



# Message From the Under Secretary

August 25, 2009

## **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)**

I join Secretary Locke's call to ensure Equal Employment Opportunity for all Department of Commerce employees and support his policy issued on May 27, 2009. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is firmly committed to ensuring compliance with our Nation's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Civil Rights laws and maintaining a work environment where discrimination, retaliation, and harassment are not tolerated. Therefore, I want to take this opportunity to remind all employees that it is NOAA's policy to prohibit discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex (including sexual harassment and pregnancy discrimination), sexual orientation, national origin, age (40 years of age and over), and disability (physical or mental). NOAA is also committed to providing reasonable accommodation to qualified applicants and employees with disabilities. In addition, our employees and applicants must be free from retaliation based upon participation in the EEO process, or for opposing discriminatory practices.

All employees are encouraged to promptly bring concerns regarding discrimination, retaliation, and/or harassment, in any form, to the attention of management or the NOAA Civil Rights Office. Harassment is defined as any unwelcome conduct based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create a hostile or abusive work environment. Employees who believe they have been discriminated against and wish to initiate an EEO complaint must contact the NOAA Civil Rights Office within 45 calendar days of the alleged discriminatory event. For more information on the EEO process call 1-800-452-6728 or visit [www.eeo.noaa.gov](http://www.eeo.noaa.gov).

Employees may also consider alternative dispute resolution (ADR), including mediation, to resolve conflict. ADR allows both parties to put the dispute behind them and direct their attention to making effective and productive contributions to the work and mission of the agency. To learn more about NOAA's ADR program or to request ADR, employees should send an e-mail to [adr@noaa.gov](mailto:adr@noaa.gov), or visit: <http://www.adr.noaa.gov/>.

While I expect managers, supervisors, and EEO officials to take steps to prevent and/or correct discriminatory practices and behaviors, every NOAA employee has an obligation to comply with this policy. Working together, we can create a workplace at NOAA that is free of all forms of discrimination.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jane Lubchenco".

8/25/2009

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*Signature*

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*Date*