



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
**DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES AND PUBLIC PROTECTION**  
**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

**Anti-Discrimination Policy Statement**

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection's (DESPP) Anti-Discrimination Policy is to foster a diverse workforce and maintain a fair work environment in which no employee experiences discrimination based on a legally protected class which includes age, ancestry/alienage, color, civil union status, criminal record (in state employment and/or licensing), disability (includes physical, learning, emotional, developmental and/or intellectual disability including but not limited to blindness), gender/sex, genetic information, gender identity or expression, harassment (including pregnancy and sexual harassment), marital status, familial status, national origin, previously opposed discrimination (retaliation), past or present history of mental disability, race, religious creed, sexual orientation, transgender status, veteran status and workplace hazards to reproductive systems unless the provisions of Sections 46a-60, 46a-80 and 46a-81 of the Connecticut General Statutes are controlling or if there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in one of the above protected groups.

DESPP is issuing this policy statement to guide DESPP employees in understanding their rights and responsibilities to equal employment.

**Policy:**

It is DESPP's policy to foster a diverse workforce, maintain a fair work environment, and offer programs and services in a manner that is consistent with state and federal laws that prohibit discrimination and harassment based on a person's protected class which includes age, ancestry/alienage, color, civil union status, criminal record (in state employment and/or licensing), disability (includes physical, learning, emotional, developmental and/or intellectual disability including but not limited to blindness), gender/sex, genetic information, gender identity or expression, harassment (including pregnancy and sexual harassment), marital status, familial status, national origin, previously opposed discrimination (retaliation), past or present history of mental disability, race, religious creed, sexual orientation, transgender status, veteran status and workplace hazards to reproductive systems unless the provisions of Sections 46a-60, 46a-80 and 46a-81 of the Connecticut General Statutes are controlling or if there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in one of the above protected groups.

DESPP is fully committed to equal employment opportunity (EEO) and the right to work and advance based on merit, ability, and potential, free from discrimination.

### **Prohibited Conduct:**

Discrimination is an act, which either denies or confers compensation in terms, conditions or privileges of employment based on a person's membership in a protected class.

DESPP prohibits discrimination, including harassment, based on all legally protected classes that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment.

Decisions regarding employment, including but not limited to, recruitment, hiring, placement, training, promotion, compensation, benefits, transfers, layoffs, discipline, termination, etc., must be based on valid, non-discriminatory business practices.

DESPP will not tolerate discrimination or harassment on the basis of a protected class by any individual, including but not limited to, any DESPP employee, manager, commander, supervisor, co-worker, vendor, visitor, client, customer, or contractor whether in the workplace, at assignments outside of the workplace, at DESPP sponsored social events or elsewhere.

### **Retaliation:**

Retaliation is any materially adverse action that would dissuade a reasonable person from reporting inappropriate conduct and/or filing a complaint.

DESPP strictly forbids retaliation against any employee who reports and/or files a complaint of discrimination, including harassment, or who participates in an internal or external investigation involving such conduct. DESPP managers, commanders, and/or supervisors shall not retaliate against, coerce, intimidate, threaten, harass, or interfere with any individual exercising or enjoying his or her rights under state or federal law or if such individual aided or encouraged any other individual to exercise rights granted or protected by state or federal law. All employees are strongly urged to report all instances of retaliation via one of the points of contact listed below under "Reporting Discrimination and/or Harassment."

### **Investigating Complaints:**

All DESPP employees are responsible for complying with this policy, for maintaining a high level of professional conduct in the workplace and providing a work environment in which all employees are treated with respect and fairness.

Every DESPP manager, commander, and/or supervisor has the responsibility to maintain a workplace free of any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, and to monitor working conditions in order to detect any violation(s) of this policy.

DESPP shall promptly investigate all complaints and reports of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation and take appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. DESPP employees are expected to cooperate with all investigations and any actions taken by DESPP as a result of such investigations.

### **Reporting Discrimination and/or Harassment:**

DESPP employees who feel that he or she have been subjected to or have witnessed harassment or other forms of discrimination, including retaliation prohibited under this Policy, is urged to report the conduct to any of the following:

- a. Their manager, commander, or supervisor; or
- b. DESPP Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Office

Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist 2, Daphne L. Lewis  
1111 Country Club Road, Middletown, CT 06457-2389,  
Telephone: 860-685-8657 Email: [Daphne.Lewis@ct.gov](mailto:Daphne.Lewis@ct.gov)

All DESPP employees are also urged to review DESPP's Administrative and Operational Manual, Section 4.1.3 for specific employee responsibilities and reporting procedures.

Any manager, commander, or supervisor who receives a complaint about prohibited harassment, other forms of discrimination, retaliation, or who believes that someone is engaging in such conduct is mandated to report the same to the DESPP Equal Employment Opportunity/ Affirmative Action Office, failure to do so may subject the manager, commander, or supervisor to disciplinary action.

### **Copies of Policy:**

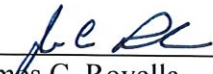
DESPP employees shall receive a copy of this Policy Statement and forward a written acknowledgement of receipt to the DESPP Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Office. This Policy Statement shall also be posted in common areas, on the DESPP Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Office Intranet website, and on the DESPP's Intranet site <http://intranet/eoo/eoo.htm>.

DESPP is committed to preventing employment discrimination, including harassment, and retaliation by ensuring that all employees are aware of their rights and obligations under this policy and by encouraging a work environment that appreciates and tolerates differences amongst employees.

DESPP shall promote these objectives through regular anti-discrimination and anti-harassment training and supervision, EEO compliance inspections of all DESPP agency facilities, including troop sites, and through general administration of its EEO programs.

DESPP is committed to promptly taking discipline and corrective action if discrimination, harassment, or retaliation occurs. Employees should promptly report any incidents of discrimination or harassment they observe, as well as any suspected retaliation related to a complaint.

2-8-2022  
Date

  
James C. Rovella  
Commissioner