
POILCY ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT



The heart of
Incredible India

MADHYA PRADESH TOURISM BOARD

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Forward

It gives me immense satisfaction to present the ***Policy on Gender Equality and Equity and Women's Empowerment, 2023***. I have closely observed the struggle women and young girls face in employment opportunities due to their skill gaps and mobility restrictions. Due to this, women and young girls are often underrepresented in the decision-making processes that impact their lives and societies.

The Responsible Tourism Mission and more importantly the project on Safe tourism destination has reconfirmed that women and young girls can be leaders in tourism destinations as entrepreneurs, artisans, gypsy drivers and as employees in the formal hospitality sector.

The Gender Policy is an effort to guide the programs and practices of Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board, Department of Tourism, Government of Madhya Pradesh to mainstream gender in tourism policies and practices across MPTB and in their supply chain.

The Policy presents a road map to attain gender equality and integrate gender concerns in designing, formulating, implementing, analysing, and monitoring in programmes and policies of MPTB.

We thank UN Women for their technical inputs to prepare this policy. In collaboration with UN Women, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board will strive to operationalise this Policy in a time-bound manner. We at MPTB are committed to mainstream Gender in our policies and practices and implement strategies and action plans that lead to a path of gender equality in tourism.

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1. Policy Statement

Tourism has a decisive role to play in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 5 i.e., gender equality and the women's emancipation. The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. India has also ratified various international conventions and human rights instruments committing to secure equal rights of women. For e.g. in 1993 India ratified the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Our organisation is dedicated to fostering gender equality and women's empowerment in the tourism industry, aligning with national and international commitments and conventions.

2. Overview of the tourism industry in Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board also referred to as the '**MPTB**' was established in 2017 with an objective to promote tourism in Madhya Pradesh. Development of tourism with public, private partnership in sustainable manner, investor facilitation, skill-development, publicity/promotion of tourist destinations nationally & internationally, identification and development of tourism infrastructure are the core objectives of the Board.

Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board (hereinafter referred to as 'MPTB') is a State Government organisation, wholly owned and controlled by the Department of Tourism, Government of Madhya Pradesh. The Board was established with an objective to promote tourism in Madhya Pradesh. 'MPTB' is responsible for exploring new possibilities of tourism in the state and increasing the facilities for the tourists while keeping the destinations clean and sustainable. To bolster this, cultural experience-based tourism and excursion programmes are being implemented to make the tourists aware of the rich heritage, culture and traditions of the state.

The Responsible Tourism Mission (hereinafter referred to as 'RTM') has been launched in order to address all issues of community participation, social and economic upliftment of community and environment protection. 'RTM' is all about "***making better places for people to live in and better places for people to visit***". The core values of this mission are community involvement, transparency, and fair

distribution of resources, equal opportunity for all, environment conservation, women empowerment, and respect for cultural diversity. Projects like Rural Tourism, Homestays, Safe Tourism Destinations for Women, Responsible Souvenir, Project Humsafar (for differently abled tourist), and Project Clean Destinations are being implemented in and around the tourist destinations and places. Department of Women and Child Development, Madhya Pradesh has already made a Policy of Women in 2015, 'RTM' has aligned its guidelines for Gender Equality accordingly.

'MPTB' is working towards inclusive and sustainable tourism which aims at socio-economic development of local communities with special focus on women empowerment. 'RTM' has been launched by 'MPTB' for the cultural and rural life experience-based tourism. Various projects are being implemented under this umbrella for environmental protection & conservation, economic development, community participation, social and cultural exchange with a special focus on women empowerment in the core of the project.

This Gender Policy embeds gender equality as an essential element of the mandate of 'MPTB' under the 'Responsible Tourism Mission'. This policy takes a holistic view of gender equality that is guided by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in general and **SDG 5** in particular, international conventions including CEDAW and UDHR among others as well as the Constitution of India, the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and allied laws, policies and programmes of the Union and the Government of Madhya Pradesh.

India is one of the signatory countries to **The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination amongst Women (CEDAW)**, adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly. India has also committed to **the Beijing Platform for Action 1995**, to follow action plan and work towards the goal of gender equality and women's empowerment along with other participating nations.

