

## Sexual harassment accusations and recoveries have risen dramatically

Sexual harassment charges filed by individuals, as well as by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, have increased dramatically in Fiscal Year 2018. Charges filed with the EEOC have increased by more than 12%, while charges filed by the EEOC have increased more than 50% over FY 2017. Last year, 41 of the 66 harassment suits filed by the EEOC included allegations of sexual harassment.

The rise in sexual harassment claims, attributed largely to the #MeToo movement, should concern employers. Through litigation and administrative enforcement, the EEOC has increased its recovery from \$47.5 million in FY 2017 to almost \$70 million in FY 2018. Keep in mind, these numbers do not reflect claims brought at the state level.

Workplace harassment can greatly impact the bottom line directly through litigation costs, and indirectly through increased turnover, lower productivity and loss of reputation. Effective policies and training can help reduce the risk of all unlawful harassment in the workplace.

Training should focus not only on preventing unlawful harassment, but also on creating an inclusive and diverse workplace in which harassment is less likely to thrive. Suggested best practices include workplace civility training and bystander training, along with the more traditional anti-harassment training. In addition to training, it is important to provide clear policies for reporting and investigating harassment claims.

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See also:

Fitzsimmons, Matthew T., "[Settling Sexual Harassment Claims Might be More Difficult Under New Tax Law](#)," *NGC Legal Insights* (Fall 2018)

McConville, Luke F., "[Protecting Your Business and Employees from Sexual Harassment](#)," *NGC Legal Insights* (Winter 2017-2018)

Grove, James H., "[Emerging Law Update: Sexual Orientation](#)," *NGC Legal Insights* (Summer 2017)

Grove, James H., "[Judicial Compass Still Spinning on Sexual Orientation Claims](#)," *NGC Legal Insights* (Spring 2017)



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