

TREADING ROUGH WATERS:

IDENTIFYING MISTREATMENT AT SEA AND WHAT TO DO NEXT

Being a seafarer comes with its own set of challenges — long days away from home, tough working conditions, and the need to stay strong for yourself and your crew. But one thing you should never have to deal with is harassment or bullying at work.

HARASSMENT means someone is treating you in a way that affects your dignity. It could make you feel scared, insulted, embarrassed, or left out.

PAROLIA



COMMON SIGNS OF HARASSMENT OR BULLYING



Shouting, swearing, or insulting people at work

THEY'RE JUST
JOKING.

IT'S JUST TOUGH
MANAGEMENT.

Being excluded on purpose for work and social events



Spreading rumors or lies

Making discriminatory jokes



Getting too much criticism, even when the job was done well

Receiving threats about your job, performance, or future



Being given unfair tasks or having responsibility taken away without reason

Cyberbullying



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YOU ARE NOT ALONE

If something feels wrong, it probably is. Harassment isn't "part of the job." Your voice matters — and help is out there.



WHAT YOU CAN DO?

KEEP RECORD

Write down what happened — dates, times, who was involved, and what was said or done.

YOUR EMPLOYER IS OBLIGATED TO LISTEN AND ACT

These are clearly outlined in the Maritime Labour Convention and are supported by the POEA Standard Employment Contract for seafarers.

TALK TO SOMEONE YOU TRUST.

Whether it's a crewmate, family member, or friend — don't keep it to yourself.

REPORT IT.

Companies must follow The Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) and other relevant national laws. Always check if your company is complying with these laws.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP.

Some companies offer helplines or independent third-party contacts. These exist for a reason — and you deserve to feel supported.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

THE RIGHT TO A SAFE & SECURE WORKPLACE

free from violence, harassment, and discrimination

THE RIGHT TO FAIR TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

including proper contracts, wages, and working hours

THE RIGHT TO DECENT LIVING & WORKING CONDITIONS

such as safe accommodations, clean food and water, and enough rest

THE RIGHT TO FAIR TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

including proper contracts, wages, and working hours

THE RIGHT TO HEALTH PROTECTION & MEDICAL CARE

both on board and ashore

THE RIGHT TO FILE COMPLAINTS

without fear of retaliation.

IF YOU SEE SOMEONE ELSE BEING HARASSED

Speak up if you can. Support your fellow crew. Even asking "Are you okay?" can make a big difference. Harassment often continues because no one talks about it. Breaking that silence is the first step to change.

WHAT COMPANIES SHOULD BE DOING

Provide safe and clear ways for seafarers to report harassment
Avoid "resolving" the issue by just moving the victim to another ship
Offer informal ways to address issues if the victim prefers
Train their crew in how to handle harassment and support others.

Everyone deserves to feel safe and respected at work — whether you're in an office or out at sea.

ORGANIZATIONS THAT CAN SUPPORT YOU

- INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION
- PHILIPPINE OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT ADMINISTRATION
- ASSOCIATED MARINE OFFICERS' AND SEAMEN'S UNION OF THE PHILIPPINES
- SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL UNION
- STELLA MARIS
- MISSION TO SEAFARERS