



Appendix F: Sexual Harassment Assessment



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Sexual harassment has no place in the Department of Defense (DoD). In policy and in practice, DoD strives to provide a respectful workplace for all warfighters and employees, free from sexually harassing behaviors. DoD's goal is to provide the highest quality response and to hold alleged offenders appropriately accountable. All who believe they have experienced sexual harassment should be able to report the behavior without fear of reprisal or retaliation.

This appendix reports on complaints of sexual harassment received by the Military Services in Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24), from October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1020.03 defines sexual harassment as a category of harassment that is sexual in nature, including but not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and repeated deliberate offensive comments or gestures of a sexual nature. Conduct that constitutes an offense at Paragraph 107a of Part IV of the Manual for Courts-Martial is punishable under Article 134 of the UCMJ.

Top Line Results of FY24 Sexual Harassment Complaints

Based on information provided by the Military Services, in FY24, there were 3,014 complaints of sexual harassment. Of which, 1,969 were formal, 885 were informal, 158 were anonymous, and two were reported as an unknown complaint type.

Of the 1,969 total formal sexual harassment complaints, 1,049 were resolved,¹ 332 remained pending at the close of FY24, and 588 were of unknown status.² Of the 1,049 resolved complaints, 624 were substantiated, 405 were unsubstantiated, three were dismissed, 27 were referred to other agencies, and one was withdrawn. The majority of substantiated sexual harassment offenses involved crude behavior and/or unwanted sexual attention.

The 624 substantiated complaints were associated with 624 complainants and 743 alleged offenders. The majority of complainants were E1-E4 women while the majority of alleged offenders were E1-E4 men, revealing an area of needed intervention in our junior enlisted population. There were 688 substantiated offenders associated with the 624 substantiated formal complaints. The vast majority of these substantiated offenders (618) received disciplinary actions, with the most common being administrative action, administrative discharge, and non-judicial actions. Additionally, there were no complaints of retaliation this FY, revealing the dedication to prevent retaliation and hold offenders accountable.

Oversight Responsibilities

The DoD Office for Civil Right and Equal Opportunity Policy (OCREOP), under the authority, direction, and control of the Executive Director for Force Resiliency (OFR), and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)), develops policy and procedural guidance for DoD's Harassment Prevention and Response Program. The

¹ A complaint is resolved when it is substantiated, unsubstantiated, dismissed, referred, or withdrawn.

² "Unknown" includes standalone cases of NDPSI, or the status was not reported by the Military Services.

Harassment Prevention and Response Program oversees Department-wide harassment prevention and response policy, training and education, and data collection and analysis.

Overview of Sexual Harassment Prevention Efforts

The Department issued DoDI 6400.11, “DoD Integrated Primary Prevention Policy for Prevention Workforce and Leaders,” on December 20, 2022. It establishes a new Integrated Primary Prevention Workforce (IPPW) with roles, responsibilities, and requirements for assessment, evaluation, and training for IPPW personnel and leaders. To proactively prevent harmful behaviors in military communities, the policy provides that DoD will establish and maintain a robust, enterprise-wide IPPW capability by implementing the following: a trained and full-time IPPW; enhanced prevention data collection; effective use of findings from the Command Climate Assessment (CCA) to address climate concerns; and empowered Service members to maintain a safe environment.

The CCAs primarily serve as organizational development tools to help commanders and leaders build positive organizational climates. CCAs allow commanders and leaders to identify areas for improvement and take appropriate actions to address challenges within their organization that include, but are not limited to sexual assault, harassment, retaliation, suicide, domestic abuse, and child abuse.

The Prevention Plan of Action (PPoA) 2.0 for 2022 to 2024, published in May 2022, established a framework to guide the development, implementation, and evaluation of integrated primary prevention. This approach aligns competing priorities, increases program effectiveness, ensures efficient use of resources, and helps leaders cultivate safe and healthy climates across the military community. The PPoA 2.0 involves taking action to decrease harmful behaviors and reduce their impact on readiness and retention in a way that:

- Incorporates values of inclusivity, connectedness, dignity, and respect (access, equity, rights, and participation)—including the elevation of Service members’ and their families’ voices—to inform plans, processes, and trainings;
- Recognizes and adjusts plans, processes, and trainings to be responsive to changing climate issues and populations that have been disproportionately impacted by harmful acts;
- Intentionally seeks to align and find common operating principles across prevention efforts and offices (e.g., equal opportunity, drug reduction response, suicide prevention, sexual assault prevention); and
- Incorporates multiple lines of effort across individual, interpersonal, and community/organizational levels.

