



State of Connecticut
Department of Aging & Disability Services

Discrimination Complaint Process

As required by section 46a-68-89 of the Affirmative Action Regulations, this complaint process addresses complaints alleging discrimination, including but not limited to harassment, based upon any legally protected class, including: race; color; religious creed; age; sex; pregnancy; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; marital status; national origin; ancestry; intellectual disability; genetic information; learning disability; physical disability (including, but not limited to, blindness); mental disability (past/present history thereof); military or veteran status; or criminal record in state employment. Retaliation complaints are also covered under the ADS discrimination complaint process. Additionally, any member of the public alleging discrimination in the provision of services, activities, programs or benefits of the Department of Aging and Disability Services related to a qualifying disability may use the ADS Discrimination Complaint Process.

The ADS Discrimination Complaint Process will be distributed annually to all employees and will be posted on both the agency's intranet and internet website. All employees shall also be notified of the right to file with state enforcement agency Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CCHRO) and that such complaints shall be filed with the CCHRO within **three hundred (300) days** of the alleged discriminatory treatment. Each new employee upon appointment shall receive and acknowledge a copy of the ADS Discrimination Complaint Process.

*Any person requiring a copy of this process in an alternative format should contact Mildred Verdejo, Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist, via phone at (860) 713-5135 or email at mildred.verdejo@ct.gov.

All employees are expected to cooperate fully with all administrative complaint investigations and any actions taken by ADS as a result of such investigations.

Counseling

ADS is committed to providing a work environment in which all people are treated with respect and dignity. Accordingly, the Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist (Mildred Verdejo) and staff of the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit are available to counsel employees with questions or concerns about ADS's anti-discrimination policies. Any individual requesting counseling will meet with the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit staff in a private area. Issues discussed during such counseling sessions will be kept as confidential as possible, consistent with ADS's legal obligations.

During such counseling sessions, the participants will be advised of their rights under state and federal anti-discrimination laws and the right to file directly with the CCHRO or other appropriate enforcement agencies to ensure that legal options for filing with these agencies are not foreclosed.



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Participants will be provided with applicable ADS policies and will be given a copy of the ADS Discrimination Complaint Process.

Mildred Verdejo may be contacted at (860) 713-5135 and is located at 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 1501, Hartford, CT 06103.

Internal Complaint Process

All complaints alleging discrimination or retaliation should be filed as soon as possible after the alleged act of discrimination or retaliation, and, absent extenuating circumstances, no later than thirty (30) days from the date of the alleged act.

Complaints may be made verbally or in writing to the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit or the ADS Human Resources Division. The ADS Human Resources Division shall promptly forward any complaint alleging discrimination or retaliation to the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit for investigation. Accommodations to the filing process will be made available for persons with disabilities upon request. The filing date of the complaint is the day the complaint is received in the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit or Human Resources Division.

Each complaint must contain the following:

- The full name and work address of the respondent;
 - A brief description of the alleged act(s) of discrimination and location(s)
 - The date(s) of the alleged act(s)
 - The complainant's protected class(es);
 - The complainant's signature and date.
- 1) The Equal Employment Opportunity Unit shall notify the respondent (person(s) against whom the complaint is filed) that a complaint has been filed.
 - 2) The Equal Employment Opportunity Unit shall notify the Commissioner, and when appropriate, the Director(s) of the business center where the parties work, of necessary details of the allegations.
 - 3) A member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit shall try to facilitate conciliation between the complainant and the respondent where there is an indication that both parties are willing to work together towards a resolution.
 - 4) If no conciliatory agreement is possible, the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit shall continue with the investigatory process, keeping the Commissioner and Director of the business center fully informed of its progress.
 - 5) The Equal Employment Opportunity Unit shall investigate all complaints and prepare a summary of the findings for administrative review. The discrimination complaint process includes time frames not exceeding ninety (90) days for filing, processing and resolution of such matters.
 - 6) The Equal Employment Opportunity Unit will notify the complainant, respondent and the parties listed above of the final determination in writing.



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- 7) All complainants retain the right to pursue a remedy through other administrative, collective bargaining, and/or legal channels or with appropriate enforcement agencies.
- 8) If the investigation of the complaint indicates a policy violation occurred, the findings will be reviewed with the Commissioner (or designee), who will determine appropriate disciplinary action.
- 9) The Equal Opportunity Unit shall maintain all records of affirmative action complaints, investigations, outcomes, and their disposition. Records so retained shall be confidential, except where disclosure is required by law. These records are subject to examination by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities. ADS will notify the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities annually, through its Affirmative Action Plan, of all discrimination complaints and any remedial actions taken. The Equal Employment Opportunity Unit will review all records of complaints and their dispositions annually to discern any pattern(s) of discrimination.

Legal Remedies

In addition, any person who believes he/she has been the subject of any act of unlawful discrimination may file a written complaint of discrimination with:

1. Connecticut Commission on Human Rights & Opportunities (CCHRO)
Capitol Region Office, 450 Columbus Blvd, Suite 2
Hartford, CT 06103
(860) 566-7710
(860) 566-7710 (TDD also)
(860) 566-1997 (FAX)

CCHRO West Central Region Office
Rowland State Government Center
55 West Main Street, Suite 210
Waterbury, CT 06702-2004
PHONE: (203) 805-6530
FAX: (203) 805-6559
TDD: (203) 805-6579

CCHRO Southwest Region Office
350 Fairfield Avenue, 6th Floor
Bridgeport, CT 06604
PHONE: (203) 579-6246
FAX: (203) 579-6950
TDD: (203) 579-6246

CCHRO Eastern Region Office
100 Broadway
Norwich, CT 06360



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PHONE: (860) 886-5703

FAX: (860) 886-2550

TDD: (860) 886-5707

*Complaints must be filed with the CCHRO no later than three hundred (300) days after the alleged act of discrimination occurred.

2. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
(800) 669-4000 (Voice)
(800) 669-6820 (TDD)

Complaints must be filed with the EEOC no later than three hundred (300) days after the alleged act of discrimination has occurred (contingent upon having first filed a complaint with CHRO within its three hundred (300) day filing period).

3. Department of Justice (DOJ)
Office of the Americans with Disabilities Act / Civil Rights Division
P.O. Box 66118
Washington, DC 20507
(202) 514-0301 (Voice)
(202) 514-0383 (TDD)
4. Any other state, federal or local agency, including the United States Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, that enforces laws concerning discrimination in employment.

Protection from Retaliation

ADS strictly forbids retaliation against employees reporting discriminatory acts or participating in internal or external investigations. Agents of ADS shall not retaliate against, coerce, intimidate, threaten, harass, or interfere with any individual exercising or enjoying his or her rights under Federal or State law or because an individual aided or encouraged any other individual in the exercise of rights granted or protected by State or Federal law. ADS will take any appropriate administrative actions necessary to prevent and/or correct any retaliatory measures. All employees are strongly urged to report all instances of retaliation to Mildred Verdejo, Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist, at (860)713-5135 or to Francine Dew, Human Resources Administrator, at (860)424-4985.

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