

## *Forms of Sexual Harassment*

There are two forms of unlawful sexual harassment. One form is referred to as *quid pro quo* sexual harassment. The second is called *hostile environment* sexual harassment.

### **Quid Pro Quo**

Quid pro quo harassment occurs when sexual compliance is a prerequisite for pay, promotion, or some other employment opportunity. This type of harassment includes advances that contain an expressed or implied condition for receiving job benefits, or refusal to submit to these requests may result in loss of job benefits or discharge. This type of harassment usually happens between a supervisor and a subordinate because supervisors are the ones who have the power to affect another person's employment. (Quid pro quo" is a Latin phrase meaning "something for something.")

For example, it is sexual harassment for a supervisor to coerce an employee into a sexual relationship and then reward the employee with a promotion. It is also sexual harassment for a supervisor to take disciplinary action against, or deny a promotion to, an employee because the employee rejected the sexual advances of the supervisor. Not only may the employee, who was coerced, challenge the harassment, but other men and women in the work place affected by the sexual harassment also may be able to claim that they were denied a job benefit because of the sexual relationship between the supervisor and the employee who received the job benefit.

### **Hostile Environment**

The second form of sexual harassment is referred to as hostile environment sexual harassment. "Hostile environment" refers to any work place conduct that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the victim's employment and create an abusive or offensive working environment. This type of harassment often refers to continued, unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature in the work place that may interfere with an employee's work performance, or create an intimidating or abusive environment.

For example, hostile environment sexual harassment include such work place conduct as displaying "pinup" calendars or sexually demeaning pictures, telling sexually oriented jokes, repeated sexual conversations or obscene language, or touching a person's clothing or body. Furthermore, when male or female employees engage willingly in conduct such as telling sexually oriented-jokes or sexually teasing one another in the office, they may be creating a sexually hostile environment for other employees not directly involved in the behavior and who do not welcome such conduct in the work place.