



United States Department of the Interior  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT



Fire and Aviation  
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To: All Fire and Aviation Directorate Employees  
From: Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation  
Subject: Policy on Equal Employment Opportunity and the Prevention of Harassment

In January 2016, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Director communicated the BLM's responsibility to provide a professional work environment free of discrimination and harassment in all activities and operations. I want to express my commitment to these principles.

It is our Fire and Aviation policy that employees are provided equal opportunity in employment. Discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age (over 40), disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, and reprisal is prohibited. Discrimination, in any form, has no place at the BLM National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) and will not be tolerated. Discrimination includes sexual or non-sexual harassment; any discriminatory act, policy, practice or procedure that denies equal opportunity; or any conduct that demeans the dignity of another person.

Sexual Harassment is a form of discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Harassment that is not sexual in nature is a form of discrimination that involves unwelcome verbal or physical conduct based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age (over 40), disability, sexual orientation, or genetic information. It is behavior that is hostile and/or intimidating which creates an abusive or offensive work environment.

Reprisal is the wrongful threatening or taking of either unfavorable action or withholding favorable action from another solely in response for their opposing employment discrimination or participating in an EEO activity protected by employment discrimination statutes.

An employee who engages in harassment or discrimination faces consequences ranging from verbal warnings and letters of reprimand, up to termination from employment, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. Managers and supervisors, who do not take action when they

know or suspect that harassment or discrimination is occurring, also face discipline. Contractor staff may be subject to comparable penalties from their employers. A contractor, who fails to enforce this policy, may have its contract terminated. Visitors who engage in harassment may be removed from any workplace and prevented from returning.

Equal opportunity is a professional conduct issue and it is based on a premise of fair and equal treatment and respect for all persons. It is everyone's responsibility to assist in promoting an environment free of discrimination. Mere compliance with minimum requirements is not enough to fully meet our obligations. I challenge everyone to be a role model of appropriate behavior and to confront any form of discrimination, harassment, or other improper behavior when it is observed or brought to your attention. In addition, you are encouraged to resolve issues at the lowest level possible and to use alternative dispute resolution (ADR), when possible. Contact Debie Chivers, EEO Manager, for more information on ADR.

The discrimination complaint process is posted on official bulletin boards and on the Fire and Aviation EEO web page. All reports of alleged discrimination will be taken seriously, promptly investigated and handled with professionalism, dignity and fairness. If you believe you have been subjected to discrimination, harassment or reprisal, you must contact the EEO Manager or an EEO Counselor within 45 days of the alleged discriminatory matter or, in the case of a personnel action, within 45 days of the effective date of the action.

All questions or concerns regarding this policy should be directed to Debie Chivers, EEO Manager, Fire and Aviation, (208)387-5454.

Signed by:  
Howard Hedrick  
Deputy Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation

Authenticated by:  
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