Overview of Sexual Harassment Response Efforts

The Department continues to review and develop substantive updates to incorporate statutory requirements and improve the response measures detailed in DoDI 1020.03, “Harassment Prevention and Response in the Armed Forces.” Concurrently, the Department is engaged in resourcing and staffing efforts to better support response efforts, including the use of independent trained investigators. Furthermore, DoD leaders continue to take appropriate administrative or disciplinary action when an allegation of harassment is substantiated. This includes documenting an offender’s substantiated harassment in the appropriate personnel records system, and initiation of involuntary separation for substantiated offenders.

These efforts are informed by the June 2021 recommendations from the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military (IRC), as approved by the then-Secretary of Defense, and recent statutory changes.

Since 2021, the Department conducts On-Site Installation Evaluation (OSIE) assessments at select military sites. The OSIE provides insight on risk and protective factors enabling the Department to address prevention and response efforts more effectively for sexual assault, harassment, and suicide.

Finally, the Department continues to expand its data collection and analysis tools to better inform its response efforts. The Department started the process to develop an integrated data solution to improve sexual harassment data collection. Additionally, with the use of surveys, DoD can assess whether available reporting measures are known, accessible, trusted, and effective.

DoD Harassment Prevention and Response Assessment

The Department has multiple policies that speak to its measures to address sexual harassment of Service members:

- DoDI 1020.03, “Harassment Prevention and Response in the Armed Forces,” February 8, 2018, incorporating Change 3, January 17, 2025.³ This DoDI:
 - Establishes a comprehensive, DoD-wide harassment prevention and response program;
 - Affirms the Department’s position that it does not tolerate or condone harassment;
 - Provides requirements for Military Department harassment prevention and response policies and programs for Service members;
 - Provides training and education requirements and standards; and
 - Implements Section 1561 of Title 10, U.S.C.
- DoDI 1350.02, “DoD Military Equal Opportunity Program,” September 4, 2020, incorporating Change 1, December 20, 2022.⁴ This DoDI:
 - Establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides procedures for the DoD Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) Program; and
 - Establishes the functions of the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) and the DEOMI Board of Advisors.
- DoDI 6400.11, “DoD Integrated Primary Prevention Policy for Prevention Workforce and Leaders,” December 20, 2022, Change 1, April 4, 2023.⁵ This DoDI:
 - Establishes and implements policy, assigns responsibilities, prescribes procedures, and identifies requirements for addressing the primary prevention of harmful behaviors, as defined in the glossary, in military communities;
 - Establishes roles, requirements, and training and education standards for full-time and part-time Integrated Primary Prevention personnel;
 - Establishes learning objectives for leaders to oversee and support prevention activities; and

³<https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/102003p.PDF>

⁴ <https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/135002p.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/640011p.PDF>

- Provides assessment and evaluation requirements for IPPW oversight.

Sexual Harassment Complaint Reporting Procedures

For Service members, sexual harassment may be reported to a variety of persons using formal, informal, or anonymous procedures. A *formal complaint* is a complaint that is submitted in writing to the staff designated to receive such complaints in Military Department operating instructions and regulations or a complaint that the commanding officer or other person in charge of the organization determines warrants an investigation. Data concerning formal complaints was obtained from Military Service and National Guard Bureau (NGB) MEO offices, with the exception of Army whose data was obtained from its Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) Program.

An *informal complaint* is an allegation, made either orally or in writing, that is not submitted as a formal complaint through the office designated to receive harassment complaints. The allegation may be submitted to a person in a position of authority within or outside of the Service member's organization. Such complaints may be resolved at the lowest level through intervention by the first-line supervisor and/or using alternative dispute resolution techniques, such as mediation.

