DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE 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. Retaliation complaints are also covered under the DAS discrimination complaint process. Additionally, any member of the public alleging discrimination in the provision of services, activities, programs or benefits of the Department of Administrative Services related to a qualifying disability may use the DAS Discrimination Complaint Process.

The DAS 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 **180 days** of the alleged discriminatory treatment. Each new employee upon appointment shall receive and acknowledge a copy of the DAS Discrimination Complaint Process.

*Any person requiring a copy of this process in an alternative format should contact Alicia Nunez, Equal Employment Opportunity Director, via phone at (860) 713-5317 or email at alicia.nunez@ct.gov.

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

Counseling

DAS is committed to providing a work environment in which all people are treated with respect and dignity. Accordingly, the Equal Employment Opportunity Director (Alicia Nuñez) and staff of the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit are available to counsel employees with questions or concerns about DAS'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 DAS'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. Participants will be provided with applicable DAS policies and will be given a copy of the DAS Discrimination Complaint Process.

* Alicia Nuñez may be contacted at (860) 713-5317 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 DAS Human Resources Division. The DAS 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 address of the complainant;
- 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.

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. DAS 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)

   Complaints must be filed with the CCHRO no later than one hundred and eighty (180) 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.

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

DAS strictly forbids retaliation against employees reporting discriminatory acts or participating in internal or external investigations. Agents of DAS 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. DAS 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 Alicia Nuñez, Equal Employment Opportunity Director, at (860)713-5317 or to Brenda Abele, Human Resources Administrator, at (860)713-5441.