



**U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF STATE
OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS**

**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY
EEO OVERVIEW**

Overview



- EEO Laws
- Role of S/OCR and EEO Counselors
- Harassment
- Department Policies
- Rights and Responsibilities

What is EEO?



- EEO = Equal Employment Opportunity
- EEO laws are anti-discrimination laws that protect employees in the U.S. workforce from being treated unfavorably because of protected categories.
- EEOC = Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- EEOC is a federal government agency that oversees the enforcement of EEO laws.

Protected EEO Bases



1. Race
2. Skin Color
3. Sex (includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity)
4. Religion (includes not having a religion)
5. Age (over 40 years old)
6. Disability (both physical and mental)
7. National Origin (includes ethnicity, accents, etc)
8. Genetic Information
9. Reprisal/Retaliation

Reprisal



Individuals are protected from reprisal by their agency if they engage in the following:

- Participation in any EEO process; or
- Opposition to a discriminatory employment practice.

Note: An individual may not prevail on their underlying complaint of discrimination, but could prevail on the reprisal claim.

Examples of Retaliation



- Writing you a negative letter of reference
- Having your internship cut short
- Removal of job duties and responsibilities
- Talking about someone's EEO activity
- Creating a hostile work environment (*e.g.* threats, intimidation)

What to do if you experience discrimination?



- Tell someone! All employees, including unpaid interns, have the right to complain about discrimination.
- You may talk to S/OCR directly or contact an EEO Counselor in your office/Post/Bureau.

Who is S/OCR?



- S/OCR = Office of Civil Rights. S/OCR is the State Department's EEO office.
- S/OCR trains employees about EEOC laws and regulations, and State Department policies on anti-discrimination and harassment.
- S/OCR manages the EEO program and helps employees understand the EEO complaints process.
- S/OCR investigates harassment.

Who are EEO Counselors?



- EEO Counselors are employees who volunteer to be in this role in addition to their full-time job.
- EEO Counselors are trained by S/OCR to attempt to resolve EEO problems between employees and Department management.
- EEO Counselors are neutral, so they will not take sides in an EEO conflict.
- You may always talk to any EEO Counselor, not just the one assigned to your office, Post, or Bureau.



The U.S. Department of State is committed to maintaining a professional and respectful work environment for all employees, contractors, and affiliates of the Department worldwide. The Department upholds a zero-tolerance policy regarding discriminatory and sexual harassment. Accordingly, those who engage in harassment will be held responsible in a meaningful and appropriate manner.

- Secretary Rex W. Tillerson

Harassment Overview



Q: What is harassment?

A: Unwelcome behavior that is based on an EEO category and interferes with an employee's ability to do his/her job. Harassment can take many forms.

Q: Who investigates allegations of harassment?

A: Attorneys in S/OCR, per 3 FAM 1525/1526.

Who Can Be the Victim or Harasser?



- Supervisors
- Co-workers, both American and LE Staff
- Non-employees (guests, media, etc.)
- Contractors
- Interns
- Spouses or Domestic partners
- Guards and security personnel

What are Examples of Sexual Harassment?



- Making sexually suggestive comments or jokes
- Following someone around, asking that person out on dates multiple times, being aggressive in your attempts to “woo” that individual
- Sending sexually suggestive e-mails or text messages
- Intentionally touching someone inappropriately

What are Examples of Discriminatory Harassment?



- Making comments, slurs, or jokes about someone's race, color, national origin, religion, disability, age, etc.
- Sending disparaging e-mails or text messages about protected EEO categories
- Teasing someone because they have a foreign accent

State Department Harassment Policies



3 FAM 1525 Prohibits Sexual Harassment

3 FAM 1526 Prohibits Discriminatory Harassment

- Both policies apply to ALL employees working under COM authority, including contractors.
- Policies require reports of harassment be made to S/OCR directly – supervisors have a *mandatory* reporting requirement.

What to Do if You Believe You are Being Harassed



- Don't just take it. Tell someone! If you feel comfortable confronting the person, tell the person to stop—that the behavior is unwelcome.
- If you don't feel comfortable confronting the person and/or the behavior does not stop, make a complaint to your supervisor.
- If your supervisor is the alleged harasser, tell another supervisor.
- Contact Post Management, any EEO Counselor, HR, and/or S/OCR.

Your Rights



You have the right to:

- Work in an environment free of discrimination and harassment
- Complain about job discrimination or harassment
- Request workplace changes because of your religious beliefs or disability

Your Responsibilities



- Under EEO laws, you have 45 calendar days from the date of the alleged discrimination incident to contact S/OCR or an EEO Counselor about the incident.
- If you are currently under 18 years of age, you must notify your parents that you have been told about this 45 day time constraint to bring forward your allegations of discrimination in order to preserve your rights to participate in the EEO process.

Contacting S/OCR



Request an EEO Counselor: SOCCounselorChannel@state.gov

General E-mail: SOCR_Direct@state.gov

Harassment Reporting Link:

<http://poems.ses.state.sbu/sites/portal/socr/default.aspx>

S/OCR Internal Website: <http://socr.state.sbu/ocr/>

Telephone: 202.647.9295