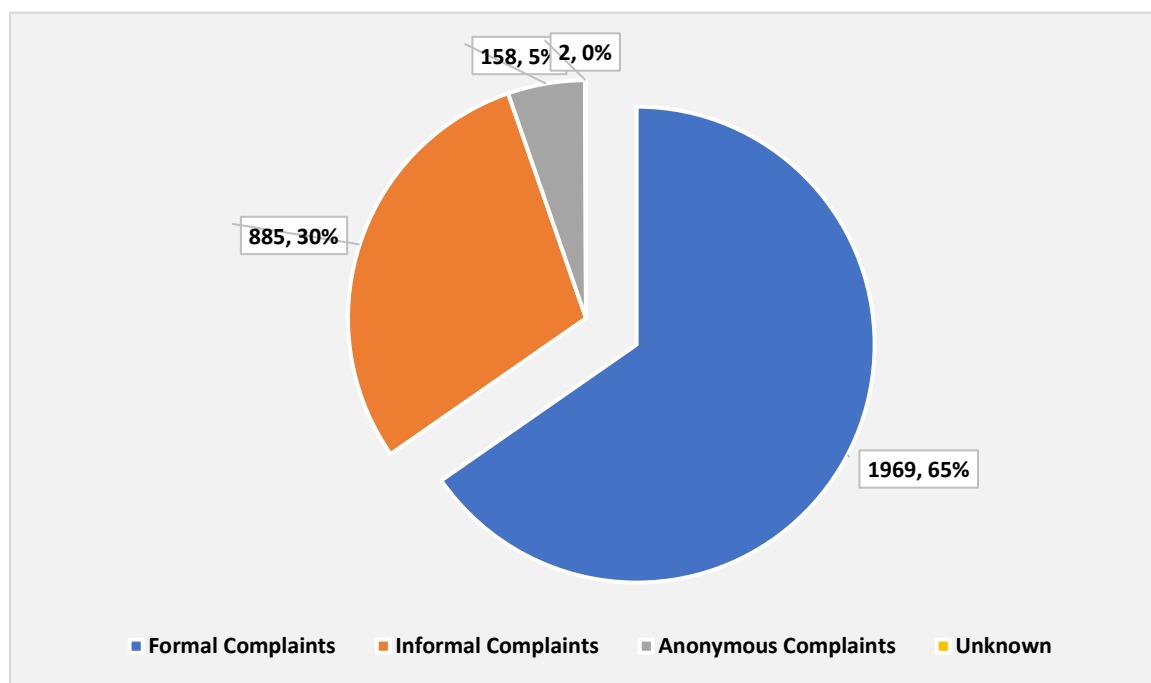
An *anonymous complaint* is an allegation of sexual harassment received by a commanding officer or supervisor, regardless of the means of transmission, from an unknown or unidentified source. The complainant is not required to divulge any personally identifiable information. If an anonymous complaint contains sufficient information to permit the initiation of an investigation, the commanding officer or supervisor will initiate the investigation in accordance with DoDI 1020.03, and any Service-specific guidance. If an anonymous complaint does not contain sufficient information to permit the initiation of an investigation, the information would be documented in a Memorandum for the Record and maintained on file in accordance with disposition instructions and the central point of contact responsible for processing harassment complaints.

FY24 Sexual Harassment Complaints

Total Sexual Harassment Complaints in FY24

Based on information provided by the Military Services, in FY24, there were 3,014 complaints of sexual harassment. Of which, 1,969 were formal, 885 were informal, 158 were anonymous, and two were reported as an unknown complaint type. Figure 1 breaks down the number of complaints by type.

Figure 1. FY24 Total Sexual Harassment Complaints by Type



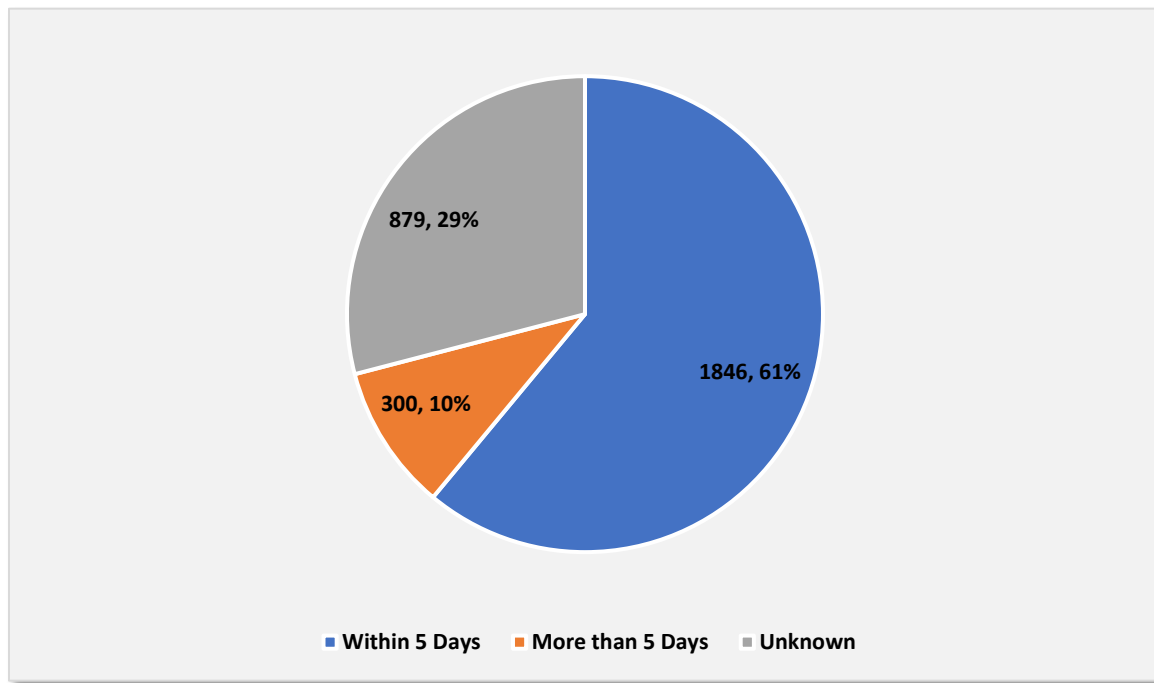
Formal Complaints

During FY24, the Military Services and NGB received, processed, and investigated a total of 1,969 formal sexual harassment complaints. The data indicate a 3.4 percent decrease in FY24 from the 2,040 formal complaints that were received, processed, and investigated in FY23.

