

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION POLICY STATEMENT ON EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) employees remain committed to organizational excellence through the work and service they provide every day across the Nation and throughout the world. To fully support their efforts, NOAA leadership affirms its commitment to providing a workplace that is free from discrimination and fully inclusive of all employees. However, achieving this goal requires not only commitment from leadership, it requires a commitment from all employees. Each one of us shares the responsibility for cultivating an inclusive culture that will allow us to successfully accomplish our mission and goals.

To that end, NOAA remains steadfast in its goal to eradicate discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex (including sexual harassment and pregnancy discrimination), sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age (40 years of age and over), genetic information, or disability (physical or mental), including the provision of reasonable accommodations for qualified applicants and employees with disabilities. ***Our policy at NOAA is simple, discrimination in any form will not be tolerated.*** Likewise, retaliation against those who initiate discrimination complaints, serve as witnesses, or otherwise oppose discrimination and harassment is also strictly prohibited. These protections encompass all management practices and decisions, including recruitment and hiring practices, appraisal systems, promotions, and training and career-development programs.

Employees, applicants, and contractors, who believe they have been discriminated against, and want to initiate an equal employment opportunity (EEO) complaint, must contact the NOAA Civil Rights Office within 45 calendar days of the alleged discriminatory event or when they become aware of an alleged discriminatory act. For information on the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaint process, call [1 \(800\) 452-6728](tel:18004526728), [\(301\) 713-0500](tel:3017130500) or visit www.eeo.noaa.gov.

I also want to continue to encourage any NOAA employee who files an EEO complaint to take advantage of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program. It is a valuable tool designed to resolve EEO disputes as quickly as possible. As established in 2018, participation in ADR is now mandatory for managers and supervisors when an EEO Complaint elects this option.

If an employee is found to have discriminated against another employee, they may be subject to discipline. Pursuant to DAO 202-751, *Discipline*, the penalty for a first offense ranges from a minimum of a five (5) day suspension up to removal depending on the severity of the case. For a second offense, 30 days to removal, and if an employee is found to have been guilty of discrimination three (3) times they will be removed from the Agency.

As with other forms of discrimination, harassment at NOAA is unacceptable and will also not be tolerated. I want to remind you of your responsibilities to eliminate harassment as outlined in Department Administrative Order (DAO) 202-955: *Allegations of Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law* and NOAA Administrative order (NAO) 202-1106: *NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy*. Under these policies, NOAA managers and supervisors are responsible for preventing, documenting, and promptly correcting harassing conduct in the workplace.

The effects of discrimination are insidious. They can rob their victims of their dignity and self-respect, impact their sense of self-worth, and can lead to physical and psychological problems. From an organizational perspective, environments that allow discrimination directly impact the job satisfaction of all employees which impacts productivity and ultimately leads to high turnover rates and a loss of skilled, competent workers. To be the best we can be, NOAA needs to create environments where all employees can be the best they can be and be fairly judged based on their accomplishments not on characteristics

unrelated to their work. I implore you to join me and together make a concerted effort to eliminate discrimination from NOAA. When we are judged by what we do and not who we are, we all benefit!

Sincerely,



Dr. Neil Jacobs
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Environmental Observation and Prediction,
Performing the duties of
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