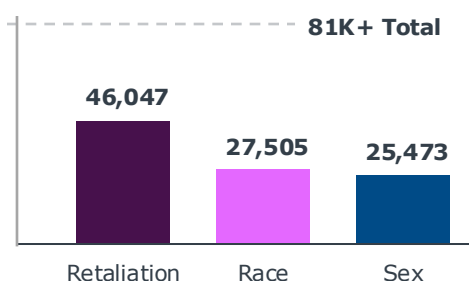


From Reaction to Resolution: A Smarter Way to Handle Employee Relations Complaints

A surge in discrimination, harassment, or performance complaints about a specific employee or group can quickly escalate into an employee relations crisis. If mishandled, these crises can lead to lower productivity, retention, or market perception—especially if those same issues continue to resurface.

Top 3 Categories of Employee Complaints

Complaints Received by EEOC in 2023



52% of employees were exposed to workplace harassment or misconduct

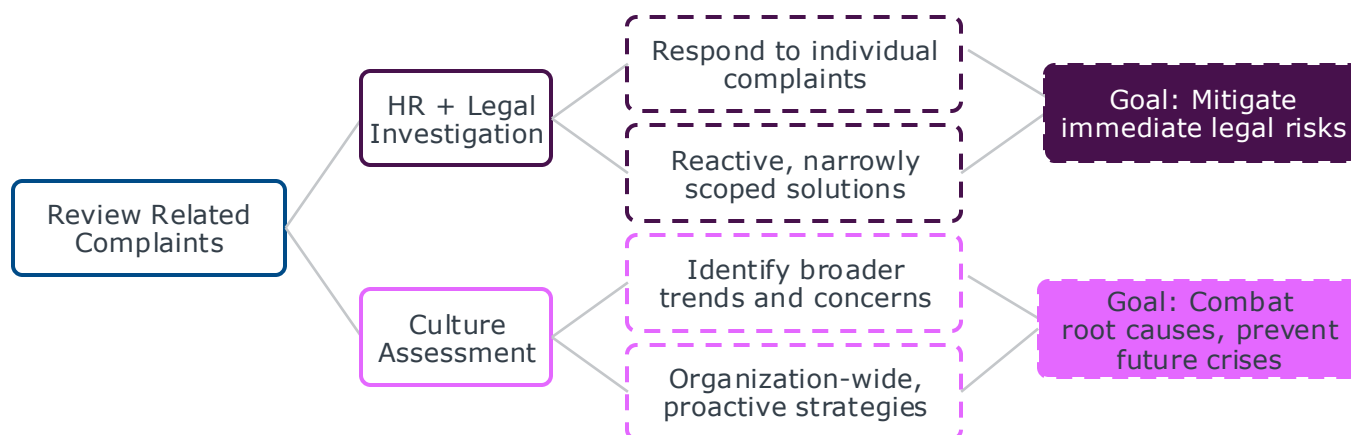
42% of inappropriate workplace behaviors were not reported last year

57% of employees cited harassment or misconduct as a factor or the primary reason they left

Creating Lasting Change Requires More than Legal Action

While legal investigations may be necessary to address employee complaints, they don't uncover the deeper cultural and behavioral patterns that contribute to workplace issues. Beyond witness interviews and document requests, HR leaders have a unique opportunity to assess the broader workplace climate and create an infrastructure for change.

A Dual Approach for Managing Urgent Employee Relations Crises

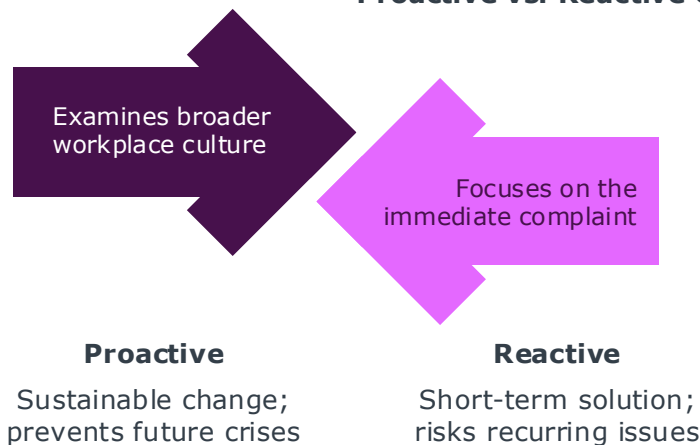


Sources: "Enforcement and Litigation Statistics," U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, September 3, 2024; "2023 Workplace Harassment & Employee Misconduct Insights," HR Acuity, July 30, 2024.