Timeliness of Reporting

DoD policy requires that, to the extent practicable, commanders will forward sexual harassment complaint information or allegations to a general court-martial convening authority (GCMCA) within five days of receipt. In FY24, 1,846 formal complaints of sexual harassment were forwarded to a GCMCA within five days and 300 were forwarded to GCMCA after more than five days. The timeliness of 879 complaints was unknown (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Timeliness of Reporting for Formal Complaints of Sexual Harassment

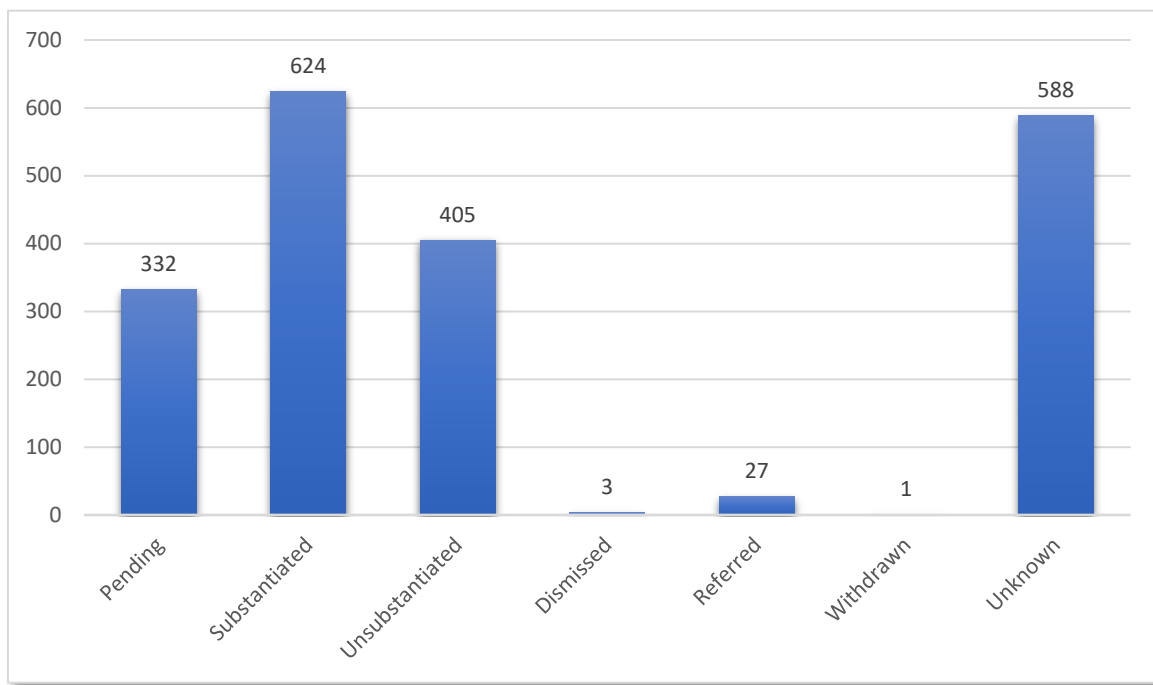


Complaint Disposition

Following completion of a commander-directed investigation, commanders determined whether formal complaints of sexual harassment were substantiated or unsubstantiated based on the evidence obtained.

Figure 3 displays the case statuses of the FY24 formal complaints. The numbers are broken down by complaint disposition of substantiated, unsubstantiated, pending, unknown, dismissed, referred, or withdrawn.

Figure 3. Formal Sexual Harassment Case Status by Complaint Disposition



Nature of Substantiated Incidents

Sexual harassment is characterized as a hostile work environment and/or quid pro quo. A hostile work environment is when a person is subjected to offensive, crude, unwanted, and unsolicited comments and behavior of a sexual nature that interferes with that person's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. Quid pro quo refers to conditions placed on a person's career or terms of employment in return for sexual favors.

