

TOOL 4.11

Guidelines for GBVH Focal Point Training

- » **GOAL:** Provides guidance on training focal points
- » **TARGET UNITS:** Human Resources, Training and Development, and Union

Gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) focal points are designated company representatives who can act as the first point of contact for workplace GBVH issues. Ask focal points to work as a team (referred to as the contact team) so that they can support each other in this role. It is important that they receive training to build their knowledge and skills on workplace responses to GBVH so that they can undertake their roles effectively. Untrained focal points may cause serious harm because they may reinforce unhelpful norms, give incorrect advice, retraumatize survivors, or burn out due to a lack of boundaries.

The contact team training should:

1. Improve focal points' knowledge of:

- › GBVH, including definitions and examples. Training may focus on issues such as bullying and harassment, domestic violence, and sexual exploitation and abuse—with the specific content varying depending on the scope of your company's GBVH policy.
- › Drivers, dynamics, and impact of GBVH on the individual, business, and community.
- › Overview of context-specific issues around race, income, religion, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, or disability that can increase the risk of experiencing violence.
- › Survivor-centered approaches (see [BOX 4I](#)).
- › Laws relevant to GBVH in your jurisdiction.
- › Support and protective services available in the community for survivors and perpetrators of GBVH. See [TOOL 4.5](#) for more information on service providers.
- › The company's GBVH policy and practices (see [TOOL 4.12](#)).
- › Any mandatory reporting requirements.
- › Self-care (see guidelines for self-care in [TOOL 4.14](#)).

2. Improve focal points' attitudes about:

- › Gender stereotypes
- › Nondiscrimination
- › Minimization of violence
- › Victim-blaming attitudes
- › Pressure on survivors to disclose and/or formally report perpetrators⁷⁹

⁷⁹ For more information about why this is not good practice, see the survivor-centered approach guidance in [BOX 4I](#).

3. Improve focal points' skills to:

- › Communicate effectively about respectful workplaces
- › Respond to disclosures of GBVH in a survivor-centered way, including discussing options for the survivor and referring them to GBVH service providers
- › Investigate allegations of GBVH and to make recommendations to management (if focal points are also involved in investigations)⁸⁰
- › Establish appropriate boundaries and self-care (see [TOOL 4.14](#))
- › Undertake monitoring and evaluation activities (see [TOOL 4.15](#))

In any training focused on adults, it is important to recognize that adults benefit most from learning experiences that are problem-based and collaborative rather than just the provision of information. Embedding elements of these principles into training content (e.g., breakout groups, role play, question and answer sessions, and practical homework exercises) is key to ensuring the learning experiences are effective.

Consider engaging employees in short scenario-based training regularly to help them to develop the skills to raise issues if they witness, hear about, or experience workplace violence and harassment. All training should be led by experts and engagements should include meetings with relevant service providers.

It is recommended to conduct a pre-and post-training questionnaire capturing participants' knowledge, skills, and attitudes towards addressing GBVH as a workplace issue. Companies may want to consider adding a follow-up survey six months later to track longer-term outcomes of training and identify any follow-up training needs.

⁸⁰ Training in investigating GBVH in a survivor-centered way should be provided to any focal points involved in investigations. All focal points may not need to receive this training.