INDIALAW

POSH Advisory and Compliance

POSH Policy and Compliance Audit Law Firm for Internal Committees and Annual Reports

PRACTICE PROFILE • OCTOBER 2026

Overview

POSH Policy, Internal Committee and Compliance Audits

A compliant POSH framework has a few fixed parts: a written policy, an Internal Committee constituted for each office, the committee's details and the penal consequences of harassment displayed at the workplace, regular awareness programmes, and records that show all of this happened. When a complaint arrives, each of these parts gets tested.

We draft or revise the POSH policy against the Act and the 2013 Rules, constitute or reconstitute the Internal Committee for each office, and audit existing frameworks. An audit checks the committee's composition and tenure, the external member's appointment, the notices on display, training records, past inquiry files and annual reports, and lists each gap with the step needed to close it.

Annual reports go to the District Officer for each district where the employer has an office, and companies also confirm compliance in the Board's report. Some district authorities now ask employers to register their Internal Committees on the Ministry of Women and Child Development's SHe-Box portal. The Mumbai City district office, for example, has directed private establishments with ten or more employees to do so.

Our Services

- Drafting and reviewing workplace POSH policies and employee handbooks
- Conducting compliance audits to assess gaps and risk areas
- Advising on the scope of applicability for various work environments (including remote and hybrid)
- Legal support for constitution and functioning of the Internal Committee (IC)
- Guidance on periodic filing of annual returns with District Officers
- Developing documentation protocols for record maintenance and confidentiality
- Advisory on handling third-party and client-site harassment issues and training to the Internal Complaints Committee

Key Highlights

What a POSH policy should cover

- What counts as sexual harassment, using the definition in Section 2(n) and practical examples
- Who the policy covers, including contract staff, interns, trainees, consultants and visitors
- How and to whom to complain, with the Internal Committee members' names and contact details
- The inquiry procedure and the timelines at each stage
- Interim relief available during an inquiry under Section 12
- Confidentiality under Section 16 and the consequences of breaching it
- Action on false or malicious complaints under Section 14, and the appeal route under Section 18

Key Professionals



Nidhi Singh
Partner



Arpita Dutta
Partner



Ratnakar Srivastava
Head: Technology and Data Protection Laws

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1 What should a POSH policy include?

The definition of sexual harassment from the Act with examples, who is covered, how and to whom to complain, the Internal Committee members and their contact details, the inquiry procedure and timelines, interim relief, confidentiality, consequences of false complaints, and the appeal route. It should also state that retaliation against a complainant or witness will not be tolerated.

Q2 Does an employer with offices in several cities need more than one Internal Committee?

Yes. Where offices or administrative units are located at different places, Section 4(1) requires an Internal Committee at each of them, and the order constituting each committee should be displayed at that location.

Q3 Who can be the external member of the Internal Committee?

A member from an NGO or association committed to the cause of women, or a person familiar with issues relating to sexual harassment (Section 4(2)(c)). Section 4(4) requires the employer to pay the external member fees or allowances for holding the proceedings.

Q4 How often should the Internal Committee be reconstituted?

Members hold office for up to three years from their nomination (Section 4(3)). The committee also needs reconstituting when a member leaves the organisation, and a member must be removed on the grounds in Section 4(5), such as breaching confidentiality or being convicted of an offence.

Q5 What does a POSH compliance audit check?

Whether the policy matches the Act and Rules, whether each office has a properly constituted committee with a valid external member and current tenure, whether notices are displayed, whether training and orientation programmes were held and recorded, how past complaints were handled, and whether annual reports were filed with the District Officer.

Q6 Is registering the Internal Committee on the SHe-Box portal mandatory?

The POSH Act does not mention SHe-Box. Some district authorities have directed employers to register their committees on it, as the Mumbai City district office did for private establishments with ten or more employees, so the position depends on where each office is. Check the directions issued in every district where you operate.

Related Practice Areas

Sexual Harassment at Workplace (POSH) | Litigation and Dispute Resolution | Training and Awareness Programs | Investigations and Proceedings | Internal Committee (IC) Support And Management