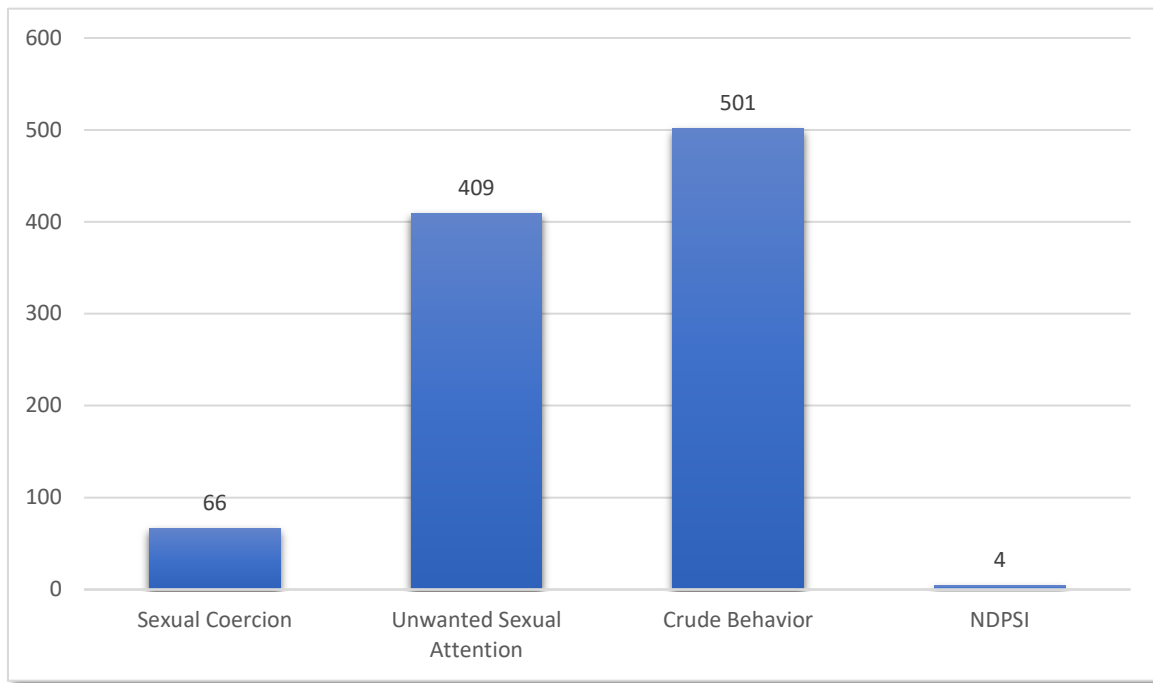
Sexual harassment complaints are generally of four different types, depending on the nature of the sexual harassment behaviors. For every substantiated sexual harassment complaint, there can be a combination of sexual harassment behaviors. For example, one substantiated formal sexual harassment complaint can involve both crude behavior and unwanted sexual attention. Therefore, the total of the allegations in each category type exceeds the overall total of complaints.

Sexual harassment incidents that involve nonconsensual distribution of private sexual images (NDPSI) are included within the total sexual harassment allegation numbers. Based on the way the data are collected from the Military Services, some of the allegations of NDPSI are counted as their own problematic behavior type.⁶ In FY24, the Military Services and NGB received, processed, and investigated 14 total formal complaints of sexual harassment involving an allegation of NDPSI. Four reports of NDPSI were substantiated.

In Figure 4, substantiated allegations of the FY24 formal complaints are listed by complaint type: crude/offensive behavior, unwanted sexual attention, sexual coercion, and NDPSI.

⁶ The Marine Corps interprets NDPSI as an offense completely separate from sexual harassment.

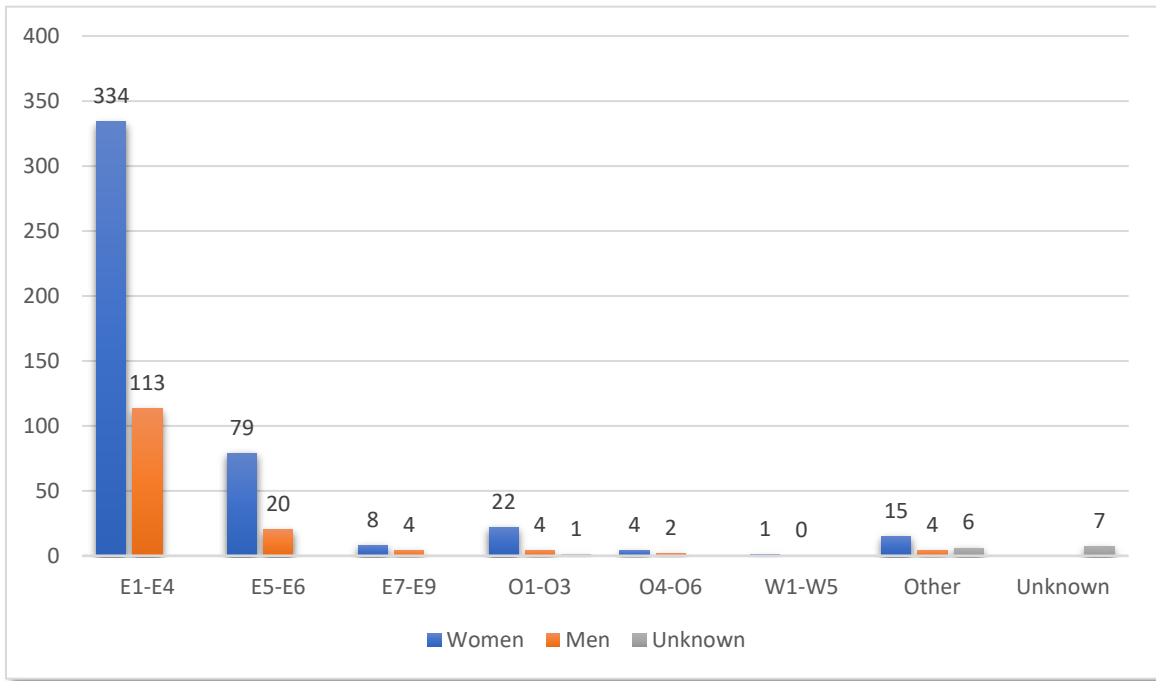
Figure 4. Substantiated Formal Sexual Harassment Allegations by Behavior Type



