequately complying with the POSH Act?

Aureliano Fernandes v. State of Goa and Others (2023) SC 622 OnLine

Analysis

The Supreme Court observed that while sexual harassment matters demand sensitive, prompt management, administrative speed cannot be prioritized at the absolute expense of justice. Concluding complex proceedings with multiple witnesses in 39 days—when standard service rules permit up to 6 months—was deemed a severe over-acceleration. An Internal Committee acts as a quasi-judicial body; denying an incapacitated accused a realistic timeline to cross-examine witnesses or prepare a defense violates the bedrock maxim of audi alteram partem (hear the other side). Furthermore, the Bench took judicial notice of a disturbing nationwide trend: a decade after the passage of the POSH Act, countless institutions still lacked legally operational or trained Internal Committees (ICs).

Judgement

The Supreme Court quashed the High Court's order and **set aside the termination order** due to deep-rooted procedural illegalities and breaches of natural justice. The matter was remanded back to the university to conduct the inquiry afresh. Critically, the Court issued sweeping **Mandatory Nationwide Directives** requiring the Union of India, State Governments, and statutory bodies to conduct immediate, time-bound audits to ensure functional ICs are active, up-skill IC members on legal procedures, and publicly publish their contact details on institutional websites.

R. Mohanakrishnan v. Deputy Inspector General of Police (Madras High Court, 2024)

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Facts

- The petitioner, R. Mohanakrishnan, a senior police officer, was accused of sexual harassment by a junior colleague regarding incidents that occurred during 2018–2019. The complainant submitted her grievance in 2022 to the Superintendent of Police, who referred the matter to the Internal Committee (IC). The IC, in its enquiry report dated March 6, 2023, found merit in the complaint and recommended disciplinary action. It also suggested continued suspension of the petitioner.
- The petitioner challenged the enquiry report by filing a writ petition, claiming bar of limitation under Section 9 of the POSH Act and violation of natural justice due to lack of cross-examination.

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Issues

- Whether the enquiry report is barred by limitation under Section 9 of the POSH Act?
- 2. Whether the enquiry report violates principles of natural justice, particularly with respect to denial of cross-examination?

R. Mohanakrishnan v. Deputy Inspector General of Police (Madras High Court, 2024)

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Analysis

- The Court noted the social stigma and fear of retaliation often prevent victims from immediately reporting sexual harassment, especially in hierarchical setups like the police force.
- It clarified that procedural timelines like the 3+3 months under Section 9 are directory, not mandatory.
- Held: The complaint was not time-barred; Section 9 does not invalidate the enquiry.
- Drawing from **Aureliano Fernandes v. State of Goa**, the Court emphasized that cross-examination remains a vital part of procedural fairness.
- Although the IC avoided direct confrontation to protect the victim, complete denial of cross-examination—even through indirect means was held to partially vitiate the proceedings.
- The Court remanded the matter back to the IC, allowing the enquiry to continue from the stage where the petitioner could exercise his right to cross-examine.

Judgement

- The enquiry report was not quashed in full, but partially vitiated.
- The matter was remanded to the IC to continue the proceedings with due regard to natural justice, especially enabling cross-examination.
- The Court reiterated that POSH is a social welfare legislation and must be interpreted liberally and purposively, without being defeated by hyper-technicalities.

Vineeth V.V. v. Kerala State Electricity Board & Ors (2022)

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Facts

The petitioner, Vineeth V.V., an employee of the Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB), filed a sexual harassment complaint against a senior official.

The KSEB failed to:

- Initiate inquiry in a timely manner
- Follow the procedural safeguards under the POSH Act
- Prevent victimization and retaliation during the delay
- The petitioner alleged that the Internal Committee (IC) was improperly constituted, and the process lacked impartiality.

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Issues

- Did the KSEB violate the POSH Act's requirement of conducting a timely, impartial inquiry into sexual harassment complaints?
- Was the complainant adequately protected from retaliation or victimization during the inquiry process?
- Did the Internal Committee act in accordance with Rule 7 of the POSH Rules, 2013, which lays down procedural due process?

