

## **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY STATEMENT**

The Office of Policy and Management (OPM) is an affirmative action and equal opportunity employer. Affirmative action and equal employment opportunity are immediate and necessary objectives of the agency.

The purpose and goal of affirmative action is to:

- achieve equal employment opportunity;
- achieve workforce parity;
- provide programs and services in a fair and impartial manner; and
- create a work environment free of any form of discrimination.

"Affirmative action" means 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 affected by policies or practices having an adverse impact.

"Equal employment opportunity" means employment of individuals without consideration of protected classes in Chapter 814c of the Connecticut General Statutes unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in a protected group.

Except in the case of a bona fide occupational qualification or need or unless it is shown that a disability as referenced below prevents performance of the work involved, OPM shall employ and promote individuals on the basis of qualifications and merit, without regard for race, inclusive of ethnic traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to hair texture and protective hairstyles, color, religious creed, age, sex, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, ancestry, present or past history of mental disability, intellectual disability, learning disability, physical disability including, but not limited to, blindness, exercising rights afforded by Paid Family Medical Leave, status as a veteran, status as a victim of domestic violence, status as a victim of sexual assault or status as a victim of trafficking in persons per C.G.S. Secs. 46a-60(b)(1) and 46a-70(a). OPM shall not discriminate against a woman because of her pregnancy per C.G.S. Sec. 46a-60(b)(7); shall not sexually harass per C.G.S. Sec. 46a-60(b)(8); shall protect individuals from workplace hazards to reproductive system or to a fetus per C.G.S. Sec. 46a-60(b)(10); shall



not request or require genetic information per C.G.S. Sec. 46a-60(b)(11); shall not disqualify a person solely because of a prior conviction of a crime per C.G.S. Sec. 46a-80(a); and shall not discriminate because of an individual's sexual orientation or civil union status per C.G.S. Sec. 46a-81c.

In accordance with C.G.S. Sec. 31-40y, OPM shall not discriminate against or sexually harass any fellow, intern or individual seeking a fellowship or an internship based on race, inclusive of ethnic traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to hair texture and protective hairstyles, color, religious creed, age, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, ancestry, present or past history of mental disability, intellectual disability, learning disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness.

In accordance with C.G.S. Sec. 46a-60(d)(1), OPM shall provide written notice to every new employee, existing employees and any employee who notifies OPM of her pregnancy of the right to be free from discrimination in relation to pregnancy, childbirth and related conditions, including the right to a reasonable accommodation to the known limitations related to pregnancy.

OPM is committed to maintaining a workplace environment that is conducive to the well-being of all individuals. To enhance such an environment, the agency has developed policies which specifically address areas such as Sexual Harassment, Sexual Orientation and Individuals with Disabilities in the workplace. To also ensure this well-being, all employees, fellows and interns are provided with the OPM Discrimination Complaint Procedure and upon request referred to appropriate resources for employee assistance. These policies and the procedure are distributed to each OPM employee, fellow and intern at the time OPM submits its Affirmative Action Plan to the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO), is provided to new employees upon hire, is provided to interns or fellows upon the start of their fellowship/internship, and is posted on OPM's Intranet/SharePoint Drive. In addition, the policy statements are reviewed annually and if necessary, revised, distributed to staff, fellows and interns, and posted on the agency's Intranet/SharePoint Drive to reflect any changes in federal or state laws and/or agency policy.

Any employee, fellow or intern who believes that OPM has discriminated against them with regard to employment or to any program, service or activity at this agency may choose to file a complaint in accordance with the agency's Discrimination Complaint Procedure.



OPM's Designated Equal Employment Opportunity Officer will receive and investigate all complaints of employment discrimination under this policy statement, as well as the Sexual Harassment, Sexual Orientation and Individuals with Disabilities Policy Statements.

