



UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

1331 Pennsylvania Ave, NW • Suite 1150 • Washington, DC 20425 www.usccr.gov

January 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS EMPLOYEES

FROM: Mauro Morales
Staff Director

SUBJECT: Policy Statement on Anti-Harassment and Inappropriate Conduct

The United States Commission on Civil Rights (Commission) is committed to providing a work environment that is free from harassment and to taking the necessary steps to prevent any form of harassment in the workplace. Therefore, it is the Commission's policy to strictly prohibit harassment, as well as inappropriate or unwelcome behavior, that, if left unchecked, could become severe or pervasive as to constitute harassment. Further, the Commission will promptly investigate all allegations of harassment/inappropriate or unwelcome behavior and take immediate and appropriate corrective action when the Agency determines that harassment has occurred.

The policy applies to all employees in their working relationships and to harassment by anyone in the workplace, including harassment by coworkers, supervisors, or non-employees. Under this policy, harassing conduct is defined as any unwelcome **verbal or physical conduct**, based on an individual's race, color, religion, sex (sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy), national origin, age, disability, parental status, genetic information or genetic identity, or retaliation for protected EEO activity when the conduct either (1) can reasonably be considered to adversely affect the work environment; or (2) results in an employment decision affecting the employee and is based upon the employee's acceptance or rejection of such conduct. Some examples of the first category of harassing conduct include: use of electronic media to harass employees based on a protected status; oral or written abuse and/or threats that may include teasing, jokes, insults, gestures, epithets, or remarks based on sex, race, age of 40 or over, disability, religion, national origin, color, or retaliation; or subjecting another employee to unwelcome sexual advances or touching. Some examples of the second category of harassing conduct include when a supervisor coerces an employee into an unwelcome sexual relationship and then rewards the employee, or when a supervisor takes disciplinary action or denies a promotion to an employee because he or she rejected sexual advances from the supervisor. Retaliation against those who report prohibited harassment, misconduct, serve as a witness or participate in the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) process, or otherwise oppose discrimination and/or harassment is also strictly prohibited.

Any employee who believes that he or she has been the subject of or has witnessed an incident of harassing conduct should report the matter promptly to one's supervisor (if appropriate), or any other supervisor within or outside of their chain of command, or to the Human Resources Division, and/or Director of the Equal Employment Opportunity Programs Office. Employees also can contact an equal employment opportunity counselor at USCCR's EEO Office. All Commission employees and applicants should express harassment complaints without fear of retaliation. All reports of harassment will be kept confidential to the fullest extent possible without impeding an investigation into the allegations. All investigations will be prompt, thorough, and impartial. Appropriate and impartial investigations will be initiated within 10 calendar days of receiving notice of a harassment allegation. The agency will reach a decision and, if necessary, take appropriate corrective action within 60 calendar days of receiving notice of the allegation if it determines that harassment occurred. The Commission may employ the use of disciplinary actions to eliminate the harassing conduct regardless of whether the conduct rose to the legal definition of harassment and/or violated the law. All supervisors and managers must act promptly to investigate and resolve reports of harassing conduct. If harassing conduct is found to have occurred, the manager or supervisor must take appropriate corrective and disciplinary action, up to and including removal, against all persons who have been found to have engaged in that conduct.

Mauro Morales

Mauro Morales
Staff Director

01-16-2025

Date