

AMA Code of Medical Ethics

9.1.3 Sexual Harassment in the Practice of Medicine

Sexual harassment can be defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment in the practice of medicine is unethical. Sexual harassment exploits inequalities in status and power, abuses the rights and trust of those who are subjected to such conduct; interferes with an individual's work performance, and may influence or be perceived as influencing professional advancement in a manner unrelated to clinical or academic performance harm professional working relationships, and create an intimidating or hostile work environment; and is likely to jeopardize patient care. Sexual relationships between medical supervisors and trainees are not acceptable, even if consensual. The supervisory role should be eliminated if the parties wish to pursue their relationship.

Physicians should promote and adhere to strict sexual harassment policies in medical workplaces. Physicians who participate in grievance committees should be broadly representative with respect to gender identity or sexual orientation, profession, and employment status, have the power to enforce harassment policies, and be accessible to the persons they are meant to serve.

AMA Principles of Medical Ethics: II,IV,VII