



Colleagues,

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is committed to a workplace free of discrimination, and I am proud to reaffirm the agency's commitment to the principles of equal employment opportunity in the workplace.

The EPA cannot and will not tolerate discrimination based on race; color; religion; sex, including pregnancy; sex stereotyping, gender identity, gender expression or transgender status; national origin; sexual orientation; physical or mental disability; age; protected genetic information; status as a parent; marital status; political affiliation or retaliation based on previous EEO activity. In addition, the EPA will not tolerate any type of harassment – either sexual or nonsexual – of any employee or applicant for employment. Employment decisions must be made in accordance with merit system principles contained in 5 U.S.C. § 2301.

Our EPA management team is expected to continue to provide first-class leadership in supporting the agency's EEO program by taking steps to promote EEO in all facets of employment, including recruitment, hiring, promotion, performance assessment, awards and career-development opportunities. I ask that all EPA employees, including managers and staff, take responsibility for reporting and addressing discriminatory conduct and preventing all types of discrimination, including workplace harassment.

This policy statement affirms the commitment to EEO for all EPA employees and applicants for employment. Any employee or applicant for employment who believes that they have been subjected to discrimination and elects to seek redress for discrimination must initiate the EEO complaint process within 45 days of the alleged discriminatory event by contacting the EPA's Office of Civil Rights Employment Complaints Resolution Staff at (202) 564-7272 or an EEO Officer at the regional or laboratory level. See also 29 C.F.R. Part 1614, Federal Sector Equal Employment Opportunity, or EPA Order 1000.31A4, Discrimination on the Basis of Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Status as a Parent, Marital Status, or Political Affiliation, as applicable. In addition, an employee or applicant for employment who believes he or she was subjected to workplace harassment should also review EPA Order 4711, Procedure for Addressing Allegations of Workplace Harassment, for information on how to report allegations of workplace harassment.

To resolve workplace disputes and EEO complaints, the EPA promotes the use of alternative dispute resolution methods. Managers are reminded that their participation in agency-approved ADR efforts to resolve EEO complaints is required, absent extraordinary circumstances as determined by the director of the Office of Civil Rights or their designee.

A professional, productive, diverse and inclusive workplace is essential to the EPA's mission to protect human health and the environment. Therefore, I appreciate your shared commitment to equal employment opportunity at the EPA, and I look forward to working with you.

Andrew R. Wheeler
Acting Administrator