3. Strategic objectives and scope of the policy

This policy seeks to define in clear unambiguous terms the rights and responsibilities of various stakeholders and to provide a framework for their enforcement by all stakeholders thus defined.

4. Vision

All individuals irrespective of their gender and sexual identity attain their full potential and are able to participate as equal partners in all spheres of life and influence the process of social and economic development. This policy aims to define the rights and responsibilities of stakeholders, providing a framework for enforcement across all levels.

5. Objective

- a) Mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment perspectives in Tourism planning and implementation across all tourism sectors operations including tourism allied services.
- b) Ensure a safe, inclusive, gender bias free, effective and enabling environment for all stakeholders of all genders
- c) Develop and implement gender-responsive procedures and standards for implementing tourism programmes, projects and products.
- d) Work towards bridging the gender gaps in tourism employment.

6. Thrust Areas

1. Gender mainstreaming:

The overall approach of the policy has been to mainstream issues of diverse gender and sexual identities from an intersectional perspective. This policy responds to the gender and sexuality spectra including women, girls and all non-cisgender and non-conforming gender and sexual identities commonly referred to as LGBTQIA+, which stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex, Asexual and others. References to family/ household in the policy includes those headed by women and LGBTQIA+ persons.

2. Leave No One Behind (LNOB) approach:

The policy takes an intersectional view of gender inequalities to address deep-rooted and overlapping discriminations. It focuses on social and economic development of women, girls and LGBTQIA+ persons from vulnerable categories and recognises the resultant intersectional gender needs.

3. Gender responsive social safety nets:

Social protection measures will be prioritised for supporting women, girls and transgender persons to access opportunities from attaining skills that opens up employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

4. Strategic institutional architecture:

Appropriate governance systems and mechanisms will be constituted to effectively implement and monitor the provisions outlined in this policy at the state, district and sub-district levels involving multiple stakeholders for engendering tourism in Madhya Pradesh.

5. Financial and human resources:

Adequate and timely allocation of budgets and fund flow will be ensured along with optimal human resource deployment across state, district and block level for effective implementation of the policy.

6. Greater accountability:

This policy will be implemented in a timebound and systematic manner. A detailed action plan will be prepared to implement this policy.

7. Stakeholders and Tourism

This policy is applicable to the employees of MPTB, registered vendors and supplier of materials, registered tourism facilities (accommodation as well as tourist fair premises, convention centres), services (Guides, travel agencies, tour operators, artisans, tourism workers) including private and public sector. All MPTB partner organisations, consultants, outsourced team members are under the ambit of this policy.

8. Employment and Tourism

1. Women's labour force participation in tourism will be promoted through appropriate policy measures and effective implementation of labour laws around decent work conditions, equal opportunities, fair and equal wages, safeguards, occupational safety and health measures including the informal sector.
2. Inclusion of women and transgender persons will be prioritised in all skills and entrepreneurship development programmes in traditional, new and emerging areas, as envisaged in the National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015. Re-entry of women in the job market will be promoted, especially recognising the unequal burden of unpaid care work and loss of livelihoods as a result of COVID.
3. Skill development of women and transgender persons in tourism sector and its allied industries will be promoted. Emphasis will be laid on skill development of marginalised women and transgender persons including those with disabilities.
4. Entrepreneurship and innovation among women and transgender persons in various sectors through programmes and schemes of various departments will be prioritised. Emphasis will be laid on pursuing entrepreneurship and innovation in tourism sector.
5. Access to banking and institutionalised financial services for women and transgender persons to address the significant gender gap will be enabled by integrating and prioritising financial needs of marginalised women and diverse genders.
6. Promoting gender sensitive terms of employment for women and transgender persons in public transport systems.
7. Gender and disability friendly transport hubs (bus stations, train stations, auto stands, airports, jetties, ports) with provision of ramps, railings, escalators, washrooms, changing rooms, waiting rooms, feeding rooms, sanitary pad vending machines, emergency medical care facilities, signage, braille signage, public address systems, etc. following maintaining standard hygiene.
8. Concerted efforts will be made to transform SHGs as women enterprises to lead tourism enterprises at the tourism destinations (Homestay owners, artisans, gypsy drivers, guides). Structured support will be extended in the areas of institution building and gender mainstreaming for women and transgender persons' collectives and federations.
9. To provide enabling workspace for women and young girls, creche facilities to be provided in MPTB and in all registered tourism infrastructure.

