

# Workplace Harassment

## Model Policy and Judicial Branch Survey Findings

### Why Do Courts Need an Anti-Harassment Policy?

The Gender and Justice Commission's [2021 Workplace Harassment Survey](#) found employees from court cultures that promoted awareness and understanding of an existing anti-harassment policy, and fostered confidence that reports would be responded to, were significantly less likely to experience harassment.

This highlights the crucial role of proactive communication and training on the anti-harassment policy, while fostering confidence in the reporting and response mechanisms.

Preventing and responding to all types of workplace harassment helps courts to cultivate respectful workplaces and promote fair and efficient administration of justice.

### Consider Adopting the Washington Courts Model Anti-Harassment Policy

In 2020, the Gender and Justice Commission developed and the BJA adopted, a statewide [Model Anti-Harassment Policy](#) for courts. The model policy can be tailored to local needs and be part of a healthy workplace program that promotes employee engagement and retention and fosters a culture of respect. Courts can adopt an Anti-Harassment Policy as an independent member of the judicial branch or in unification with local executive branches.

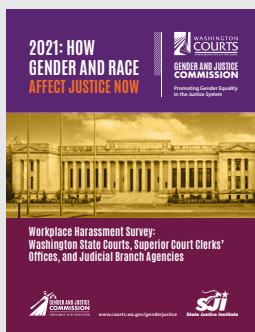
### What Can Courts and Individuals Do to Prevent and Respond to Workplace Harassment?

- Promote awareness of your court's policy during onboarding of new employees and in staff meetings
- Support transparency and accountability, and promote timely and fair resolution of harassment reports
- Take explicit steps to increase diversity, equity and inclusion
- Get free/low cost trainings through your risk management and human resources department when available. Members of [Washington Counties Risk Pool](#) and [Washington Cities Insurance Authority](#) can attend a variety of free trainings that support healthy workplaces, including anti-harassment trainings. These agencies will sometimes allow non-members to attend for a small fee.

### Report Harassment and Get Help

Ensure court staff have easily accessible information on how to report harassment, including contact information for Management, Human Resources, or the Employee Assistance Program.

## Key Highlights from the Workplace Harassment Survey



The survey asked participants about their encounters with various types of harassment, including sexual orientation-based, gender-based, race-based, and unwanted sexual attention and work-related harassment, such as unreasonable deadlines, unmanageable workloads, and limited promotion or training opportunities. By capturing these different dimensions of harassment, the survey provided a holistic view of the prevalence and nature of workplace harassment within the judicial branch.

- The highest rates of any workplace harassment were reported by employees who identified as Indigenous, (82%), bisexual (84%), gay or lesbian (73%), multiracial (66%), and women (62%), relative to all respondents (57%).
- Court clerks, as a group, experienced workplace harassment at a higher rate (65%) than respondents with any other appointment type. Judicial assistants experienced the second highest rate of harassment (61%).
- Superior Court Clerks (49%) and Judges or Commissioners (51%) experienced the lowest rates of harassment. These numbers, however, are still alarming. They mean that one out of every two Judges or Commissioners and one out of every two Superior Court Clerks experienced some type of workplace harassment at least once during the preceding 18 months.
- 89% of respondents reported that their workplace has a policy, but less than half of reported knowing how to report, get help or prevent harassment.