

Sexual Harassment Claims by Men On The Rise

By Hope Eastman

According to a recent Associated Press story citing statistics from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the percentage of sexual harassment claims filed by men from 1990 to 2009 doubled from 8 percent to 16 percent of all claims..

While most sexual harassment claims are filed by women, those filed by men do have common threads. Although some involve harassment by female employees or managers, most have to do with harassment by other males. Many employers may not regard them as presenting the same level of legal concern as claims filed by females or involving male-female interaction.

The cases sometimes pertain to unwelcome romantic advances. They can involve men being harassed or otherwise mistreated because they are perceived as gay, are gay or are not considered masculine by other workers.

The EEOC, already on a path toward greater enforcement, is filing more lawsuits for male victims. The Commission wants to send a message that such behavior is both unacceptable and unlawful. Employers should make sure their company's anti-harassment policies are broad enough to cover all kinds of sexual harassment (as well as other kinds of harassment) and should regard any complaint filed as serious. The employer's three requirements should always be: prevent, investigate and take effective steps to stop any harassment they find.