

# Gender Discrimination and Harassment in Schools



Educators have received widespread praise for their flexibility and hard work throughout the pandemic. However, a look at the insurance data provider Advisen's database shows allegations of gender discrimination and harassment occur more frequently than in other industries.

In elementary and secondary schools, retaliation and sexual harassment were the most frequent allegations—each present in 30% of losses. Allegations of demotions or denied promotions due to gender were present in about 10% of losses. Allegations of retaliation, unequal pay and denials of promotion were each present in fewer than 10% of gender discrimination and harassment losses for industries outside of education—6%, 9% and 8%, respectively. However, in the education sector, these allegations were present in a much higher percentage of losses—33%, 10% and 17%, respectively.

With the median cost of gender discrimination and harassment claims in the education sector resulting losses of ~\$200,000, preventing discrimination and harassment claims is both ethically and fiscally responsible for schools. FFB recommends that schools conduct regular audits of their harassment and discrimination policies and procedures to ensure that the policies:

- Outline robust harassment and discrimination training both for school leaders and employees
- Clearly define harassment and discrimination and provide examples of what constitutes such conduct
- Include a clear process for employees to report claims of discrimination and harassment and/or provide a third-party compliance hotline where employees can make reports of discrimination and harassment.
- Clarify the investigation process and express the school's commitment to conducting an immediate and thorough investigation and to taking any corrective action needed
- Ensure employees will not be retaliated against for making claims of discrimination or harassment and that the employer will take all steps to protect the employee and their confidentiality

If you have questions about the strength of your current harassment and discrimination policies, please reach out to FFB. Our specialization in the education sector enables us to provide a full risk-management review of your program to ensure that your school has properly managed risk.



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