CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION

MICHELLE H. SEAGULL | COMMISSIONER

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY STATEMENT

Purpose

The Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) is an affirmative action employer and is committed to the policies and procedures that promote equal employment opportunity. Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity have been established as immediate and necessary agency objectives. The ultimate purposes of DCP's Affirmative Action Program are to:

- ensure equal opportunity at DCP,
- avoid discrimination – either intentional or inadvertent,
- develop a workforce that is truly representative of all segments of the state's population; And
- improve the operation of DCP's services.

Definitions

- "Affirmative Action" is a program of 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 protected group found to be underutilized in the workforce or groups affected by past policies and practices having an adverse impact.

- "Equal Employment Opportunity" is employment of individuals without consideration of the following: race; color; religious creed; age; sex; pregnancy; sexual orientation; workplace hazards to reproductive systems, gender identity or expression; marital status; national origin; ancestry; retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, 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, unless the provisions of C.G.S. §46a-80(b) or 46a-81(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes are controlling or unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in one of the above protected groups. Equal Employment Opportunity is the purpose and goal of Affirmative Action under §46a-68-75 through 46a-68-114 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies

DCP's Internal Complaint Process

The Department of Consumer Protection has developed and established internal complaint procedures to be utilized in the investigation of internal complaints of alleged discrimination. All DCP employees are provided with a copy of the Department's internal complaint procedure and policy statements, which outline their protections under equal opportunity laws.

DCP's Affirmative Action Program

DCP has created an Affirmative Action Program to overcome the present effects of any past policies, practices and barriers to equal opportunity. In our Affirmative Action Plan, we identify the achievements that have been made through the application of our good faith efforts and, through the full and fair participation of all of our employees in all of the Agency's undertakings. We also recognize the hiring difficulties experienced by the physically disabled and by many older persons, and will set program goals to achieve the full and fair utilization of these persons in the workforce.

The Department fully supports all federal and state constitutional provisions, laws, regulations, guidelines, and executive orders that prohibit or outlaw discrimination. In accordance with these requirements, no person or facility of this Agency shall be used in the furtherance of any discriminatory practice, nor shall we become a party to any agreement, arrangement, contract or plan that has the effect of sanctioning discriminatory practices. All education and training programs and all employment practices conducted by, sponsored by, or with the approval of, DCP shall be open to all qualified persons.

Our policy is posted on DCP's policy bulletin boards throughout the agency, on the DCP Intranet, and on DCP's internet website. Each employee has the right to review and comment upon the agency's Affirmative Action Plan. All responses should be addressed to Jennifer Taplin, the agency's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Specialist 2, who has been assigned all affirmative action duties. She can be reached at the Department of Administrative Services, Equal Employment Opportunity Unit, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 1501, Hartford, CT 06103, or at jennifer.taplin@ct.gov. Her phone number at the agency is (860) 713-5309.

Commitment

DCP will use viable affirmative action measures in all stages of the employment process as outlined in Section 46a-68-87 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies and in the DCP Affirmative Action Plan, and will provide services and programs in a fair and impartial manner.

As Commissioner of DCP, I readily assume the ultimate responsibility for ensuring the success of our Affirmative Action programs and goals, within the timetables stated in our Plan, and stress that the effectiveness of our programs will depend on the complete cooperation of all administrative and supervisory staff. I ask that each share in this responsibility and act accordingly.

We recognize that programs without effort are meaningless and that effort undirected by specific procedures prevents achievement. I personally pledge my support and commitment to Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity. I ask each employee to review this policy and be familiar with it. More importantly, however, each employee is expected to commit him/herself to its ideals and objectives as I have done.

Michelle H. Seagull
Commissioner, Department of Consumer Protection

2/19/2020
Date

Rev. 2/2020

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION

MICHELLE H. SEAGULL | COMMISSIONER

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN
SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES

May 2020

The Department of Consumer Protection has completed its biennial Affirmative Action Plan for the reporting period of November 1, 2017 through October 31, 2019. The Plan continues to be utilized as a tool to assist in the effort and realization of Equal Employment Opportunities for all individuals without consideration of the following: race; color; religious creed; age; sex; pregnancy; sexual orientation; workplace hazards to reproductive systems, 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, unless the provisions of §46a-80(b) or 46a-81(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes are controlling; unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in one of the above protected groups.