- 9.1.1. Universal Inclusive Access at all Tourism sites shall have the following:
 - 9.1.2. Separate washroom for women, men, disabled and transgender persons
 - 9.1.3. Crèche and other facilities for children and pregnant women
 - 9.1.4. Wheelchairs, escalators, ramps and other facilities for disabled visitors and elder persons
 - 9.1.5. Braille-enabled signage's and facilities for visually challenged visitors
10. Conduct Annual gender audit of MPTB registered hotels, tourism infrastructure and services across to ascertain adequate infrastructure as per existing Acts and guidelines.

9. **Enabling and Safe tourism destination**

1. Efforts will be made to create an enabling environment for women, girls and transgender persons to access opportunities for skill training, employment and entrepreneurship through innovative partnerships with government departments and private sector.
2. All forms of violence against women (physical, emotional sexual and mental) shall be dealt with effectively with a view to eliminate such incidence. Institutions and mechanisms/schemes for assistance created for prevention of such violence, including sexual harassment at work-place will strictly adhere and effective action be taken against the perpetrators of such violence. A special emphasis will also be laid on programmes and measures to deal with trafficking in women and girls in tourism destinations.
3. Concerted efforts will be made for effective implementation of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act 2013, ensuring constitution, and functioning of the Internal Committees (IC) at the organisational level.
4. Ensuring that women, girls and LGBTQIA+ persons live a life free from all forms of violence and abuse in private, public, work and online spaces. Innovative, multi-sectoral strategies that prevent and respond to end the lifecycle of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) will be designed and

implemented. This will include addressing gender discriminatory social norms and cultural practices through information and awareness programmes, especially engaging men and boys in all tourism destinations.

5. Efforts will be made to sensitise and raise awareness among stakeholders at tourism destinations to end overt and covert forms of SGBV.
6. Due process for gender-sensitive and stringent implementation of all legislations for SGBV across all public and private tourism infrastructure and services will be advocated for and facilitated. Governance systems at all levels by embedding appropriate mechanisms to end all forms of violence against women, girls and LGBTQIA+ persons will be strengthened.
7. To ensure safety and security of girls, women and LGBTQIA+ persons using sanitation facilities, sanitation facilities to be well lit and equipped with hi-tech security systems to record and prevent any breach of safety.

10. Awards and Punishment

In recognition of adherence to this gender policy, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board will institute an annual award for outstanding contributions to gender equality and women's empowerment within the tourism sector. This award aims to motivate and acknowledge exemplary efforts in mainstreaming gender perspectives and creating an inclusive environment.

MPTB will adhere to the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act 2013.

MPTB will have its own punitive mechanism. Non-compliance with the policy may result in disciplinary actions, ranging from counselling and training to suspension or termination, depending on the severity and recurrence of the violation. Instances of non-compliance will be thoroughly investigated, and appropriate actions will be taken to ensure a gender-sensitive and harassment-free workplace.

11. Complaint Registration and Redressal Mechanism (including Dispute and Grievances)

1. Any stakeholder who believes that there has been a violation of this gender policy or has concerns about discrimination, harassment, or any related issue may submit a written complaint to the designated grievance redressal committee.
2. The POSH committee will be presided by a senior level employee (Manager and above – Women only) who has served MPTB for a minimum of one year. The committee will have one male and one female member. The third member of the committee must be from an organisation, working on gender issues at least for 3 years.
3. A dedicated email e-mail will be created for receiving complaints related to this policy matter.
4. The committee will ensure prompt and impartial investigation of the complaint, followed by appropriate action.
5. The details of the committee and the grievance redressal process will be communicated to all stakeholders through the designated email.
6. Step-by-Step Guideline to handle sexual harassment complaints as per the POSH Act, 2013:

Step 1: Jurisdiction Check

Once an IC receives a written complaint, the first thing that it should do is to check for jurisdiction. Following points should be covered while ascertaining if the IC has the authority to deal with the complaint-

1. Check if the identity of the complainant as well as the respondent is mentioned in the complaint.
2. Check if the allegations fall within the definition of 'sexual harassment' as per the POSH Act.
3. Check if the complaint was filed within a period of 3 months from the last date of the incident. IC has the discretionary power to give a further extension of 3

months.

