



U.S. Department of Energy Oak Ridge Operations Equal Employment Opportunity Counselors

POLICY

Department of Energy policy on Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity affirms that diversity is more than an abstract concept and goes beyond compliance with EEO requirements. Rather, diversity is a core value and strategic business imperative. It is an important consideration in every aspect of what we do. Departmental policy reiterates a commitment to ensuring that applicants and employees are not subject to prohibited to discrimination in any aspect of employment. Prohibited discrimination includes discrimination or reprisal on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age (40+), disability (physical or mental), sexual orientation, parental status, protected genetic information.

INDIVIDUAL COMPLAINTS

Employees, former employees, or applicants who feel they are being discriminated against any on one or more of the non-merit factors of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age (40+), disability (physical and mental), sexual orientation, parental status, protected genetic information or reprisal may contact an EEO Counselor for counseling. EEO counseling is required before a formal complaint can be filed. The procedure is as follows:

- ❖ The individual must contact an EEO Counselor within 45 calendar days of the effective date of an alleged discriminatory action or event; or from the date when he individual first becomes aware of the alleged discrimination.
- ❖ The EEO Counselor then has 30 days to attempt to informally resolve the issue(s). This period of counseling can be extended to no more than 90 calendar days with a written request from the individual and agreement from the Diversity Programs Office.
- ❖ If the individual wishes to participate in an alternative dispute resolution process (such as mediation), the individual and ORO management can agree to extend the counseling period to no longer than 90 calendar days.
- ❖ If the issue(s) are unresolved at the end of counseling, the individual has 15 calendar days to file a formal complaint.
- ❖ If the formal Complaint is accepted, the Department of Energy is required to investigate the formal complaint and provide a copy of the investigation file to the individual within 180 calendar days of the filing, unless the parties agree to an extension.

CONFIDENTIALITY

An individual may obtain counseling on a confidential basis and remain anonymous to other parties by advising the EEO Counselor of their request. The EEO Counselor will not make inquires of third parties nor review documents unless authorized by the individual in writing. Anonymity is not possible after a formal complaint of discrimination is filed.

RETALIATION/REPRISAL

Under federal regulations, complainants, their representatives and witnesses are to remain free from restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal at any stage in the presentation or processing of a complaint, including the counseling stage and any time thereafter. Protected activities may include the filing of formal complaints; informal protects of discriminatory employment practices, including making complaints to management; writing critical letters, and expressing support of co-workers who have filed formal charges.

CLASS COMPLAINTS

Class complaints may be filed by persons believing they and other members of their class have been victims of discrimination. A class is a group of employees, former employees, and/or applicants who allegedly have been, or are being, adversely affected by an agency personnel management policy or practice which discriminates against the group on the basis of a common non-merit factor of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age (40+), disability (physical and mental), sexual orientation, parental status, protected genetic information or reprisal. A class complaint representative must contact the ORO Diversity Programs Manager at the address listed below within 45 calendar days of the date of the alleged discrimination or when they first became aware of the action.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For further information or to initiate EEO counseling, contact an EEO Counselor. For further information about the DOE/ORO Diversity Programs Office, contact us at (865) 576-4988 or visit the web site: <http://www.oro.doe.gov/diversity/diversity.html>



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For further information concerning the DOE/ORO EEO Program contact:
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