

# Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

## Scope:

This policy is established to ensure the dissemination and implementation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Program throughout all levels of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). This policy applies to all full-time Office of Economic Opportunity employees.

## Authority:

A.R.S. § 41-743, Powers and Duties of the Director  
A.R.S. § 41-1401 et. seq., Arizona Civil Rights Act (ACRA)  
Civil Rights Act of 1991, as amended  
R2-5A-104, Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation  
R2-5a-501, Standards of Conduct  
R2-5A-901, Complaint System  
R2-5A-902, Complaint Procedures  
Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended

## Definitions:

*“Disability”* refers to:

- A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life function of an individual;
- Having history of such an impairment; or
- Being regarded as having such impairment.

*“Discrimination”* includes, but it not limited to:

- Preferential treatment of one individual or group over another similarly situated individual or group because of the individual’s or group’s race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, age, national origin, genetic information or disability;
- Sexual harassment;
- Harassment of any individual because of the individual’s race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, age, national origin, genetic information or disability; and
- Failing or refusing to provide a reasonable accommodation to a qualified person with a disability.

*“Discrimination because of disability”* refers to:

- Treating an individual with a disability less favorably than a similarly situated person without a disability;
- Favoring a person with one disability over a person with a different disability; and
- Refusing to provide a reasonable accommodation which is necessary to enable a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of his or her job.

*“Harassment because of race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, national origin, age, genetic information or disability”* involves unwelcome and unsolicited conduct which is predicated upon an individual’s race,

color, religion, sex, pregnancy, national origin, age, genetic information or disability when (1) submission to the conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an employee is used as basis for an employment decision affecting the employee; or (3) the conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an employee's work performance and creating a hostile, intimidating or otherwise offensive working environment.

Prohibited harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Derogatory comments, epithets or slurs directed at an individual because of that individual's race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, national origin, age, genetic information and/or disability;
- Posting or circulating written or graphic materials, including but not limited to, cartoons, pictures, posters, or calendars containing derogatory comments, epithets or slurs based upon an individual's race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, national origin, age, genetic information and/or disability; and
- Abusive or derogatory remarks or conduct targets at identifiable groups which are identified based upon their race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, national origin, age, genetic information and/or disability.

*"EEO Coordinator"* means the Administrative Service Officer II within the Office of Economic Opportunity, who is receiving complaints, determining applicability under the complaint system, assigning the complaint to the appropriate EEO Liaison for review or investigation, and tracking the processing of complaints.

*"EEO Liaison"* means the individual within the Arizona Department of Administration – Human Resources Shared Services Office, who is receiving complaints from the EEO Coordinator, investigating, and tracking the processing of complaints.

*"Sexual Harassment"* means unwelcome and unsolicited conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to the conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; (2) submission or rejection of such conduct by an employee is used as a basis for an employment decision affecting the employee; or (3) the conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an employee's work performance and creating a hostile, intimidating or otherwise offensive working environment.

Examples of conduct that can violate this policy include, but are not limited to:

- Explicit sexual behavior by a supervisor, manager, co-worker, visitor, client or other entity with whom the employee interacts during the course of employment
- Implicit request for sex
- Direct or indirect pressure for dates or sexual activity
- Pinching, patting or other unwelcome touching
- Leering or gawking
- Posting or circulating of sexually graphic materials including, but not limited to, cartoons, pictures, posters or calendars
- Sexually derogatory comments, including slurs, jokes and other inappropriate remarks
- Reprisals or threats after a negative response to sexual advances
- Unwelcome sexual advances
- Conditioning favorable terms and conditions of employment upon a positive response to abusive remarks or conduct targeted only at one sex, even if the context of the abusive remark is not sexual

**Policy:**

The Office of Economic Opportunity is committed to the prohibition against unlawful discrimination, harassment and retaliation in the workplace. It is the policy of the Office of Economic Opportunity that all OEO employees shall comply with all federal and state anti-discrimination laws. OEO and its employees shall not unlawfully discriminate against any individual with regard to the terms and conditions of employment, including hiring, pay, leave, insurance benefits, retention and rehiring. All allegations of discrimination will be promptly investigated, and any employee who engages in conduct in violation of this policy may be disciplined or separated from state employment.

**Equal Employment Opportunity**

OEO shall provide equal employment opportunity for all individuals regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, genetic information, sex, pregnancy, military or veteran status, or any other status protected by federal law, state law, or regulation. It is the policy of OEO that all individuals are treated in a fair and non-discriminatory manner throughout the application and employment process.

**Harassment Prohibited**

Harassment of a sexual nature or harassment based on race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, genetic information, sex, pregnancy, military or veteran status, or any other status protected by federal law, state law, or regulation is prohibited. OEO prohibits the unlawful harassment of any employee in the course of the employee's work by supervisors, coworkers, or third parties, such as vendors or customers. Any OEO employee who engages in unlawful harassment may be discipline or separated from state employment.

