



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

THE DIRECTOR

January 30, 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR: ALL NOAA FISHERIES EMPLOYEES AND CONTRACTORS

FROM: Janet Coit
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

SUBJECT: Policy Statement on Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

As we work together to strengthen and advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility within NOAA Fisheries, we must also ensure a work environment that is respectful, safe, and free from discrimination and harassment. Therefore, in compliance with all applicable EEO laws, I would like to remind you of the importance of upholding and advancing the principles and practices of EEO within our organization.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, as amended, protects employees, former employees, applicants and contractors from discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, transgender status, and pregnancy), national origin, age (40 and over), genetic information (including family medical history), or disability (physical or mental). In addition, retaliation against anyone who initiates a discrimination complaint, serves as a witness, or otherwise opposes discrimination is also prohibited under the law. These protections encompass all management practices and decisions, including recruitment and hiring practices, appraisal systems, promotions, training, and career development programs.

Any employee who believes they have been discriminated against and wants to initiate an EEO complaint is strongly encouraged to contact the NOAA Office of Inclusion and Civil Rights at noaa.oicr@noaa.gov or 301-713-0500. **Please note: 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.**

Conflict can occur in any organization when employees with different backgrounds and priorities work together. When conflicts arise, the Fisheries Program Director for EEO and Diversity, along with staff in NOAA's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program, are 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. Although ADR is offered during the EEO process, the NOAA Office of Human Capital Services offers an ADR process that is a separate and distinct part of the agency's effort to address non-EEO-related workplace conflict. To learn more about NOAA's ADR Program or to request mediation, please contact OHCS.ADR@noaa.gov.

If you have any questions regarding this policy, or the ADR Program, please contact our National Program Director for EEO and Diversity, Natalie Huff, at 301-427-8025, or natalie.huff@noaa.gov.

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

THE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR
FOR FISHERIES

