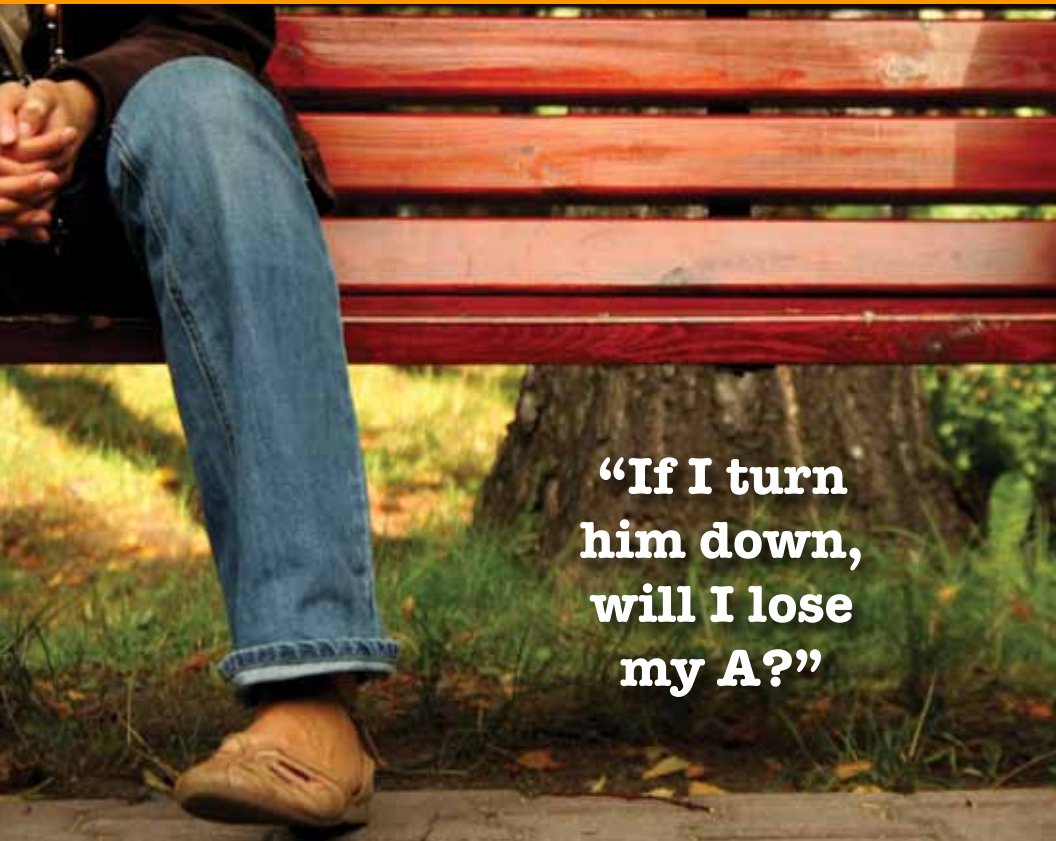




State of Illinois  
Department of Human Rights

IDHR



**“If I turn  
him down,  
will I lose  
my A?”**

**It's never okay.**

## **Illinois Law Prohibits Sexual Harassment**

**If it feels like harassment, it probably is.  
But how do you know for sure? And what are your rights?**

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF  
**Human Rights**

# If it feels like harassment, it probably is.

## What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is unwanted, deliberate or repeated sexual behavior. Sexually suggestive objects, signs, magazines, email, text messages, or pictures may be sexual harassment as well. The person hearing, seeing, or being touched does not want this attention.

**“It’s just creepy....  
She’s my TA....  
I wish she’d keep  
her hands off me.”**

It is normal to feel embarrassed and angry by unwanted, unflattering attention or demands. However, you have a right to be free of sexual harassment in the work place or educational institution.

Sexual harassment can also be a form of unlawful sex discrimination if there is a subtle or direct threat that a sexual or social relationship is part of your job or your educational performance. The threat can be present in any part of your job: wages, promotions, references or working conditions; or your educational performance: grades, honors, course work, or scholarships.

**“Why is he calling  
me like this?  
Isn’t this wrong?  
He’s my prof,  
for crying out  
loud.....”**

## Definitions

**In employment**, sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or any conduct of a sexual nature when 1) submission to such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of employment, and 2) submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for making

decisions about your employment; or 3) such conduct interferes with your job performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

**In education**, sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors made to a student by an executive, administrative staff or faculty member, or any conduct of a sexual nature that substantially interferes with the student’s educational performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

## what you should know

**Both males and females  
can be victims of sexual  
harassment.**

**Victims of sexual  
harassment and  
harassers can be members  
of the opposite sex or of  
the same sex.**

**Sexual harassment in  
the work place can be  
perpetrated by a supervisor,  
coworker, or someone on  
the business premises  
at the invitation of the  
employer.**

**Sexual harassment in  
educational institutions  
can be perpetrated by an  
executive, faculty or  
administrative staff  
member, or teaching  
assistant.**

**Sexual harassment is  
not limited to any  
level of employment or  
education. Harassers and  
victims can be found in  
all areas.**

**Charges of sexual  
harassment can be filed  
against the individual  
harasser and the employer  
or educational institution.  
Both parties can be found  
liable.**

## Legal protections

The Illinois Human Rights Act protects Illinois employees and students from sexual harassment. The law is enforced by the Illinois Department of Human Rights. Employers who are public contractors and bidders are required to have a written policy which states that sexual harassment is illegal. The policy should also include the legal definition of sexual harassment, a description of sexual harassment (including examples), and internal procedures for investigating complaints, and any penalties.

## What to do if you are sexually harassed...

- Let the harasser know that you are offended by this conduct and want it to stop.
- Write down what happened to you, when it happened, who was there and what was said by all the parties involved. Keep records of subtle or overt job or educational related promises or threats.
- Speak with peers whom you trust. Often, the person harassing you may be bothering others as well. These witnesses may be willing to testify to the facts.
- Though not necessary, it is a good idea to report the incident to your supervisor or academic advisor. If the supervisor or academic advisor is the sexual harasser, see his or her supervisor, and also report the incident to the affirmative action officer and/or human resources.
- If the sexual harassment conduct is criminal in nature, report the incident to law enforcement authorities immediately.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF  
**Human Rights**

[www.illinois.gov/dhr](http://www.illinois.gov/dhr)  
800-662-3942

**Office Hours**

Monday through Friday  
8:30am – 5:00pm  
(No Intake Interviews on Fridays)

**Chicago**

James R. Thompson Center  
100 W. Randolph St.  
Suite 10-100  
Chicago, IL 60601  
312-814-6200  
866-740-3953 (TTY)

**Springfield**

222 South College St.  
Room 101A  
Springfield, IL 62704  
217-785-5100  
866-740-3953 (TTY)

**Marion**

2309 W. Main St.  
Marion, IL 62959  
618-993-7463

**A charge of sexual harassment must be filed with the Department within 180 days of the date you believe the harassment took place, even if you are using union or internal grievance procedures.**

*In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Illinois Human Rights Act, the Department of Human Rights will ensure that all programs are readily accessible to and usable by qualified individuals with disabilities. The ADA coordinator can provide additional information about compliance requirements, at (217) 785-5119 (voice) or (866)740-3953 (TTY).*