

TIPS FOR EDUCATORS WHO PLACE INTERNS

University journalism programs often arrange for students to be placed as interns in newsrooms. Experts at the Freedom Forum Institute’s “Power to the Interns” training session on March 2, 2018, offered these tips for internship faculty supervisors to protect students from sexual harassment:

> **DEVELOP TRAINING AND MATERIALS ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT.**

Be sure the training is reinforced throughout the school term by incorporating it into the curriculum. For example, students could be assigned to write about the issue of workplace power dynamics.

> **INFORM INTERNS ABOUT THEIR LEGAL RIGHTS.**

Explain to students the rights they do — and don’t — enjoy under the federal laws that prohibit discrimination by employers and education programs. State anti-discrimination laws could also apply.

> **EXPLAIN WHAT CONSTITUTES INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR.**

Illustrate the types of behavior that could constitute sexual harassment. Use scenarios that interns could encounter in a newsroom setting.

> **PROVIDE MULTIPLE OPTIONS FOR RESPONDING TO ABUSE.**

Describe ways students can respond to harassment, such as asking the offending person to stop or reporting the behavior to the faculty supervisor.

> **DEVELOP GUIDELINES FOR INTERNS’ CONDUCT.**

Offer advice on how interns should conduct themselves in a professional setting, including the avoidance of sexual banter and workplace romances.

> **CHECK IN ON STUDENT INTERNS REGULARLY.**

Talk with interns about their workplace experiences, and be clear that faculty supervisors are available at any time to answer questions, provide advice and perhaps intervene.

> **SPEAK WITH NEWSROOM EMPLOYERS ABOUT THEIR POLICIES.**

Be sure employers have strong policies in place to protect student interns from sexual harassment.

For more information, visit freedomforuminstitute.org/powershiftproject.

TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS WHO HIRE INTERNS

Newsrooms — including newspapers, broadcasters and news websites — often run student intern programs to provide future journalists with real-life experience. Experts at the Freedom Forum Institute’s “Power to the Interns” training session on March 2, 2018, offered these tips for employers to protect interns from sexual harassment:

> **PROVIDE ONGOING STAFF TRAINING ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT.**

Use experts to conduct face-to-face, interactive sexual harassment training for employees at every staff level, including those with “superstar” status. The trainer should provide examples of harassment tailored to newsrooms.

> **DEVELOP GUIDELINES ON INTERACTIONS WITH INTERNS.**

Focus part of harassment training on inappropriate behavior toward interns. Rules could prohibit sexual banter and one-on-one, after-hours meetings outside the office. Set rules for behavior at holiday parties and staff outings.

> **CONDUCT SEXUAL HARASSMENT TRAINING FOR INTERNS.**

Create separate training for paid and unpaid interns that includes a review of company policies on harassment, scenarios depicting inappropriate behavior, ways to avoid and handle uncomfortable incidents, and a method for reporting incidents.

> **INSTITUTE AN “ACTIVE BYSTANDER” RULE ON HARASSMENT.**

Require all employees to report any instance of inappropriate behavior toward any employee or intern, leaving it to higher-level managers to decide on a follow-up.

> **PROVIDE GUIDANCE TO INTERNS ON PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT.**

Offer advice to interns on expectations for their behavior in a professional setting. Guidance could include avoidance of office romances and sexually suggestive comments, as well as advice on appropriate office attire.

> **GIVE INTERNS OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET MANY EMPLOYEES.**

Do not isolate interns; offer them opportunities to interact professionally with a variety of newsroom employees. Seek their input, at story conferences, ethics discussions and creative brainstorming, to show they are valued.

> **SET UP A STRUCTURE TO OVERSEE INTERNS.**

Assign a high-level manager, or someone with direct access to one, to oversee the intern program. Coordinate with the human resources department.

> **ENCOURAGE INTERNS TO REPORT UNCOMFORTABLE BEHAVIOR.**

Make it clear that interns can report possible harassment without fear of retaliation or jeopardizing job prospects. Provide a “safe space” — perhaps an employee group — where interns can seek advice on how to handle uncomfortable situations.

> **SET AN EXAMPLE FOR INTERNS AND EMPLOYEES.**

Ensure managers conduct themselves in an exemplary manner. That could include calling out inappropriate conduct, avoiding demeaning language in describing others, and choosing content and photos that are not sexist or racist.

> **DISCUSS HARASSMENT POLICIES WITH FACULTY ADVISERS**

Coordinate policies with university faculty who run the internship programs.

TIPS FOR NEWSROOM INTERNS

Students who are planning careers in journalism often seek internships in newsrooms, usually through university programs. Experts at the Freedom Forum Institute's "Power to the Interns" training session on March 2, 2018, offered these tips for paid and unpaid interns to protect themselves from sexual harassment:

> **UNDERSTAND YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS.**

Ask your faculty supervisor to explain your rights under federal and state laws that prohibit sex discrimination in education programs and in the workplace.

> **ASK THE COLLEGE FOR TRAINING ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT.**

Before you are placed in a newsroom, ask the supervisor of the internship program for information on the types of behavior that are considered sexual misconduct. The training should include scenarios you could encounter in a newsroom setting as well as "active bystander" training, should you witness inappropriate behavior against someone else.

> **KNOW YOUR OPTIONS FOR RESPONDING TO ABUSE.**

Ask your employer or faculty supervisor to suggest ways to address harassing behavior, including examples of how to rebuff harassers. Ask the faculty supervisor if he or she will be available at any time to provide advice. Find out how the university program will handle reports of harassment.

> **KEEP A RECORD AND TELL A FRIEND.**

If an incident occurs, keep a contemporaneous written report in a journal (not on your workplace computer), and tell a friend or relative about the incident. Keep copies of any harassing texts, e-mails and notes. In the event of an investigation, management could use your records as evidence of abuse.

> **GET INFORMATION ON THE EMPLOYER'S HARASSMENT POLICY.**

Ask your faculty adviser whether the university has done its due diligence in scoping out the employer's policy on sexual harassment. Be sure the school has received detailed information on how the employer's internship program protects students from abusive behavior.

> **ASK THE EMPLOYER FOR INFORMATION ON POLICIES.**

During orientation with your employer, ask about policies on sexual harassment, including whether there is a point person or an employee group who could answer your questions about possibly inappropriate behavior. Check the employer's procedures and policy regarding the reporting of harassment.

> **MEET AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE.**

Ask the head of the internship program to introduce you and other interns to employees at all levels and all editorial departments. Look around for possible "allies" in the newsroom who could provide advice and support.

> **AVOID UNCOMFORTABLE SITUATIONS IF YOU CAN.**

Do not participate in sexual banter or jokes that are sexual. Recognize the potential risks of workplace romances, especially with those more powerful than you. If people in the newsroom invite you out to a restaurant or bar, be sure you are with a group, and leave if you are uncomfortable.