Vineeth V.V. v. Kerala State Electricity Board & Ors (2022)

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Court's Observations

- The Court expressed strong disapproval of institutional delays, finding that:
- Delayed and improper inquiry defeats the purpose of the POSH Act.
- The IC did not act independently, and procedural lapses undermined the fairness of the inquiry.
- The employer failed in its statutory obligation to protect the complainant from retaliation and mental harassment.
- Emphasized the spirit of the Act, citing the need for a victim-centric approach.

Judgement

- The enquiry report was not quashed in full, but partially vitiated.
- The matter was remanded to the IC to continue the proceedings with due regard to natural justice, especially enabling cross-examination.
- The Court reiterated that POSH is a social welfare legislation and must be interpreted liberally and purposively, without being defeated by hyper-technicalities.

Chandrani Saha v. Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd. (2020)

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Facts

- Complainant: Chandrani Saha, an employee of Oriental Insurance Company Limited, a public sector undertaking.
- She filed a complaint of sexual harassment against a senior official.
- The company: Delayed initiating any inquiry, and
- Failed to constitute or activate an effective Internal Committee (IC).
- The matter escalated due to lack of action and accountability by the employer, leading to judicial intervention.

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Issues

- Whether Oriental Insurance Company complied with its obligations under the POSH Act to ensure a safe, dignified workplace and timely redressal of complaints.

Chandrani Saha v. Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd. (2020)

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Analysis

Employer Responsibility:

The Court criticized the employer for failing to provide a safe work environment. It emphasized that corporate inertia amounts to institutional betrayal.

Internal Committee's Role:

Highlighted that ICs must be functional, trained, and independent. Delays or passive ICs violate the statutory mandate of the POSH Act.

Timeliness & Fairness

Inaction or delayed inquiries deprive victims of justice. Delay also deters other employees from coming forward.

Zero Tolerance Approach

The Court asserted that sexual harassment at workplace is non-negotiable, and employers must adopt zero tolerance policies.

Judgement

- Found Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd. liable for failing its legal duties under the POSH Act.
- The Court ordered –

1. Immediate inquiry into the complaint.
2. Compensation to the complainant for mental trauma and procedural delay.
3. Strict compliance and training within the organization going forward.

Dr. Malabika Bhattacharjee V. Internal Complaints Committee, Vivekananda College

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Facts

- Dr. Malabika, the petitioner, was accused of sexual harassment by a colleague at Vivekananda College. Both the complainant and the accused were of the same gender (two women).
- Acting on the complaint, the college authorities entertained the grievance under the POSH Act, 2013 and initiated proceedings through the ICC constituted under the relevant UGC act.
- Malabika approached the Calcutta High Court through a writ petition, challenging the jurisdiction of the ICC to entertain the complaint.
- Her allegations essentially pertained to vilification and defamation in public, which, accordingly, did not fall within the statutory definition of "sexual harassment" under Section 2(n) of the Act.

Issues

1. Whether a complaint of sexual harassment under the POSH Act is maintainable when both the complainant and the respondent are of the same gender?

2. Whether the allegations made in the complaint fall within the definition of "sexual harassment" under Section 2(n) of the POSH Act?

3. Whether the Internal Complaints Committee acted without jurisdiction in entertaining the complaint against the petitioner?

Dr. Malabika Bhattacharjee V. Internal Complaints Committee, Vivekananda College

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Court's Reasoning:

- The Court examined, particularly Sections 2(m), (n), 3, and 9, and held that the term "respondent" clearly includes any person, irrespective of gender. It observed that nothing in the Act expressly bars same-gender complaints.
- The Court rejected the argument that sexual harassment must necessarily involve persons of different genders.
- It emphasized that sexual harassment is intrinsically linked to the dignity, modesty, and sexuality of an individual, and that a hostile or humiliating work environment may be created by any person of any gender.

Judgement

- The writ petition was dismissed.
- The Court held that the complaint of sexual harassment was maintainable under the POSH Act.
- It was clarified that the ICC was free to decide the matter independently.
- The petitioner was granted a further opportunity to cross-examine the complainant.
- No order as to costs was passed.

