

From the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Training and Technical Assistance Program. Washington D.C.

### **WORKPLACE HARASSMENT ISSUES**

Answers:

1. False. Harassment depends on how the conduct was received, not on the intent.
2. False. Conduct that is unwelcome is not invited.
3. False. If an employee finds conduct to be offensive, s/he should report the conduct before it becomes severe or pervasive.
4. False. Harassment depends on how the conduct is received, not on intent. Definitely not OK if done in the workplace. Good friends joking back and forth in a non-workplace setting, may be OK.
5. True. A request for a date does not rise to the level of harassment. However, continued requests or pressure for dates after the party says no may be harassment.
6. False. Actions which offend employees based on race, color, gender, national origin, age or disability, if severe and pervasive, are prohibited activities.
7. True. Men and women can be victims of harassment, and the victims can also be the same sex as the harasser.
8. False. Employers are responsible for ensuring that they provide a work environment free of harassment. Thus, they may be liable for harassment by non-employees.
9. False. Employees may indicate offense by remaining silent, (e.g., when insensitive jokes are being told). In other instances, employees may fail to complain because the harasser is a high ranking official of the employer. A person does have to complain in order to get redress.
10. False. Managers and supervisors are obligated to report unlawful workplace harassment.
11. False. Actions which are egregious or threatening may rise to the level of unlawful harassment. It depends on the degree.
12. False. Employees age 40 and over are protected against harassment based on age. If the teasing is egregious or frequent enough that it creates a hostile work environment, it would be considered unlawful harassment.
13. True. Employees with disabilities are protected against harassment by the Americans With Disabilities Act.
14. False. Managers and supervisors should report, correct and prevent harassment, even if no one complains. The manager/supervisor has direct knowledge.
15. False. Employees who complain about workplace harassment are protected against retaliation.