Complainant Characteristics

There were 624 complainants associated with 624 incidents of sexual harassment substantiated following a formal complaint and investigation. Of the 624 complainants, 463 were women, 147 were men, and the sex of 14 complainants was unknown. The majority of complainants were in paygrades E1-E4 (334 women and 113 men). Figure 5 displays complainant characteristics by sex and paygrade for formal complaints received in FY24.

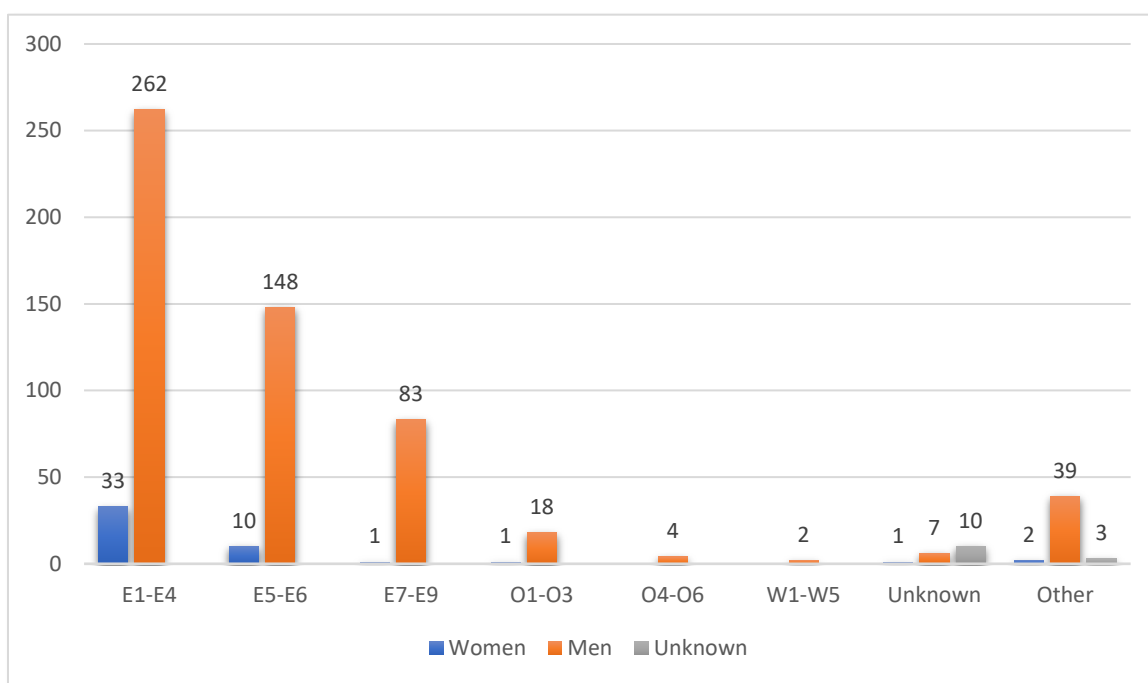
Figure 5. Formal Complaints by Complainant Sex and Paygrade



Alleged Offender Characteristics

This section presents offender characteristics for formal substantiated sexual harassment complaints. During FY24, there were 624 alleged offenders associated with 624 incidents of sexual harassment substantiated following a formal complaint and investigation. Figure 6 displays alleged offender characteristics by sex and paygrade for formal complaints received in FY24.

