



Mineral



Question of the Week

March 19, 2025

Question

What does “quid pro quo” mean in the context of workplace harassment?

ANSWER

Quid pro quo—a Latin phrase meaning “this for that”—refers to a specific type of unlawful sexual harassment. Quid pro quo harassment can occur in two ways:

- The harasser promises an employee or applicant a promotion, raise, or other positive employment change in exchange for a sexual favor or the employee’s positive response to sexual advance (such as agreeing to go on a date).
- The harasser demotes, reduces pay, or takes other adverse action against an employee or applicant for refusing a sexual favor or advance.

Sexual harassment isn’t limited to quid pro quo scenarios. It can also be (and is more commonly) unlawful when it creates a hostile work environment. If you are alerted to the possibility that harassment has occurred in your workplace, you should investigate immediately. You can learn more about preventing a hostile work environment and conducting an investigation on the [platform](#).

This Q&A does not constitute legal advice and does not address state or local law.