Getting to the Heart of Employee Complaints

Many organizations only address employee relations issues when they reach a breaking point, but waiting until a crisis strikes is costly. On average, employees spend more than two hours per week managing workplace disputes. For a company with 250 employees, that adds up to nearly 3,250 workdays lost each year. True progress requires both immediate action and long-term cultural improvements. A proactive employee relations approach not only resolves workplace concerns but also strengthens employee morale and organizational resilience.

Proactive vs. Reactive Crisis Management



The Risks of a Reactive Approach:

- Higher turnover
- Lower productivity and engagement
- Stifled innovation and creativity
- Negative press and brand perception
- Class-action lawsuits

Aligning Policies with Workplace Culture

Addressing individual complaints while assessing broader workplace trends allows HR leaders to tackle systemic workplace issues before they escalate. Taking a proactive stance on employee relations isn't just about avoiding crises—it's about creating a culture of accountability, trust, and inclusion. Organizations that embed these principles into daily operations—not just crisis management—see the greatest long-term success.

How a Holistic Approach Helps HR Leaders

- Builds Trust:** Employees feel valued when leadership reacts to concerns and commits to long-term cultural improvement
- Reduces Legal Risk:** A proactive approach minimizes liability, prevents reputational damage, and ensures alignment with HR best practices
- Strengthens Organizational Health:** Companies that invest in employee feedback, transparency, and inclusion see higher retention and engagement rates



Do your employee relations policies and reporting procedures align with the company's values and vision for an inclusive work culture?

If the same types of complaints keep surfacing in specific departments—or a certain demographic rarely submits complaints at all—this could signal issues with company policies, leadership accountability, or the reporting process itself.

Consider How Your Employees Might Respond:

- When misconduct occurs, does leadership correct it in the moment?
- Do employees feel safe reporting inappropriate behavior?
- Do employees trust that HR and leadership will take action?

How Seramount Can Help You Prevent the Next Crisis

Bringing in external legal support often signals that deeper cultural issues are at play. A third-party assessment, such as Seramount’s Assess360, allows organizations to gather anonymous feedback about harassment, discrimination, and retaliation concerns in a safe environment. We provide HR and Talent teams with strategic solutions that create real change. **By identifying cultural risks early, organizations can prevent crises before they unfold—ensuring a stronger, more resilient workplace.**

Measurable Impact for Assess360 Partners

- **50%** of employees who intended to leave in 1–3 years **chose to stay**
- **36-point reduction** in attrition within two years
- **45%** of proteges **promoted** within one year of completing the sponsorship pilot program
- **Increased accountability** for senior leadership

Supporting Employees Through Crisis and Change

HR leaders need to start a conversation with employees before complaints escalate into crises. Our unique listening methodology, Employee Voice Sessions (EVSs), bridges the gap between broad surveys and small focus groups—providing deeper insights while maintaining scalability and anonymity to uncover the real drivers of workplace challenges.

Key Benefits:



Anonymous, online focus groups create psychological safety



Expert facilitators engage employees in a solutions-oriented forum



Rich data reports convey an authentic view of employee experiences

	Engagement Surveys	Focus Groups	Employee Voice Sessions
Anonymity	✗ Not guaranteed	✗ Not anonymous	✓ Completely anonymous
Depth of Insights	✗ Only quantitative	✗ Only qualitative	✓ Both quantitative and qualitative
Follow-Up Capability	✗ No ability to follow up	✗ Only facilitator can follow up	✓ Facilitator and observers can follow up
Reach	✓ Broad	✗ Narrow	✓ Broad reach with segmentation
Personalization	✗ Cannot personalize	✓ Can personalize	✓ Personalization at scale
Actionability	✗ Hard to analyze and act on	✗ Limited scalability	✓ Reports with actionable recommendations

Is your workplace culture prepared to handle future challenges? Learn more or schedule a call with an expert at seramount.com/solutions/assess360.