



THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

September 25, 2006



Commemorating 75 Years of Service

TO ALL EMPLOYEES

SUBJECT: Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

The successful pursuit of equal employment opportunity depends on every one of us. As Secretary of Veterans Affairs, I am asking for your support to help the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) accomplish its equal employment opportunity mission. I am confident that I can continue to count on you to ensure that VA employees, present and future, have the opportunity to reach their full potential and contribute to the Department's success of this noble mission.

The Equal Employment Opportunity policy of any organization is reflective of the core values embraced by that organization, and VA is no different. Central to these core values are commitment, excellence, communication and stewardship, all of which are focused on mutual respect among employees who make up VA's highly-skilled, motivated, and diverse workforce.

I take responsibility for leading the way on this issue. My policy is simple and straightforward: zero tolerance of any discrimination against or harassment of any employee. Anything less falls short of the professional conduct required to achieve this mission.

I hold executives, managers, and supervisors responsible for managing diversity. I expect them to show initiative in employing veterans and persons with targeted disabilities, and in providing reasonable accommodations under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. I also expect management to ensure a fair and level playing field which provides opportunities to all employees to rise to their highest level of achievement based solely on merit and ability.

All incidents of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or reprisal should be reported to the local EEO Office, or to the Office of Resolution Management toll free at 1-888-737-3361 or via TTY/TDD at 1-888-626-9008. Allegations will be immediately investigated and, where substantiated, appropriate action will be taken.

I emphasize again that VA can accomplish its mission only if it ensures equal employment opportunities for all employees to reach their full potential and contribute to the Department's success.

Thank you for your full support of this policy.

R. James Nicholson