4. Check if the Respondent is an employee of your organisation.
5. Check if the alleged incident took place at the workplace.

Step 2: Introductory Call with the Complainant

Once the IC has determined its jurisdiction, the next step is to have an introductory call with the complainant. The objective of this call is to understand the allegations better, to explain the procedure laid out under the law and the redressal options available.

Step 3: Introductory Call with the Respondent

The next step is to have an introductory call with the respondent. The objective of this call is to apprise the respondent of the complaint, inform them about the procedure and their rights.

Step 4: Forward the complaint copy to the Respondent

Once the IC speaks to the respondent, it should forward a copy of the complaint to them. The objective is to ensure that the IC acts in a fair and an unbiased manner and give the respondent an opportunity to present their side of the story. This has not only been mentioned in the POSH Act but has also been reiterated by the courts. Further, the IC should ensure that this is done within a period of 7 working days from the date of filing of complaint. Once the respondent receives the complaint copy, they get a 10 working days period to file their written response.

Step 5: Follow up with the Complainant on her choice of redressal option

The complainant has the right to either opt of conciliation or inquiry. Conciliation is a form of settlement which can be requested in writing only by the complainant and before the inquiry has been initiated. If the complainant opts for conciliation, the same needs to be conveyed to the respondent who then gets the right to accept, deny or negotiate the conciliation terms.

Step 6: Examination of Complainant, Respondent and Witnesses

If the complainant opts for inquiry, then the next step is to individually meet both the parties and the witnesses, if any, to have a detailed conversation regarding the complaint and ask questions which will help the IC ascertain if the allegations can be substantiated or not. Questions should be open-ended; they cannot be leading or personal in nature.

Step 7: Cross Examination

Once individual statements of the parties are recorded, the next step is to let the parties cross-question each other. At this stage, the complainant and respondent will come face to face and ask questions, including pointed questions. Here the IC's role is to supervise the conversation and disallow any personal or derogatory questions. The parties can also cross-examine the witnesses of their choice. In exceptional circumstances, written cross-examination can be allowed.

Step 8: Calling

This is the final and an optional stage wherein the IC can call any of the parties or witnesses if it requires any further clarification before concluding. Here, leading questions can be asked.

All the above-mentioned steps need to be completed within 90 days.

Step 9: Inquiry Report

Now the IC needs to prepare an inquiry report with a set of recommendations if the allegations are substantiated or if it's a false or malicious complaint. The report needs to be generated and forwarded to the employer within 10 days. Once this is done, the employer gets 60 days to execute the recommendations.

These are the broad steps which the Internal Complaints Committee or the IC needs to follow while dealing with a sexual harassment complaint.

12. Laws and Tourism

1. This policy is guided by laws enacted by the Parliament and State Legislature and their amendment/s, notification/s issued from time to time. There are variety of laws rules and regulations (Central and State) which are directly or indirectly related to tourism and women's empowerment. This policy will be adhering to the existing policies, laws and acts as per the Central and State Government to ensure gender equality and women's empowerment.
2. Awareness and orientation sessions on laws and rights will be conducted for all stakeholders so that there is both assertion and implementation of rights.

13. Governance

1. Monitoring and Evaluation:

- 1.1. A review and monitoring committee will be constituted under the learnship of Principal Secretary/ Managing Director, Department of Tourism for assessing the implementation of this policy, its impact and amendments on a quarterly manner. The committee will be consisted of five members
- 1.2. Manager and above (women only)
- 1.3. Two senior members from MPTB (one man and one women)
- 1.4. One member from women's organisation (at least having 3 years of experience in delaying with gender issues)
- 1.5. A format will be created for monitoring and reviewing implementation of this policy.
- 1.6. Guidelines and SoPs will be prepared for each section of this policy for smooth and effective implementation
- 1.7. An enabling environment will be created for women and transgender persons' participation and representation in the tourism policy formulation process to register their voices
- 1.8. Developing a convergence plan and mechanism for interdepartmental coordination between the key departments/ministries of Finance, Planning, Rural Development

and Panchayati Raj, Urban Development, Tribal Development, Social Justice and Special Assistance, School Education, Higher and Technical Education, Skills Development and Entrepreneurship Development, Department of Police, Department of Transport and Women and Child Development among others.

