

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT

Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc. stands with women in every walk of life to affirm that sexual harassment and assault will no longer be tolerated wherever it occurs, including in the workplace or at school.

Sexual harassment and assault are widespread in virtually every industry. Tarana Burke created the #MeToo campaign to raise awareness about sexual harassment and assault in the workplace. When stories about sexual harassment and assault in the tech industry came to light, it sparked a conversation about toxic work cultures. More recently, women in the entertainment and media industries came forward with their own experiences of being sexually harassed and assaulted, and they named names. This, in turn, motivated numerous women in a variety of other industries to name their harassers and assailants. We must use this momentum to bring about lasting legislative change.

Hadassah passed a policy statement on sexual harassment in 1999 that focused primarily on harassment in schools. Today we reaffirm that policy and expand its scope. As one of the largest women's membership organizations in the country, Hadassah believes that every woman (and, indeed, every individual) has the right to work, volunteer and study in an atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits unlawful discrimination, including sexual harassment and assault. We urge employers and schools to recognize a woman's (and everyone's) right to work, volunteer and study free of harassment and assault, and to create clear and comprehensive policies, complaint procedures and disciplinary guidelines that will result in taking prompt and effective action to address and correct any incidents of sexual harassment and assault.

We believe that creating a workplace free from sexual harassment and assault should include the following:

- Stronger workplace protections for women, both preventative and punitive
- An enlargement of the statutes of limitation to bring claims of sexual harassment and assault

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT

- Access to independent, outside entities to investigate workplace claims of sexual harassment and assault, if necessary
- Passage of the Fair Employment Protection Act which provides that an employer is liable for the creation or continuation of a hostile or harassing work environment under any of the federal anti-discrimination laws, if at the time of the harassment (1) the alleged harasser was authorized by the employer to take or recommend tangible employment actions that affect the alleged victim of the harassing conduct or to direct that employee's daily work activities; or (2) the negligence of the employer led to the creation or continuation of the hostile or harassing work environment.