Figure 6. Alleged Offenders Associated with Formal Complaints, by Paygrade

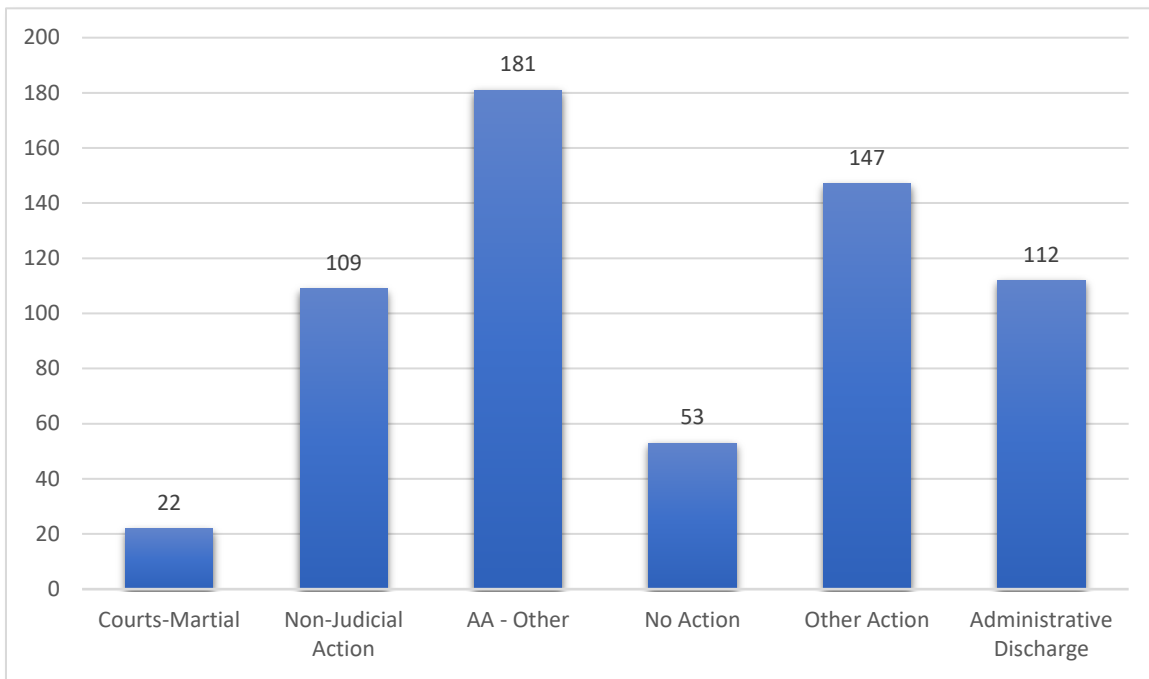


Corrective Actions

Alleged offenders identified through substantiated complaints may receive more than one type of disposition. For example, an alleged offender may receive a letter of reprimand, administrative actions, and non-judicial punishment. In FY24, of the total 624 offenders associated with substantiated complaints, only 463 were subject to disciplinary actions while 171 were not. This occurs because some formal complaints are resolved through counseling or other means of resolution⁷ and, as such, were not subject to further disciplinary action. Out of the 463 substantiated offenders subject to disciplinary action, 53 received no disciplinary action. In cases where the Office of Special Trial Counsel does not exercise jurisdiction, commanders have discretion on how to discipline substantiated alleged offenders of sexual harassment. In most cases, when disciplinary actions are not taken for substantiated sexual harassment complaints, the alleged offender is pending disciplinary actions for other offenses, to include sexual assault. Of the 410 disciplinary actions reported, most rendered were administrative actions (39 percent, n=181), followed by administrative discharge (24 percent, n=112), and non-judicial action (23 percent, n=109). Of note, there were 22 courts-martial administered (5 percent), and 43 other corrective actions (9 percent). Figure 7 displays the different types of corrective actions administered to offenders in substantiated formal complaints.

⁷ Other means of resolution include, but are not limited to training and education, and performance evaluations.

Figure 7. Corrective Actions Administered to Alleged Offenders in Substantiated Formal Complaints



Retaliation Complaints

If a Service member (who has filed a sexual harassment complaint) and/or a uniformed witness, bystander, or first responder perceives subsequent retaliation related to the complaint of sexual harassment, they may seek guidance from an Equal Opportunity Advisor (EOA). Individuals are encouraged to report retaliation issues to command for investigation or other appropriate command action per Service guidance, the Inspector General (IG),⁸ or a Military Criminal Investigative Organization (MCIO).

In FY24, there were no retaliation referrals reported for sexual harassment.

Way Forward

DoD-wide Integrated Data Solution

The Department recognizes the need for a DoD-wide Integrated Data Solution (IDS) that utilizes current technologies to ensure more accurate and timely sexual harassment and other complaint data. OCREOP is developing an acquisition strategy to leverage internal IT assets and systems to create an IDS to support automated Department-wide MEO data collection and reporting from the Military Departments' existing case management systems. The IDS would provide access to timely, accurate, and complete Department-wide MEO prohibited

⁸ Currently, no mechanism is in place to share dispositions of retaliation investigated by the IG with Equal Opportunity Advisors.

discrimination, harassment (to include hazing and bullying), sexual harassment, and related problematic behaviors data as well as accurately measure and statistically assess the progress and effectiveness of Department-wide policies and programs and fulfill DoD's reporting requirements. Funding for the IDS, however, is contingent on approval and alignment with leadership priorities.