Included in the plan are an analysis of the DCP workforce by race and sex within each occupational category and a comparison of the workforce to the availability of these individuals in the relevant labor market area. Where a disparity exists, numerical goals and timetables have been established to assist in achieving parity. The Plan further reviews the Department's previous year's Plan with regard to progress to goals.

The Department of Consumer Protection continues to review its employment processes on an ongoing basis to assure all processes and procedures are administered in accordance with equal employment opportunity and affirmative action guidelines.

All employees are invited to review the Plan and submit comments about the Plan to our Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist 2, Jennifer Taplin. She can be reached at the Department of Administrative Services, Equal Employment Opportunity Unit, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 1501, Hartford, CT 06103, or at jennifer.taplin@ct.gov. Her phone number at the agency is (860) 713-5309.

A copy of the Affirmative Action Plan Policy Statement as well as other relevant policy statements that are contained in the Plan will be forwarded to all DCP employees and will be posted on the Department's Website. The Department of Consumer Protection will make every good faith effort to achieve the objectives, goals and timetables as set forth in the Affirmative Action Plan and will hold all DCP employees accountable for their responsibilities in helping achieve its objectives.

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; workplace hazards to reproductive systems; gender identity or expression; marital status; national origin; ancestry; retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion; 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 DCP discrimination complaint process. Additionally, any member of the public alleging discrimination in the provision of services, activities, programs or benefits of the Department of Economic Development related to a qualifying disability may use the DCP Discrimination Complaint Process.

The DCP 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 300 days of the alleged discriminatory treatment. Each new employee upon appointment shall receive and acknowledge a copy of the DCP Discrimination Complaint Process.

*Any person requiring a copy of this process in an alternative format should contact Jennifer Taplin, Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist 2, via phone at (860) 713-5309 or email at jennifer.taplin@ct.gov.

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

Counseling

DCP is committed to providing a work environment in which all people are treated with respect and dignity. Accordingly, the Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist 2 (Jennifer Taplin) and staff of the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit are available to counsel employees with questions or concerns about DCP'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 DCP'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 DCP policies and will be given a copy of the DCP Discrimination Complaint Process.

* Jennifer Taplin may be contacted at (860) 713-5309 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 DCP Human Resources Division. The DCP 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.

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. DCP 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
   (203) 805-6530
   (203) 805-6559 (FAX)
   (203) 805-6579 (TDD)

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

   CCHRO Eastern Region Office
   100 Broadway
   Norwich, CT 06360
   (860) 886- 5703

(860) 886-2550 (FAX)
(860) 886-5707 (TDD)

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 the CHRO within

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

DCP strictly forbids retaliation against employees reporting discriminatory acts or participating in internal or external investigations. Agents of DCP 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. DCP 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 Jennifer Taplin, Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist 2, at (860)713-5309 or to Lorraine Vittner, Principal Human Resources Specialist, at (860)713-5449.

Rev: 2/2020

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY UNIT

COMPLAINT FORM

Name of Complainant: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____ Worksite/Department Address: _____

Name of Immediate Supervisor: _____

Nature of Complaint: ( )Discrimination; ( )Harassment; ( )Retaliation; ( )Other _____

Protected Class or Activity: _____

Name of Alleged Wrongdoer(s):_____

Relationship of Wrongdoer(s) to Complainant, if any: _____

Date of Incident(s): _____

DESCRIPTION OF COMPLAINT (*use reverse side if necessary*):

_____

_____

_____

_____

SPECIFIC REMEDY REQUESTED:_____

_____

Was this complaint filed with any other enforcement agency (i.e., CHRO, EEOC, Union, Other)
( )Yes ( ) No If yes, with whom and Date Filed: _____/_____

I hereby declare that all statements made herein are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

_____/_____

Signature of Complainant Date

I have received a copy of the agency's Discrimination Complaint Procedure, which outlines the process and timeframes for filing a complaint of alleged discrimination or harassment, and also provides me with information about alternative legal remedies, such as filing with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights & Opportunities (CHRO) and the federal Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC).

_____/_____

Signature of Complainant Date