

ACT Greens Sexual Harassment Policy

Policy Statement

The ACT Greens are committed to creating and maintaining a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated under any circumstances. All incidents will be reviewed promptly, confidentially, and sensitively, adhering to principles of natural justice and trauma-informed responses.

Scope

This policy relates to Greens members, employees and contractors in their interactions with other people in the course of Greens activity. It also provides a right of complaint against Greens members, employees and contractors to volunteers and attendees at ACT Greens events.

Note: This policy does not apply to parliamentary office staff for interactions pursuant to their duties in that role. It may nevertheless apply to them as Greens members during interactions outside that role, including campaigning, volunteering, and discharge of roles as Greens office bearers.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that makes someone feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated, and where a reasonable person would anticipate this reaction. Conduct may include:

- Unwelcome physical contact
- Sexual comments, jokes, or advances
- Unwanted social invitations
- Displaying explicit materials
- Sending explicit messages
- Stalking or other criminal behaviours

Legal Framework

Sexual harassment is unlawful under:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)

Other legislation, including criminal penalties or civil causes of action, may also apply to sexual behaviour.

Rights and Responsibilities

All persons involved in complaints (complainants, respondents, witnesses, and bystanders) have the right to:

- Confidentiality;
- A support person throughout the process;
- Be informed about the process, progress, and outcomes;
- Protection from retaliation; and
- Access counselling and support services

Principles for Response

Responses to sexual harassment will:

- Treat all complaints seriously
- Prioritise the safety, dignity, and empowerment of complainants
- Respect confidentiality
- Provide protection against retaliation
- Ensure fair, impartial investigations
- Offer a trauma-informed response

Complaint Procedures

While the ACT Greens has a formal complaints process in place, all members have a responsibility under the Code of Conduct to ensure that any individual raising a concern is appropriately directed to either the informal or formal complaints process. Members must not attempt to resolve complaints independently, but instead support the complainant to engage with the established procedures in a respectful and timely manner.

Informal Complaint

Where it is safe and appropriate to do so, complainants are encouraged to address the individual responsible for the behaviour directly, requesting that the conduct cease. Alternatively, an informal complaint can be raised through a nominated person, who may facilitate a conversation or mediation process aimed at reaching a mutually acceptable resolution.

Formal Complaint

A formal complaint can be submitted in writing to the Party Office or to the Co-Convenors of the Management Committee or any person in a position of authority in the party. Support

from a nominated person is available to assist in lodging and documenting the complaint. Formal complaints may initiate an investigation by the Arbitration and Conciliation Committee—an independent body comprising members operating separately from the party's supervisory structures.

Investigation Process

Investigations will:

- Be conducted confidentially, impartially, and promptly
- Respect natural justice principles including being informed of all evidence that the Committee takes into account in coming to a decision; and having the right of reply to any such information.
- Provide regular updates to involved parties
- Be documented securely and stored confidentially in accordance with legal obligations.

External Review

Complaints may be escalated to external bodies such as the ACT Human Rights Commission or Police if appropriate.

Criminal Conduct

Allegations involving criminal behaviour such as sexual assault or stalking will be supported to be referred to police if the complainant chooses to make such a referral, but the choice remains with them.

Outcomes and Sanctions

Possible outcomes include:

- Counselling or behaviour change programs
- Formal apologies
- Suspension from engaging with greens related social media or online groups
- Suspension or expulsion from the party
- Official warnings noted in databases
- Reimbursement of related costs
- Mediation or conciliation where agreed

Confidentiality

Identities and details will be kept confidential and shared strictly on a need-to-know basis.

Implementation and Training

All employees, office bearers, and other volunteers with a leadership role will undertake the Australian Greens online training and education on sexual harassment prevention, trauma-informed responses, and this policy.

Monitoring, Reporting, and Evaluation

Complaints data will be collected and reviewed annually, ensuring transparency and continuous improvement. Non-identifying complaint outcomes will be documented in a Complaints Register.

Support Services

The ACT Greens will ensure that approved support contacts are available to provide initial information, support, and guidance. External support services include:

- ACT Human Rights Commission
- Conflict Resolution Centre
- Canberra Rape Crisis Centre
- Legal Aid ACT
- Relevant trade unions

The ACT Greens are dedicated to upholding dignity, respect, and equality, actively working towards eliminating sexual harassment in all forms.