Confidential Reporting of Sexual Harassment

The FY21 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Section 532 amended Section 1561b, required the Secretary of Defense to prescribe in regulations a process by which a member of an Armed Force under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of a Military Department may confidentially allege a complaint of sexual harassment to an individual outside the immediate chain of command of the member to gain access to services and not automatically trigger an investigation, similar to confidential reporting of sexual assault.

In response, all Military Departments began implementing confidential reporting options in FY24⁹, complementing existing informal, formal, and anonymous mechanisms. Additionally, all Military Departments have issued policies on Confidential Reporting. These expanded reporting options empower Service members who experience sexual harassment to access support and seek resolution through their preferred avenue. This option fosters trust and encourages reporting, ultimately contributing to a climate of accountability and respect.

The Department recognizes that cohesive, resilient teams are essential for combat readiness. By prioritizing both prevention and responsive intervention, including the confidential reporting option, the Department aims to protect Service members, reinforce unit cohesion, and enhance overall military effectiveness.

The Military Departments have issued policies consistent with the NDAA for FY25, Section 532, providing for confidential reporting of sexual harassment to an individual outside the Service member's immediate chain of command. The Department will submit the information required by Section 532 to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives in the next Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military.

Harassment Prevention and Response Policy Updates

DoDI 1020.03, "Harassment Prevention and Response in the Armed Forces," was updated on January 17, 2025. This update:

- Provides procedures for processing formal complaints of sexual harassment, including independent investigation of such complaints;
- Requires initiation of involuntary separation of Service members against whom a formal complaint of sexual harassment is substantiated;
- Designates the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security as responsible for developing the training curriculum for independent investigators of formal complaints of sexual harassment;
- Clarifies procedures for harassment complaints arising in joint Service environments;
- Specifies training requirements for independent investigators of formal sexual harassment complaints; and

⁹ Army, DAF, and NGB are utilizing SARCs, and DON is utilizing its MEO professionals by offering services through the No Wrong Door program.

- Updates definitions, organizational titles, information collections requirements, and references for accuracy.

OSIE

The OSIE visits have provided early detection of risk factors so leaders can take corrective actions and enhance prevention. The site visits provide insights on shared risk and protective factors on the ground, what works, what does not, and how the Department can improve efforts more comprehensively and support and inform future policy development.

Technology's Effect

DoD is committed to holding Service members who engage in cyber harassment behaviors appropriately accountable. Providing support and remedies to victims when such behavior occurs is also a top priority. DoD will accomplish these efforts through policy and programmatic actions as the Department recognizes cyber harassment has become more pervasive in society.

DoD is collaborating with the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress to evaluate how, and to what extent, the cyber environment and “information cocooning” impact the attitudes and behaviors of Service members. This collaboration will also provide recommendations for prevention activities derived from peer-reviewed academic literature and organizational best practices on how to mitigate the corresponding harmful behaviors. These recommendations will inform ways to promote a common understanding of cyber-facilitated sexual harassment and sexual assault to inform reporting and investigation procedures.

DoD continues to leverage every tool at its disposal to ensure DoD components have the requisite data and tools to hold leaders, both civilian and military, appropriately accountable for promoting good order and discipline. DoD is diligently working toward change within every unit and organization to reduce the rates of sexually harassing behaviors; ensuring those who experience sexual harassment are comfortable coming forward; holding alleged harassers appropriately accountable; and making certain that unit climates do not allow these behaviors to exist.

Conclusion

The Department is committed to eliminating sexual harassment and fostering a respectful environment for all Service members. The Department strives to provide effective responses to complaints, hold alleged offenders appropriately accountable, and ensure that individuals feel safe reporting harassment without fear of reprisal. In FY24, there were over 3,000 complaints of sexual harassment, highlighting the ongoing need for robust prevention and response measures, particularly among the junior enlisted population where the majority of these incidents are occurring. Of the 1,969 total formal sexual harassment complaints, 1,049 were resolved, of which 624 complaints were substantiated. This indicates that roughly half of the formal sexual harassment complaints investigated and resolved were substantiated. Additionally, the vast majority of alleged offenders associated with the 624 substantiated formal complaints received disciplinary action, indicating that these incidents are taken seriously and offenders are being held appropriately accountable.

The DoD is actively reviewing and updating its policies to strengthen its approach to addressing sexual harassment. This includes improving response measures, investing in resources and staffing, and utilizing independent trained investigators. The Department is also developing an

IDS to enhance data collection and reporting on harassment, enabling more effective assessment of prevention programs and policy effectiveness.

Furthermore, the DoD has implemented a confidential reporting option for Service members who experience sexual harassment. This confidential reporting mechanism aims to ensure that individuals outside the chain of command, who can maintain confidentiality, receive and address these sensitive complaints. This reflects DoD's commitment to providing a safe and supportive environment for all Service members.