



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

THE DIRECTOR

JAN - 7 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR: All NOAA Fisheries Employees
and Contract Employees

FROM: James W. Balsiger, Ph.D.
Acting Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

SUBJECT: Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement

It is NOAA Fisheries policy to provide Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) for all employees and applicants for employment regardless of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age (over 40), sexual orientation, and/or mental or physical disability. Pursuant to this policy, NOAA Fisheries prohibits discrimination in all aspects of its organization, including facilities programs, personnel policies, technical program operations, and management practices. It is our goal to provide and maintain an accessible work environment that is free of all forms of unlawful discrimination, including reprisal or retaliation for engaging in protected EEO activity. In addition to the above, it is expected that all NOAA Fisheries employees will perform their duties in a non-discriminatory manner. Discrimination, harassment or intimidation that violates this policy will not be condoned or tolerated. NOAA Fisheries remains fully committed to preventing or correcting unlawful discrimination while ensuring that this policy becomes an integral part of every aspect of the organization's personnel management practices.

Keep in mind, managers and supervisors are held accountable for employment decisions regarding hiring, promoting, training, rewarding, and disciplining employees. Therefore, all supervisors are expected to actively support and promote this policy and remain informed of and sensitive to the EEO impact of all their employment decisions. Similarly, you are expected to provide leadership by educating, and updating employees on Diversity and EEO issues in the workplace. All employees will continue to receive training to ensure they fully understand their role, rights, and responsibilities in helping to create and maintain a work environment that values diversity, and is free from discrimination. Additionally, employees are encouraged to advise supervisors, managers, or the NMFS EEO and Diversity Program Director of any discriminatory conduct affecting the agency's work environment.

In the event of workplace disputes, all employees, supervisors and managers are reminded of the agency's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program. The ADR process can help improve communication and the quality of life in NMFS, while resolving conflicts as early as possible in an appropriate, cost-effective manner. For more information about the NOAA ADR Program, please visit the ADR website at: <http://www.adr.noaa.gov>.

Finally, please remember, on October 1, 2003, the No FEAR Act (Notification and Federal Anti-Discrimination and Retaliation Act 2002) made federal agencies individually accountable for violations of anti-discrimination, whistleblower protection, and retaliation laws. Therefore, any employee who believes that they have been subject to retaliation for EEO activity should immediately contact Larry J. Beat, the Director of NOAA's Civil Rights office, on 301-713-0500. Employees who feel they have been the subject of retaliation for reporting fraud, waste, abuse and non-EEO illegal activities should contact the Department of Commerce's Office of the Inspector General at 1-800-424-5197 (voice) or 1-800-854-8407 (TDD), or the U.S. Office of Special Counsel at 1-800-872-9855 (voice) or 1-800-877-8399 (TDD).

If you have any questions regarding this policy, the ADR Program or the No FEAR Act, please contact Natalie Huff, our National Program Director for EEO and Diversity. She can be reached on 301-713-1456.

cc: DUS - Mary Glackin
WFM - Eddie Ribas
OCR - Larry J. Beat

THE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR
FOR FISHERIES