In accordance with C.G.S. Sec. 46a-68(b)(4)(B), discrimination complaints made against the Secretary of OPM or OPM's Designated Equal Employment Opportunity Officer alleging that he/she directly or personally engaged in discriminatory conduct, or discrimination complaints made by the Secretary of OPM or OPM's Designated Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, should be directed to OPM's General Counsel in accordance with the agency's Discrimination Complaint Procedure. Upon receiving a complaint, OPM's General Counsel will refer such complaint to CHRO for review and, if appropriate, investigation by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS).

No employee, fellow or intern will be coerced, intimidated, or retaliated against by OPM or any employee, fellow or intern for performing any of the duties and responsibilities of developing and implementing the agency's affirmative action plan. Any person so aggrieved may file a complaint with any external discrimination investigative agency such as: The Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO), the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and/or the United States Department of Labor (U.S. DOL). Furthermore, no employee, fellow or intern will be retaliated or discriminated against by OPM or any employee, fellow or intern for opposing any discriminatory employment practice or for exercising their right to file or participate in the processing of a discrimination complaint.

All forms of discrimination will be dealt with immediately and accordingly, through the OPM Discrimination Complaint Procedure. If investigation reveals the presence of discrimination, the employee, fellow or intern behaving in such an inappropriate manner will be subject to progressive discipline.

Every employee, fellow and intern has an absolute right to be treated professionally. We expect OPM employees, fellows and interns to be sensitive to this issue and cooperative in creating a work environment free of any form of discrimination.



In order to continue to make every good faith effort to achieve parity in the workforce, this agency will utilize viable affirmative action measures in all stages of the employment program. These measures include the following:

- 1) The Human Resources Unit provides outreach recruitment for classified and competitive vacancies.
- 2) Job qualification, job specification, recruitment and personnel practices are reviewed by the Human Resources representative/Designated Equal Employment Opportunity Officer to ensure that artificial barriers do not exist that would exclude the appointment of protected group members.
- 3) The Human Resources Unit conducts orientation for interns, fellows, new employees, and employees returning to state service. This includes providing employees with a copy of the Affirmative Action Policy Statement, Sexual Harassment Policy Statement, Sexual Orientation Policy Statement, Individuals with Disabilities Policy Statement, the Pregnancy Discrimination and Accommodation in the Workplace Notice, the Discrimination Complaint Procedure and sends email to new employees within three (3) months of hire with information regarding the illegality of sexual harassment, remedies available to victims of sexual harassment, and a link to the CHRO website.
- 4) Career Development/Upward Mobility counseling is available to all employees by the Human Resources Unit.
- 5) Training opportunities are available to all employees through LinkedIn Learning, the Tuition Reimbursement Program, and when funding is available, through the State's In-Service Program.
- 6) Service ratings or employee evaluations are based solely on job performance and are conducted by a superior with knowledge and familiarity of the employee's work duties and performance.
- 7) Layoffs and terminations are conducted under the provisions of State Personnel Regulations and applicable collective bargaining agreements. The Human Resources representative/Designated Equal Employment Opportunity Officer is

involved in this process to ensure absence of discrimination due to protected class status.

OPM's primary mission is to assist the Governor in policy formation, program development and implementation. OPM's functions also include the development of a continuing, integrated process of program design, resource allocation and performance evaluation. Although not a direct service provider, OPM pledges to affirmatively ensure that programs and services are provided in a fair and impartial manner.

OPM recognizes hiring difficulties experienced by the physically disabled and many older persons and will set program goals for action to overcome the present effects of past discrimination, if any, to achieve full and fair utilization of such persons in its workforce.

The agency Designated Equal Employment Opportunity Officer reporting directly to the Secretary is:

Carolyn Kozak  
Human Resources Generalist 3/Designated Equal Employment Opportunity Officer  
Office of Policy and Management  
450 Capitol Avenue - MS#52ADM  
Hartford, Connecticut 06106  
Telephone: (860) 418-6324

As the appointing authority of OPM, I am fully committed to achieving the goals and timetables set forth in this comprehensive Affirmative Action Plan.



9-23-25

Jeffrey R. Beckham  
Secretary

Date