



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

February 3, 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR: All NOAA Fisheries Employees and Contractors

FROM: Janet Coit  
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

SUBJECT: EEO Policy Statement

As we move into this New Year, I wish to reiterate my commitment to a workplace that is free of unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. Workplace discrimination is illegal and will not be tolerated in NOAA Fisheries. And, continued compliance with Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) laws is required in order for organizations to protect their workplace environment and sustain a culture of respect.

Under laws enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, it is illegal to discriminate against anyone, whether the individual is an applicant or an employee, because of their race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability (physical or mental), or genetic information. Executive Order 13087 prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation in the federal workforce. Retaliation against anyone who initiates a discrimination complaint, serves as a witness, or otherwise opposes discrimination is also prohibited.

I want to remind all managers and supervisors of your responsibility to not only uphold and support this policy, but to promote it within your ranks. As leaders you are required to report allegations of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and any other unlawful conduct. Any employee who believes they are a victim of discrimination and/or retaliation is strongly encouraged to bring the matter to the attention of management, the NOAA Fisheries Program Director for EEO and Diversity, or the NOAA Office of Inclusion and Civil Rights immediately. **Remember: An aggrieved person must initiate contact with an EEO Counselor in the NOAA Office of Inclusion and Civil Rights within 45 days of the incident alleged to be discriminatory or, in the case of a personnel action, within 45 days of the effective date of the alleged action.** You can reach the NOAA Office of Inclusion and Civil Rights at [noaa.oicr@noaa.gov](mailto:noaa.oicr@noaa.gov) or 301-713-0500.

Conflict can occur in any organization when employees with different backgrounds and priorities work together. When conflicts arise, the staff of NOAA's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program is available to assist you. It has proven effective in helping employees and managers reduce and resolve unproductive workplace conflicts quickly so that NOAA's mission can be accomplished as effectively and efficiently as possible. **NOTE:** While ADR is offered during the EEO process, the ADR process is a separate and distinct part of the agency's effort to address workplace conflict. It is not necessary to file any type of complaint to participate in this process. To learn more about NOAA's ADR Program or to request mediation, please contact [OHCS.ADR@noaa.gov](mailto:OHCS.ADR@noaa.gov).

If you have any questions regarding this policy, and/or the ADR Program, please feel free to contact our National Program Director for EEO and Diversity, Natalie Huff at 301-427-8025.

cc: Dr. Ngozi Butler-Guerrier, Director of NOAA's Office of Inclusion and Civil Rights  
Marie Herndon, Director (Acting), Workplace Violence and Prevention Response Office  
Hakeem Basheerud-Deen, Director of NOAA's Office of Human Capital Service