- 1.9. Conducting impact assessments of benefits flowing to women, girls and diverse genders and resource allocation to the programmes relating to them to optimise benefits under the responsible tourism mission.
- 1.10. A review committee will be formed with membership from women stakeholders, representatives from employees and an independent person to review the implementation of the policy.
- 1.11. Annual report on the status of implementation will be published on to the MPTB website.

2. Financial Resources:

- 2.1. Setting up of Gender budget cell in MPTB. Strengthening the exercise of gender budgeting in MPTB through improved collection and reporting of gender-disaggregated beneficiary data and related budgets, and submitting Gender Budget Statement (GBS) to the Department of Finance, Government of Madhya Pradesh.
- 2.2. Adequate resource allocation to promote and implement the policy and action plan by MPTB
- 2.3. Ensuring that not less than 30% of benefits/funds flow to women from MPTB towards implementation of this policy.

14. Implementation of Policy

The policy is envisioned to be dynamic allowing for review, reflection and integration of emerging perspectives, issues, priorities and appropriate action as required. An annual review will be organised at appropriate levels consistent with the institutional arrangement.

14.1 Committee Formation

A committee cum action group will be constituted to formulate action points with regard to descriptions as prescribed in this policy document, where definitive targets, milestones activities, timelines (short term, medium term & long term) and outcome indicators will be provided for implementing the actions as well as to periodically monitor the achievements and progress made under the action points.

14.2 Convergence and Collaboration:

The effective implementation of this Policy will be a collaborative effort by all levels of the State Departments through Gender Mainstreaming Committee.

14.3 Awareness and Capacity Building

Regular Gender Sensitisation shall be undertaken at all levels. While working together with the Gender Focal Point, the Gender Mainstreaming Committee shall: -

1. Provide guidance to departments in the implementation of their respective programs to ensure there is Gender responsiveness.
2. Incorporate the issue of Gender in training and during orientation and induction of new staff.
3. Hold regular meetings and workshops on Gender using the State Department Gender Mainstreaming Tool kit and other resources.
4. Establish fora for discussions and debate on Gender issues.
5. Contribute articles on Gender issues to the State department's newsletters and website. MPTB will be responsible to give wide publicity to this Policy and programmes through all means of communication including print and electronic media.

15. Timely Assessment, Change and Update in Policy:

This Policy shall be applicable to the State of Madhya Pradesh. The Policy shall remain in effect for 5 years from the date of its notification or until a new policy supersedes it. The Government of Madhya Pradesh may extend the period of this policy as and when required after review by the Gender committee.

To ensure the continued relevance and effectiveness of this gender policy, MPTB commits to conducting periodic reviews and making necessary updates. The policy will be revisited at least once every two years, considering emerging issues, changing societal norms, and evolving legal frameworks. Feedback from stakeholders will be actively sought, and

adjustments will be made to align with the dynamic nature of gender-related challenges and opportunities.

16. Support required from each other

Achieving the goals outlined in this policy requires collective effort and collaboration from all stakeholders. Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board encourages mutual support, understanding, and cooperation among employees, vendors, tourism facilities, and services. This includes sharing best practices, fostering an inclusive work environment, and actively participating in initiatives that promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

17. Glossary of terms

1. **Empowerment** is about people taking control over their lives, setting their own agendas, gaining skills, developing a voice and capacity to aspire, building autonomy and self-confidence, solving problems, and developing self-reliance, irrespective of their gender. Society, as well as the institutions can support processes that can nurture the self-empowerment of individuals or groups.
2. **Gender** is used to describe those characteristics of individuals, which are socially constructed, while sex refers to those which are biologically determined. People are born female or male but learn to be girls and boys who grow into women and men. This learned behaviour makes up gender identity and determines gender roles. Gender also refers to the roles and responsibilities of women/girls and men/boys in construction of roles and relationships that are created in our families, our societies and our cultures between women and men. The concept of gender includes the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes, and likely behaviors of both women and men (related to femininity and masculinity). These roles and expectations are learned. These are not biologically predetermined nor are these fixed forever.
3. **Gender Bias** refers to the unequal treatment in employment opportunity and attitudes based on the sex of an employee or group of employees. Gender bias can be a legitimate basis for a lawsuit under anti discriminatory statutes.

