WORKPLACE HARASSMENT

**WHAT HP COORDINATORS NEED TO KNOW**

VA Office of Resolution Management – Harassment Prevention Program Fact Sheet Issue 9/23/2019

*What is Harassment?*

EEO law defines harassment as personal slurs or other denigrating or insulting verbal or physical conduct relating to an individual’s: *race, age, color, religion, disability, retaliation, genetic information, national origin parental status\*, or sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, and transgender status).*

Harassment creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment; unreasonably interferes with an individual’s work performance; or otherwise adversely affects an individual’s employment opportunities that either results in a tangible employment action or is so severe or pervasive as to constitute an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. Harassing behavior can include, but is not limited to: 1) verbal conduct that could include racial or sexual epithets, foul language, unwanted sexual flirtations, ethnic jokes, derogatory statements or slurs; 2) physical conduct that could include improper touching or assault; or 3) visual harassment that could include racially or sexually explicit or derogatory posters, cartoon or drawings, or obscene gestures. \**NOTE: Although EEOC does not have jurisdiction, VA prohibits discrimination based on parental status.*

**Harassment Prevention Coordinator Responsibility**

The HP Coordinators are the local Point of Contact (POC) for all allegations of harassing conduct for their respective administrations or staff offices. HP Coordinators assist supervisors, management, and unions with addressing allegations of harassment and ensuring prompt and appropriate corrective actions are taken if applicable. HP Coordinators maintain all records associated with each harassment allegation and works closely with the Harassment Prevention Program to provide updates and reports on all harassment cases.

*Employee Rights and Responsibilities*

It is the employee’s responsibility to report any and all harassment. The employee may directly say to the harasser that she or he wants the misconduct to stop and then wait to see if that is effective in ending the harassment before complaining to management or contacting the Harassment Prevention Program (HPP). If the harassment persists, report the unwanted behavior immediately. The employee may elect to have a representative assist them in this process. **Note: The Harassment Prevention Program (HPP) procedures do not affect rights under the EEO complaints process. The harassment prevention reporting process is entirely separate from the EEO complaints process. This means that an employee who reports allegations of harassment in accordance with VA’s Harassment Prevention Policy has not filed an EEO complaint. An employee who wishes to file a discrimination complaint should contact an EEO counselor at (888) 566-3982 within 45 days of the alleged harassing conduct. An employee may also report harassment using the HPP procedures and file an EEO complaint simultaneously.**

*Retaliation*

Management should make clear that it will not tolerate retaliation against employees who report harassment or provide information related to such complaints. To assure employees there is no need to fear retaliation management must clearly communicate and enforce a policy that no employee will be retaliated against for complaining of harassment.

*Reporting Procedures*

There are two paths for reporting harassing conduct:

1. Contact your internal departmental resources. Your first line supervisor, if applicable, or the next level in your supervisory chain if the harassment involves your direct supervisor. You can also contact the Harassment Prevention Coordinator (HPC) POC for your office. OR
2. Contact the HPP office at (888) 566-3982. This team of Specialists is equipped to discuss your concerns with you, enter your harassment report in to the HPP database, as well as answer any questions you may have.

**Upon receipt of harassment allegation, the HPC and the appropriate manager will promptly act to thoroughly and impartially investigate the alleged harassment. All inquiries and corrective measures will be completed and administered under the oversight of the Harassment Prevention Program.**



*The Consequences of Harassment*

Management should make clear that it will undertake immediate and appropriate corrective action, including disciplinary action, whenever it determines that harassment has occurred in violation of VA’ s Harassment Prevention Policy. Management should inform both parties about the measures undertaken. Remedial measures should be designed to stop the harassment; correct its effects on the employee; and ensure that the harassment cease. Remedial measures need not be those that the employee requests or prefers as long as they are effective. However, remedial measures should not adversely affect the employee alleging harassment. Those measures should correct the effects of the harassment.

* Disability
* Prior EEO Activity
* Genetic Information
* Parental Status
* National Origin
* Race
* Color
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**Office of Resolution Management**

**Harassment Prevention Program**

*Mission*

The Harassment Prevention Program provides centralized tracking, monitoring and reporting processes to respond to all allegations of harassment. We will ensure all harassment allegations are reported to VA leadership outlining prompt corrective measures taken to decrease harassing behavior in the workplace. The HPP is responsible for providing education and awareness training on the harassment program and the reporting process. The HPP is committed to establishing transparency and accountability at every employment level.

