



Connecticut Department of

**ENERGY &  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION**

**AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the policy of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to provide its programs and services in a manner that is consistent with State and Federal laws that prohibit discrimination and harassment based on a person's legally protected status which includes race, color, religious creed, age, sex, marital status, national origin, ancestry, intellectual disability, physical disability, learning disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, present or past history of mental disability, genetic information or prior conviction of a crime, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in one of the above protected groups.

Sexual harassment means any unwelcome conduct when: (A) submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment; (B) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (C) when such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. Therefore, sexual harassment is persistent hostile, intimidating, offensive and unwanted behavior because of a person's membership in a protected class and has the effect of unreasonably interfering with his/her work performance or creating a hostile work environment.

Affirmative action is positive action undertaken with conviction and effort to overcome the present effects of past practices, policies or barriers to equal employment opportunity and to achieve the full and fair participation of women, Blacks and Hispanics, and any other groups that have been found historically to be underutilized in the workforce or affected by policies or practices having an adverse impact. The purpose of affirmative action is to achieve equal employment opportunity in all aspects of the employment process. Equal employment opportunity is the employment of individuals without consideration of their protected group status, as required by State and Federal laws and regulations.

As the Commissioner of the DEEP, I acknowledge the purpose and need for affirmative action and equal employment opportunity, and I pledge my commitment to achieve the full and fair participation of women, people of color, people with disabilities and other groups that have been historically disadvantaged in our workforce in all aspects of the employment process including recruitment, selection, hiring, training, promotion, benefits, compensation, layoffs, and terminations.

As stated by the U.S. Supreme Court, discrimination not only refers to situations in which intended discrimination has occurred, but also includes practices, criteria, and procedures which appear neutral but have a discriminatory effect on classes of individuals protected against employment discrimination. Accordingly, the DEEP pledges to periodically review its policies and procedures to identify and eliminate any barriers to the full representation of members of protected groups in its workforce as compared to their availability in the labor market.

Affirmative action and equal opportunity are immediate and necessary objectives for the DEEP, therefore, I pledge my commitment to comply with all Federal and State constitutional provisions, laws, regulations, guidelines, and executive orders that prohibit discrimination (see attached listing). The DEEP also recognizes the hiring difficulties experienced by people with physical disabilities and older persons. Therefore, we will take the necessary steps to identify and overcome areas of underutilization of such persons in our workforce and to achieve their full and fair participation in our programs and services.

The DEEP will not knowingly do business with any contractor, sub-contractor, bidder or supplier of materials who discriminates against members of a protected class, and will actively solicit services from businesses owned by persons with disabilities, minorities and women.

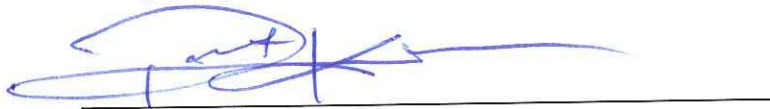
Complaints alleging violation of this policy must be filed with the Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Office within 30 days of the alleged violation and/or with the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory action. Complaints filed with CHRO must be submitted to the office which serves the town where the alleged discriminatory action took place. The CHRO offices are listed in the Affirmative Action Complaint Procedure.

This policy also protects employees and applicants from retaliation for filing and/or participating in the investigation of a complaint alleging discrimination. Employees are expected to cooperate fully with all administrative complaint investigations and any actions taken by the DEEP as a result of such investigations.

As the appointing authority for the DEEP, I have the responsibility to implement an effective Affirmative Action Plan as a tool to achieve equal employment objectives and as a mechanism to prevent and eliminate discrimination. Therefore, I am committed to making a good faith effort to achieve a successful affirmative action program, and I will hold managers and supervisors accountable for their compliance with the goals and objectives established.

I have assigned the responsibility to implement our affirmative action goals and objectives to Barbara K. Viadella, EEO Manager. Ms. Viadella may be contacted at 79 Elm Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Hartford, CT 06106, or at (860) 418-5937, or via e-mail at [Barbara.Viadella@ct.gov](mailto:Barbara.Viadella@ct.gov).

This policy statement will be given annually to staff and will be posted at all agency locations. Any employee found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination.



Robert J. Klee, Commissioner

2/26/16

Date

Attachments