4. **Gender Budgeting** is critical for ensuring that resource allocation takes place in a gender-responsive manner. Gender budgeting involves the examination of all expenditures and revenues from a gender perspective. This implies that all expenditure is examined for its relevance, accessibility, impacts and consequences for women and men and transgender persons
5. **Gender Disaggregated Data** is the data that are collected and presented separately on all gender's women, men and transgender persons.
6. **Gender Discrimination** refers to the prejudice or discrimination based on person's sex or gender and has been linked to gender stereotypes and gender roles. Gender discrimination continues to get perpetuated with the belief that one sex or gender is intrinsically superior to the other.
7. **Gender Equality** means that all genders have equal conditions for realising their full potential and for contributing to and benefitting from economic, social, cultural and political development. It is based on the principle of all genders being full partners in their home, community and society. The advancement of the goals of gender equality and empowerment are central to the agenda of learning for development. Existing power structures must change, and all genders must be full partners in development processes. There is a need to move from a gender-neutral perspective to a gender-responsive approach.
8. **Gender Gaps** in learning environments stem from socio-cultural values, beliefs and attitudes. Such gender gap in learning environments refers to differences in access, participation and benefit from learning opportunities for women/girls, men/ boys and transgender persons'
9. **Gender Identity** refers to a person's internal, deeply felt sense of being either man or woman, or something other or an identity that is between man and woman, or neither
11. Gender Inclusive term denotes that all genders should be part and parcel of the processes of education aiming at mainstreaming for equity, equality, justice and empowerment.
10. **Gender Mainstreaming** is a strategy for making women's, men's as well as transgender concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political,

economic and social spheres, such that inequality between men, women and transgender persons is not perpetuated.

11. **Gender Policy** is developed out of the recognition that there are deficiencies in the operation of institutions and organizations in the structuring of society, social norms and gender relations, in their fair and equitable treatment of all genders i.e. women/ girls, men/boys and transgender community. A gender policy is an evolving instrument for tackling those deficiencies in an organised manner with stated goals, timeframes for achieving them, methodologies for the achievement of goals and strategies, and programmes through which the policy will be applied.
12. **Gender Sensitivity** is the translation of awareness into practices, which result in changes in the perceptions, plans and activities of people, society, institutions and organizations.
13. **Transgender person** as defined under the “The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.
14. **The Concept of ‘Extended Workplace’ given under POSH Law**

The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act) has given a wide definition to the term ‘workplace’ under Section 2(o) of the Act and included the concept of ‘extended workplace’ in its definition. Under the POSH Act, workplace includes:

- any department, organisation, undertaking, establishment, enterprise, institution, office, branch or unit which is established, owned, controlled or wholly or substantially financed by funds provided directly or indirectly by the appropriate Government or the local authority or a Government company or a corporation or a co-operative society;
- any private sector organisation or a private venture, undertaking, enterprise, institution, establishment, society, trust, non-governmental organisation, unit or service provider carrying on commercial, professional, vocational, educational, entertainment, industrial, health services or financial activities including production, supply, sale, distribution or service; hospitals or nursing homes;

- any sports institute, stadium, sports complex or competition or games venue, whether residential or not used for training, sports or other activities relating thereto;
- any place visited by the employee arising out of or during the course of employment including transportation by the employer for undertaking such journey; a dwelling place or a house

The term workplace also includes unorganised sector which means an enterprise owned by individuals or self-employed workers, engaged in the production or sale of goods or providing service of any kind whatsoever, and the number of such workers is less than ten. The concept of extended workplace includes any place visited by the employee arising out of or during the course of employment and also includes transportation provided by the employer for undertaking such journey.

According to Section 2(o)(vi) of the Act, the term workplace includes 'dwelling place or a house'. Due to 'work from home' becoming a new norm and considering the intention of the legislation, it is safe to say that sexual harassment occurring during the course of 'work from home' is also covered by POSH Law. Work is never restricted to the four walls of the office. It is now well accepted that a workplace is not only limited to the physical place of work but goes beyond the physical boundaries of the primary workplace or office building. Virtual workplaces are becoming an unavoidable tool for many working professionals and a necessity as we move forward. Under the law, employers are responsible towards providing a safe working environment for their employees including the new normal of digital workspaces.