

Get Your Acts Together, Act IV: The Hotel Workers Sexual Harassment Ordinance

In October, 2017, Chicago passed the Hotel Workers Sexual Harassment Ordinance. By July 1, 2018, per the statute, every Chicago hotel must:

(1) equip employees who are assigned to work in a guest room or restroom, under circumstances where no other employee is present in such room, with a panic button or notification device.

In addition to providing a notification device, hotels must develop, maintain, publish, and display an Anti-Harassment policy. The policy must:

(a) encourage employees ("complaining employee") to immediately report to the licensee instances of alleged sexual assault and sexual harassment by guests ("offending guest");

(b) describe the procedures that the complaining employee and licensee shall follow in such cases;

(c) instruct the complaining employee to cease work and to leave the immediate area where danger is perceived until hotel security personnel or members of the Police Department arrive to provide assistance;

(d) offer temporary work assignments to the complaining employee during the duration of the offending guest's stay at the hotel, which may include assigning the employee to work on a different floor or at a different station or work area away from the offending guest;

(e) provide the complaining employee with necessary paid time off to: (i) sign a complaint with the Police Department against the offending guest, and (ii) testify as a witness at any legal proceeding that may ensue as a result of such complaint, if the complaining employee is still in the licensee's employ at the time such legal proceeding occurs;

(f) inform the employee that the Illinois Human Rights Act, Chicago Human Rights Ordinance and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provide additional protections against sexual harassment in the workplace; and

(g) inform the employee that it is illegal for the employer to retaliate against any employee who reasonably uses a panic button or notification device, or otherwise attempts in good faith to seek relief under the Ordinance.