



Demerara Associates

OPENING UP NEW FRONTIERS

Demerara Associates Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy

1. Policy Statement

Demerara Associates is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive work environment in which all individuals are treated with dignity. Sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, abuse, and any form of inappropriate conduct are strictly prohibited.

The Company adopts a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and is committed to preventing, addressing, and responding to all allegations promptly, fairly, and confidentially. This policy aligns with the laws of Guyana, including the **Prevention of Discrimination Act, Cap. 99:08**, and reflects international best practices in workplace conduct.

2. Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Prevent sexual harassment and related misconduct in all work-related environments
- Provide clear guidance on acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
- Establish accessible and confidential reporting mechanisms
- Ensure fair, timely, and impartial investigations
- Protect individuals from retaliation
- Promote a culture of respect, accountability, and professionalism

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees (permanent, temporary, and contract staff)
- Consultants, interns, and volunteers
- Clients, vendors, partners, and visitors

It applies to conduct:

- In the workplace
- During work-related travel, meetings, and events
- In digital environments (email, messaging platforms, social media)

4. Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment refers to any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that violates the dignity of a person or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.

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This includes, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favours
- Verbal conduct (comments, jokes, or remarks of a sexual nature)
- Non-verbal conduct (gestures, displaying explicit material)
- Physical conduct (unwanted touching, contact, or proximity)
- Repeated invitations or pressure for personal or romantic interaction
- Suggesting that employment decisions depend on sexual favours

Sexual harassment may occur regardless of gender and may involve individuals of the same or different genders.

5. Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH)

Demerara Associates prohibits:

- **Sexual Exploitation:** Abuse of a position of power for sexual purposes
- **Sexual Abuse:** Actual or threatened physical sexual intrusion
- **Sexual Harassment:** As defined above

Any such conduct, particularly involving vulnerable individuals or clients, will be treated as a serious breach and may be referred to law enforcement.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Management

- Promote a culture of respect and zero tolerance
- Ensure staff are aware of this policy
- Act promptly on complaints

Employees

- Conduct themselves professionally
- Respect colleagues, clients, and partners
- Report any incidents or concerns

Human Resources / Designated Officer

- Receive and manage complaints confidentially
- Conduct or coordinate investigations
- Maintain records and ensure due process

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 demeraraassociates@demeraraassociates.com  1 592 668 3665  www.demeraraassociates.com



7. Reporting Procedures

Employees are encouraged to report incidents as soon as possible through any of the following channels:

- Immediate supervisor
- Human Resources or designated officer
- Confidential reporting email or hotline (if applicable)

Reports may be made verbally or in writing. Anonymous reports will be considered, though this may limit investigation outcomes.

8. Investigation Process

All complaints will be:

- Taken seriously and handled promptly
- Investigated impartially and confidentially
- Addressed in accordance with principles of fairness and due process

Where appropriate:

- Both complainant and respondent will be heard
- Evidence will be reviewed objectively
- Interim measures may be implemented to ensure safety

9. Disciplinary Action

Any employee found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include:

- Written warning
- Suspension
- Termination of employment

Serious cases may be referred to relevant authorities in Guyana.

10. Protection Against Retaliation

Demerara Associates strictly prohibits retaliation against any individual who:

- Reports harassment in good faith
- Participates in an investigation



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Any act of retaliation will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

11. Confidentiality

All complaints and investigations will be handled with the highest level of confidentiality, consistent with the need to conduct a fair investigation.

12. Training and Awareness

The Company will:

- Provide regular training on workplace conduct and harassment prevention
- Promote awareness of rights and responsibilities
- Integrate gender equality and inclusion into workplace practices

13. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure alignment with:

- National legislation
- International best practices
- Organizational needs

14. Conclusion

Demerara Associates is committed to fostering a workplace that is safe, respectful, and free from harassment. All individuals are expected to uphold these standards and contribute to a professional and inclusive environment.