*Our Goal*

Ultimately, the goal of the HPP is to prevent harassing conduct before it can become severe or pervasive.

*What Does Harassment Look Like?*

* Threatening that rejection of sexual overtures will affect appointments, promotions, transfers, or evaluations.
* Creating belittling caricatures or objects depicting persons of a particular race, national origin, religion, or other protected category.
* Telling racial or ethnic jokes.
* Teasing, mimicking, or repeatedly commenting on an individual’s disability, accent, or other protected category.
* Making offensive comments, jokes or suggestions about an employee’s gender.
* Making obscene or lewd comments, slurs, jokes, epithets, suggestions, or gestures.
* Commenting on an employee’s body or sexual characteristics.
* Displaying nude or sexually suggestive objects, pictures, images, or cartoons.
* Continuing prohibited behavior after a coworker has objected.
* Laughing at, ignoring, or retaliating against an employee who complains.
* Bullying, intimidation, ridicule, and mockery

**Note:** The conduct must be unwelcome. Therefore, the perspective of the recipient – i.e., the person subjected to the behavior – as to whether the behavior is viewed as offensive, demeaning, or hostile is a primary consideration in determining whether the behavior constitutes harassing conduct.

HPP – 1-888-56-NEW VA (1-888-566-3982)

**For more information contact your local Harassment Prevention Coordinator:**

1. **Veterans Health Administration (VHA)**
* **David Groves – EEO Program Manager**
* **Tiffany Kibler – EEO/AEO Program Manager**
1. **Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)**
* **Gary Richardson – EEO Program Manager**
1. **National Cemetery Administration (NCA)**
* **Nicole Maldon – EEO Specialist**
1. **Office of Information & Technology (OIT)**
* **Laurie Young – EEO Program Manager**
1. **Office of the Secretary (OS) / Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication (OEDCA & OSDBU)**
* **Eddie Riley – Director of Administrative Operations**
* **Renaee Allen – HR Liaison**
* **Nolita Pollard – HR Liaison (OSDBU)**
1. **Office of General Counsel (OGC)**
* **Sharon Weiner – Deputy Assistant Director for Management**
1. **Office of Acquisitions, Logistics & Construction (OALC)**

**TO INCLUDE: Office of Construction & Facilities Management (CFM)**

* **Samuel Robinson – Management and Program Analyst**
1. **Office of Construction & Facilities Management (CFM)**
* **Robert Madden –Supervisory Executive Assistant**
1. **Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA)**
* **Erika Lucas – Attorney Advisor**
* **Mike Stein – ER/LR Specialist**
1. **Office of Public & Intergovernmental Affairs (OPIA)**
* **Lyndon Johnson – Chief of Staff**
1. **Office of Management (OM)**
* **Nealie Page – Operations Research Analyst**
* **Charnae Richardson – Correspondence Analyst**
1. **Office of Human Resources & Administration (HR&A)**
* **Laurie Young – EEO Program Manager**
1. **Office of Operations, Security and Preparedness (OSP)**
* **Sylvia Dunn – Director, Resource Manager**
1. **Office of Enterprise Integration (OEI)**
	1. **Steven Carney – Director of Operations**
* **Troy Williams – Human Capital Manager**
1. **Office of Congressional & Legislative Affairs (OCLA)**
* **Regina Mack-Abney – Administrative Officer**
1. **Office of Procurement, Acquisitions and Logistics (OPAL)**
* **LaKeeta Campbell – Management Analyst**
1. **Office of Administration (OA)**
* **Shellece Hankerson – Supervisory Management Analyst**
1. **Corporate Senior Executive Management Office (CSEMO)**
* **Tiera Craig – Administrative Officer**
1. **Veterans Employment Service Office (VESO)**
* **Renetta Lane – Special Assistant**
1. **Veterans Experience Office (VEO)**
* **Sharonda Parker – Management Analyst**

 **21. Veterans Canteen Service (VCS)**

* **Johnnie Lee Caswell – VCSCO EEO Specialist**
1. **Ofc of Accountability &Whistleblower Protection (OAWP)**
* **Sandy Pecorella – Chief Operating Officer**
1. **Ofc Acquisitions & Logistics (OAL)**
* **Brian O’Connor – Director OBS**