

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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Instruction Memorandum No. MT-2003-020
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To: All Montana/Dakotas Employees
From: State Director
Subject: State Director's Policy Statements

The purpose of this memorandum is to reiterate our responsibility to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace, in all of its various forms, and ensure a discrimination-free environment for everyone. Attached are the Montana/Dakotas BLM policies on Sexual Harassment (Attachment 1) and Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Employment (Attachment 2). These policy statements should be posted on an official bulletin board in each office and other prominent locations for everyone to read.

I also want to emphasize that our standard is to strive for a harassment-free, equitable work environment where people treat one another with respect. Managers, supervisors, and all employees, including temporary and seasonal, as well as our contractors, cooperators and volunteers have the primary responsibility for creating and sustaining this harassment-free environment. Each one of us must take personal responsibility for maintaining conduct that is professional and supportive of this environment.

The work environment includes any area where employees work or where work-related activities occur, including travel. This includes field sites, government buildings, and other facilities where work-related activities occur. Also included are vehicles or other conveyances used for travel.

It is our responsibility and personal commitment to support an equitable work environment and to convey the message that harassment in any form involving Bureau of Land Management personnel will not be tolerated.

If you have questions concerning these policies, please contact Sara Romero-Minkoff, EEO Manager, at (406) 896-5180.

Signed by: Martin C. Ott, State Director

Authenticated by: Nancy Oliver, MT-910

2 Attachments

- 1-Policy Statement on Sexual Harassment (1 p)
- 2-Policy Statement on EEO/Affirmative Employment (1 p)

**FROM THE OFFICE OF THE
STATE DIRECTOR
MONTANA/DAKOTAS ORGANIZATION**

**STATE DIRECTOR'S POLICY STATEMENT
on
SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is an "unlawful employment practice" under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. It is illegal when it is part of a manager's or supervisor's decision to hire or fire someone; when it is used to make other employment decision such as pay, promotion, or job assignment; when it interferes with the employee's work performance; or when it creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment is defined as deliberate or repeated behavior of a sexual nature which is unwelcome. The following are examples, they are not meant to be all inclusive.

- **Physical Contact:** Unwelcome touching; physical behavior such as pats or squeezes, such as squeezing a worker's shoulders or putting a hand around his or her waist; repeated brushing against someone's body; standing too close; suggestive looks or leering; inappropriate or threatening staring or glaring, obscene, threatening, or offensive gestures.
- **Verbal or Written Conduct:** Unwanted sexual comments, or pressure for sexual favors; inappropriate references to body parts; derogatory or demeaning comments, jokes, or personal questions; sexual innuendoes; catcalls; whistles, sexually suggestive sounds; questionable compliments (questionable compliments can make individuals feel uncomfortable or worse. Even if the person who received the "compliment" is not disturbed by it, others may be); and terms of endearment (the effect is the primary issue rather than intent. Even if the person "means nothing to you" or you have "used the term for years" you should be aware that such expressions are inappropriate).
- **Visual or Symbolic Conduct:** Display of nude pictures, scantily-clad, or offensively-clad people; display of offensive, threatening, demeaning, or derogatory symbols, drawings, cartoons, or other graphics; offensive T-shirts, coffee mugs, bumper stickers, or other articles; gestures, such as puckering one's lips suggestively or making obscene signs with one's fingers or hands.

Sexual harassment negatively affects morale, motivation, and job performance. It results in increased absenteeism, turnover, inefficiency, and loss of productivity. It is inappropriate, offensive, and **IT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**

Employees who experience sexual harassment should immediately contact a supervisor, manager, EEO Counselor, or the EEO Manager, 406-896-5180. Sexual Harassment Hotline: 1-800-208-0328 or 202-219-0138.

Complaints and cases of sexual harassment will be dealt with promptly. An employee who sexually harasses another employee will be disciplined as in any other case of serious employee misconduct.

/s/ Martin C. Ott

January 28, 2003

Martin C. Ott
State Director

Date

**FROM THE OFFICE OF THE
STATE DIRECTOR**

MONTANA/DAKOTAS ORGANIZATION

STATE DIRECTOR'S POLICY STATEMENT

on

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE EMPLOYMENT

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) issues are integral components in the management of today's changing work force. The concept of "human relations" has become an important management tool. The way we treat each other -- in our private lives, our working relationships, and our society as a whole -- plays an important part in determining whether or not we, individually and as an agency, achieve our goals.

Full individual potential can be realized only when all our employees receive equal opportunity and fair treatment. **I WILL TOLERATE NOTHING LESS.** The Equal Employment Opportunity Program considerations must form an integral part of the decision making process of every manager and supervisor. Non-supervisory personnel must share the responsibility and support this effort through their own conduct and sensitivity to the rights of coworkers and others with whom they interact on the job.

So that there is no misunderstanding and so that none of us become complacent, I will restate my policy on equal employment opportunity and affirmative employment:

I am personally committed to providing equal employment opportunity, to all persons by prohibiting discrimination in employment because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability and by promoting equal opportunity through a continuing affirmative employment program. This policy will be applied in all facets of recruitment, employment, development, advancement, supervision, and treatment of employees and applicants.

Managers and supervisors must be alert to issues which might result in allegations of discrimination. When discrimination is alleged, it will be the policy in Montana and the Dakotas to attempt to resolve the matter in a prompt and equitable manner. I urge both employees and managers to work together to resolve conflicts at the earliest stages, and I call your attention to the availability of qualified EEO counselors to serve the Montana State Office and all field offices in that effort.

Equal employment opportunity is included as a performance standard in the performance appraisals of managers and supervisors who will be held accountable through the Employee Performance Plan and Results Report (EPPRR) process.

Our EEO Program is just as real as any other program within BLM, and EEO laws are no less binding than the other laws, such as NEPA and FLPMA, that govern the agency's programs. The BLM is in the process of transition to integrate minorities and women into its work force; however, it has a long way to go before a totally integrated work force is achieved. The desired change will take years to accomplish unless the organization makes a concerted effort to speed up the process. A more positive approach will be possible when all our employees understand and are committed to the principles of affirmative employment. This is especially true of managers and supervisors, for these are the individuals with the capabilities and authority to be the change agents with regard to affirmative employment and equal employment opportunity.

Your continuing awareness and dedication is vital to insuring that all Montana/Dakotas BLM employees reach their full potential in an atmosphere of cooperation rather than conflict.

/s/ Martin C. Ott

January 28, 2003

Martin C. Ott

Date