**Protection from Retaliation**

OEO does not permit or tolerate retaliation against anyone for raising a concern about, assisting in an investigation of, or filing a complaint in good faith concerning unlawful discrimination or harassment. Any OEO employee found to have engaged in retaliation against another individual for reporting or assisting in the investigation of any allegation of unlawful discrimination may be disciplined or separated from state employment.

It is the responsibility of all OEO employees to promptly bring any allegation of unlawful discrimination, harassment or retaliation to the attention of the Office of Economic Opportunity. Any complaint alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment or retaliation must be submitted in accordance with the procedures described in this policy.

This policy does not affect other rights and remedies under federal and state statutes prohibiting employment discrimination. Employees who believe that they have been subjected to discrimination because of their race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, age, national origin, genetic information, or disability may also file charges of employment discrimination with the Arizona Attorney General's Civil Rights Division and with the Governor's Office of Equal Opportunity. Charges filed with the Arizona Civil Rights Division must be filed within 180 days following the most recent act of discrimination; charges filed with the Governor's Office of Equal Opportunity must be filed within 300 days following the most recent act of discrimination. The filing of an internal complaint of discrimination pursuant to the policy will not impact those statutes of limitations. No employee of the OEO who elects to file a charge with either the Arizona Attorney General's Civil Rights Division or the Governor's Office of Equal Opportunity,

or who testifies in an investigation by either of those agencies, will be retaliated against or denied internal rights or remedies on account of that charge filing or testimony.

### Matters Subject to the Complaint Procedure:

This procedure shall be used by an employee to file a complaint with the EEO Coordinator within 180 days of the action giving rise to the complaint and to clearly outline the allegations to be addressed, including whether the basis of the complaint is based on:

1. Unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), age, national origin, genetic information or on the basis of a disability.
2. Allegation of sexual harassment or other form of harassment.
3. Retaliation for filing a complaint.
4. Retaliation or intimidation for exercising any right under state or federal law.

### Preparation

A complaint shall not be allowed the use of state time or state property to prepare a complaint, prepare for a meeting with agency management or to meet with a representative. Subject to supervisory approval and the operational needs of the OEO, a complainant may request available compensatory or annual leave for this purpose.

### Multiple Complaints

Multiple complaints by an employee may be consolidated into a single complain. Separate complaints filed by two or more employees regarding the same issue or issues may be consolidated into a group complaint. Employees having a common complaint may submit one group complaint, identifying one complainant as the selected spokesperson for the group. Employees who choose to file a group complain are prohibited from filing separate complains on the same issue.

### Amendments

Once a complaint is submitted to the EEO Coordinator, it may not be amended. If additional documentation is submitted by the complainant after the imitation of the complaint, the reviewing or investigating official may remand the complaint to the complainant for reconsideration and resubmission.

### Complaint Procedure:

An employee, who has an allegation of or becomes aware of a situation involving unlawful discrimination, harassment or retaliation, shall report the allegation or complaint by submitting an Employee Complaint Form to the EEO Coordinator. The EEO Coordinator can be reached at (602)771-1168 or 100 North 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 103, Phoenix, AZ 85007.

The complaint shall include all facts and circumstances involved in the alleged violation, including the following information:

1. Description of the incident(s),
2. Name(s) of individual(s) involved,
3. Name(s) of witness(es),
4. The date(s) the discrimination or harassment occurred (if known),
5. Resolution sought,
6. Federal or state law alleged to have been violated.

The EEO Coordinator shall:

1. Notify the Director of the complaint, and
2. Provide the EEO Liaison with the Employee Complaint Form upon receipt of the complaint.

The EEO Liaison shall:

1. Acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing to the complainant not later than five business days after receipt of the written complaint.
2. Initiate an investigation into the alleged complaint or assign the complaint to a qualified individual within the Human Resources Shared Services Office for review or investigation within 10 business days. The review or investigation shall be completed within 60 business days of receipt of the written complaint. If extenuating circumstances exist, an extension shall be requested through the EEO Liaison.
3. Forward a written recommendation to the Director within 10 business days of completion of the review or investigation barring resolution of the complaint by agreement of the parties.

The Director or designee shall review the finding and recommendations and issue a decision in writing to the complainant. A copy of the response shall be provided to the EEO Liaison.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the Director's decision on a complaint alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment or retaliation, he/she may resubmit the complaint to the Director within five business days after receipt of the Director's decision. The Director will appoint an individual who is not an employee of the OEO and who serves in a position that is assigned to manage an agency's employee relations or investigations work unit to investigate the resubmitted complaint. The investigator shall conduct an investigation and furnish a copy of the findings and final decision to the Director and the complainant, within 20 business days following the receipt of the complaint by the investigator. The 20 business days may be extended by the investigator with the concurrence of the complainant. The decision of the investigator is the final step in the complaint procedure. The response must refer the employee to the appropriate entity if the employee is dissatisfied with the final step of the complaint procedure. A copy of the findings and final decision shall be provided to the EEO Liaison.

### Related Forms:

*Employee Complaint Form*

### Contact:

If you have any questions related to this policy, please contact the EEO Coordinator or the ADOA Human Resources Division Shared Services Office.