

# Workplace Harassment



## What Is It?

Harassment is any unwelcome verbal or physical conduct that is so objectively offensive as to alter the conditions of your employment, either by changing your work status (e.g. demotion, termination or failure to promote) or by creating a hostile work environment that interferes with your ability to perform your duties.

EEO related harassment is harassment based on one or more *protected classes* listed on the back of this pamphlet. (harassment based on other reasons is unprofessional but would not be the basis for

an EEO complaint; in this case you should contact Human Resources for information.)

Supervisors, employees, and non-employees, such as contractors who enter the work site, are prohibited from engaging in workplace harassment.

The most common form of harassment is sexual harassment. Conduct most often associated with sexual harassment includes sexually explicit language and jokes; pressure for dates; ogling and leering; sexual pictures, cartoons; writings and deliberate touching. Sexual harassment includes same-sex harassment because the issue is not the gender of the parties, but that the harassment is of a sexual nature and is unwelcome.

Harassment can also be based on other prohibited factors, such as race or national origin. Examples are calling an Arab-

American a "terrorist" (national origin), telling holocaust jokes (religion), leaving KKK symbols on the desk of an African-American (race), and referring to an employee as an "old man" or "old-timer" (age).

## What can I do about it?

If you feel you are the **target** of harassment, let the person know it is unwelcome — do so in a firm but pleasant manner. Tell your supervisor that the behavior is unwelcome. If your supervisor is the harasser, go up the chain or contact the EEO office.

If you **witness** questionable behavior, ask

the recipient if there's a problem and offer assistance. Mention the situation or incident to your supervisor.

If you are a **supervisor** and become aware of questionable behavior (even if there is no complaint), you have a legal duty to take immediate and corrective action. Communicate to the employee being harassed what you've done and ask him or her to notify you if the problem recurs.

## Anything else I can do?

If you are being harassed, you may file an informal complaint with an **EEO Counselor** within 45 days of the harassing behavior (or the latest instance of harassment).

When meeting with the EEO Counselor, you have the right to bring a representative with you. The Counselor is an impartial party who will advise you of your rights and responsibilities in the complaint process. The Counselor will also ask if counseling or an alternative dispute resolution procedure, called mediation, is desired. If you choose counseling, the EEO Counselor will interview appropriate personnel and will work to resolve the complaint to your satisfaction. If you choose mediation, a trained **Mediator** will conduct a meeting, between you and a management official who can settle the complaint, to attempt a resolution that is acceptable to both parties.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal complaint process, you will be notified of the process to file a formal complaint.

## Your EEO Rights

All employees and applicants have the right to be free from discrimination based on:

\_\_\_\_\_ Race \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Religion \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Disability \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ National Origin \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Sexual Orientation \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Reprisal for prior EEO involvement \_\_\_\_\_

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Equal Employment Opportunity(AK-915)  
222 W. 7<sup>TH</sup> Ave., #13  
Anchorage, Alaska 99513  
Fax: (907) 271-4573

### For more information, contact:

EEO Manager  
Phone: (907) 271-3685

EEO Complaint Manager  
Phone: (907) 271-3311

EEO Specialist, Fairbanks  
Phone: (907) 356-5508



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