

## TELANGANA GOVERNMENT INTRODUCES SEXUAL HARASSMENT ELECTRONIC BOX (T-SHE BOX)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Section (4) of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (the “**Act**”) stipulates that all government/ non-government organizations/ companies/ establishments with more than or equal to 10 employees should constitute an Internal Committee (“**IC**”) towards redressal of complaints of sexual harassment at the work place.

To ensure compliance with the Act, the government of the State of Telangana has recently issued a circular making it mandatory to register IC(s) by all organisations. This has been done by the introduction of an e-platform.

### 2. NOTIFICATION BY TELANGANA GOVERNMENT

On July 01, 2019, the Women and Child Welfare Department of the State of Telangana (the “**Department**”) issued a circular making it mandatory for all governmental and non-governmental organizations having 10 or more employees **to register their ICs by July 15, 2019**, failing which the concerned organization would have to pay a fine of INR 50,000 (approximately US\$ 730).

In this regard, the Department has launched a web portal, <https://tshebox.tgwdcw.in>. The details of the ICs (including which are already in existence) are required to be registered by the human resource (HR) department of the organizations through the ‘Sexual Harassment Electronic Box (T-SHe box)’ website.

The portal launched by the Department also provides information on various aspects of the Act, including FAQs to the public at large. The ‘T-SHe Box’ is an effort of the Government of Telangana to provide a single window access to every woman, irrespective of her work status, whether working in an organised or unorganised sector, to register sexual harassment complaints in a swift and efficient manner. Once a complaint is submitted to the ‘T-she box’, it will be directly sent to the concerned authority so that action is taken. A complainant can track the status of her complaint online and also provide a feedback after resolution of the complaint. If a complaint remains unsolved or in a disagreeable state, then the Department, at the request of the complainant, can refer the matter to the Local Committee (“**LC**”) constituted at a district level.

### 3. INDUSLAW VIEW

The Ministry of Women and Child Development (“**MOCD**”) of the Government of India had introduced a similar online platform in 2017 by the name of the Sexual Harassment electronic Box (SHe-Box). This was done with the exact intention that the T-SHe box has been launched. The implementation of the SHe-Box

may have brought perhaps better results if State Governments would have also participated with the same enthusiasm since it is generally not efficient to run such an initiative at a central level without the substantive involvement of the State Governments.

It has been reported<sup>1</sup> that the Telangana Government has taken this step as number of complaints were received from working women citing inefficiency of organizations in handling sexual harassment related complaints. This initiative would not only mean that the organizations would need to register their extant ICs but it would also compel all organizations to constitute ICs if they have not already done so.

It also demonstrates the seriousness of the Telangana government to strictly enforce the provisions of the Act. It is quite possible that other State governments may soon follow the steps taken by the State of Telangana and set up similar e-platforms to ensure holistic and substantive compliance with the Act.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.thenewsminute.com](http://www.thenewsminute.com)