We The Women of India v. Union of India & Ors. (2022)

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Facts

- **The Background:** The petitioner organization, We The Women of India, approached the Supreme Court of India by filing a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) under Article 32 of the Constitution.
- **The Legislative Deficit:** The petition highlighted that despite the enactment of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (the POSH Act), there was a dismal and widespread failure in the ground-level execution and enforcement of the law by various State apparatuses and administrative bodies.
- **Systemic Failures:** The petition pointed out that numerous States and Union Territories had failed to notify and appoint District Officers (as mandated under Section 5 of the POSH Act), failed to constitute Local Committees / Local Complaints Committees (LCCs under Sections 6 & 7), and failed to appoint Nodal Officers to receive complaints from the unorganized sector or smaller establishments.

Issues

1. Whether the failure of State Governments to appoint District Officers and constitute Local Committees violates the statutory mandate under Sections 5 and 6 of the POSH Act.
2. Whether the lack of monitoring mechanisms by the Union and State Governments effectively renders the POSH Act unenforceable for women in the unorganized sector.
3. What remedial judicial directions are required to compel the State to fulfill its constitutional duty to provide a safe workplace environment?

We The Women of India v. Union of India & Ors. (2022)

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Court's Reasoning:

- **Statutory Obligation vs. Reality:** The Court observed a massive disconnect between the legislative intent and ground reality. While the POSH Act provides a robust framework, the State's inaction in appointing District Officers made the entire grievance redressal mechanism non-existent in many districts.
- **The "Unorganized Sector" Vulnerability:** The Court analyzed that the Internal Committee (IC) is for larger organizations, but the Local Committee (LC) is the primary safety net for the vast majority of Indian women working in small-scale industries or informal settings. The failure to constitute LCs was identified as a denial of justice to these women.
- **Accountability:** The Bench noted that the POSH Act requires proactive oversight. Mere enactment of the law is insufficient; the government has a continuous obligation to ensure the machinery of the Act is "live" and functional.

Judgement

- **Directives to States:** The Supreme Court directed all State Governments and Union Territories to provide specific, verified details regarding the appointment of District Officers and the constitution of Local Committees (LCs) in every district.
- **Mandatory Compliance:** The Court ordered the authorities to ensure that these committees are not only constituted on paper but are functional, accessible, and equipped to handle complaints.
- **Public Transparency:** The Court mandated that information regarding the composition of these committees and the contact details of the presiding officers must be made available on public government websites, ensuring that aggrieved women know exactly where to approach.
- **Ongoing Monitoring:** This case served as a "wake-up call" for the executive machinery, setting the stage for subsequent judicial strictness (seen later in Aureliano Fernandes) regarding institutional audits and the legal necessity of functional POSH bodies.

YOUR QUICK REFERENCE – DO's & DON'Ts

Practical guidance for your first days at work

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✓ DO's

- ✓ Treat every colleague with dignity and respect
- ✓ Maintain professional boundaries in person and online
- ✓ Speak up if you feel uncomfortable – to the IC or a trusted mentor
- ✓ Document incidents with dates, times, and messages
- ✓ Support colleagues who face harassment – as a bystander, you matter
- ✓ Report within 3 months – don't delay

✗ DON'Ts

- ✗ Don't make sexual jokes, comments, or share explicit content at work
- ✗ Don't assume your intent protects you – impact is what counts
- ✗ Don't dismiss complaints saying 'it was just banter'
- ✗ Don't retaliate against a complainant, witness, or respondent
- ✗ Don't break confidentiality of any POSH proceeding
- ✗ Don't be a silent bystander to harassment

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REMEMBER

A Safe Workplace

is Everyone's Responsibility.

- ★ You have the right to a workplace free from harassment.
- ★ The law is on your side. Use it without fear.
- ★ Your IC is here to help – not to judge.
- ★ When in doubt, document and report.

Internal Committee (IC) | SheBox: shebox.wcd.gov.in | HR / Compliance Team