



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAY 25 2023

THE ADMINISTRATOR

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement

**FROM:** Michael S. Regan *Michael S. Regan*

**TO:** All EPA Employees

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is committed to a workplace free of discrimination so that all employees and applicants have the freedom to compete on a fair and level playing field. To fully meet our mission to protect public health and the environment, we must ensure equal employment opportunity (EEO). Therefore, as Administrator, I issue this Policy Statement to reaffirm the agency's commitment to the principles of EEO in all of the EPA's region and program offices.

The EPA will not tolerate discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation), national origin, disability, age, genetic information, status as a parent, marital status, political affiliation, or reprisal. Discrimination includes harassment – sexual or nonsexual – of any employee or applicant for employment.

With respect to reprisal, the EPA will not tolerate acts of retaliation against an employee who engages in protected EEO activity. Engaging in EEO activity means participating in an EEO process or opposing discrimination based on any of the aforementioned protected EEO bases.

The EPA must make employment decisions in accordance with merit system principles contained in 5 U.S.C. §2301. EPA management is expected to provide leadership in supporting its EEO program by taking steps to promote EEO in all facets of employment. Facets of employment include recruitments, hirings, transfers and reassignments, promotions, performance assessments, awards, training and career-development opportunities, benefits, and separations.

The EPA has established EEO as a top priority in its agency's strategic plan. As a government organization based on scientific evidence and integrity, we should all recognize that we are a stronger and more effective organization when EEO principles are fully ingrained in EPA's DNA and when we have a robust EEO program.

Within the EPA, the Office of Civil Rights ensures compliance with federal nondiscrimination employment laws, regulations, and executive orders. If you wish to enter the EEO process, you must do so within forty-five (45) calendar days of the date of an alleged act of discrimination with a few limited exceptions.

If you are in a region office, you can contact your EEO Officer; if you are in a program office, you can contact the Office of Civil Rights at (202) 564-7272. Any employee or applicant can contact the Office of Civil Rights for general support, which includes assistance with identifying an employee's EEO Officer.

In addition, to resolve EEO complaints, the EPA promotes the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) methods. If an employee chooses to participate in agency-approved ADR efforts to resolve an informal EEO complaint, the agency must participate, absent extraordinary circumstances as determined by the Director of the Office of Civil Rights or designee<sup>1</sup>.

All EPA employees, including managers and staff, must take responsibility for reporting and addressing discriminatory conduct and preventing all types of discrimination, which includes workplace harassment. Persons who believe the agency may have engaged in workplace harassment should review EPA Order 4711, *Procedure for Addressing Allegations of Workplace Harassment*, for information on how to report such allegations.

The EPA recognizes that commitment to EEO principles and practices provides a workplace that strengthens employees' dedication to the agency's mission to protect human health and the environment.

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<sup>1</sup> Bargaining Unit (BU) employees have additional rights and privileges in the EEO process. For example, BU employees have the right to Union representation. Additionally, BU employees may be able to pursue relief through the grievance process negotiated within the Union contract. Furthermore, the Union has its own legal rights independent of the rights of an individual BU employee