



JAPAN STRENGTHENS PROTECTION AGAINST WORKPLACE HARASSMENT

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Japanese employers will have to take action to combat workplace harassment — including sexual harassment and “power harassment” (pawa hara) — under a [law](#) (Japanese) enacted 5 Jun 2019. The law will take effect within one year for larger employers and within three years for smaller organizations. The law doesn't include any sanctions, but the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) could issue administrative notices and “name and shame” employers that breach the law. Future MHLW guidelines will provide more detail about employers' duties.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Power harassment includes abusive verbal or physical behavior that goes beyond business necessity and takes advantage of superior positions in a relationship, harming the workplace environment.
- Examples of power harassment include physical or emotional abuse, deliberate isolation in the workplace, or overwork of an employee; work assignments below an employee's skill level; and infringement of an employee's privacy by asking personal questions irrelevant to the business.
- Employers will have to implement measures to prevent sexual harassment and harassment related to pregnancy, childbirth, childcare leave and nursing care leave.
- Employers will need to have procedures to deal with employees' complaints of harassment and offer dispute resolution or mediation to employees reporting harassment.
- The law prohibits employers from retaliating or dismissing employees who report harassment.

RELATED RESOURCES

- [Law To Combat Harassment](#) (Japanese) (Japan MHLW, 29 May 2019)

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