



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

FEB 05 2024

**Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
Statement**

As an employer of nearly 70,000 public servants nationwide, the Department of the Interior (Department) is uniquely responsible for advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility across our workforce. This goal is not just the right thing to do—it is critical as we work to tell America’s story while making our public lands and waters accessible for all Americans. Too many of us know firsthand how devastating employment discrimination is both personally and professionally, with historically marginalized communities bearing the brunt of this mistreatment. Advancing our shared mission means ensuring that everyone, regardless of background, has access to equal employment opportunity (EEO), justice, and accountability. Our Department continues to address the barriers that persist while building an equitable workplace that serves each of us.

I reaffirm my commitment to ensuring that the Department embraces EEO, the core of which is the right to work and advance professionally based on merit, ability, and potential, free from prejudice, harassing conduct, unlawful discrimination, and reprisal. We must ensure that Department policies, practices, and procedures do not deny opportunities to employees, former employees, or applicants because of race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, genetic information, or sex, which includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Unlawful harassment is illegal and is unacceptable in Department workplaces. The Department will not tolerate unlawful workplace discrimination, which includes unlawful harassment or reprisal against anyone who engages in EEO-protected activity. When employees are found to have engaged in unlawful discrimination, retaliation, or harassing conduct, which is prohibited by Departmental policy, the Department will take prompt and effective remedial action, up to and including removal from Federal service.

The Department will ensure that EEO is implemented across our human capital and employment programs, management practices, and employment decisions, including recruitment, hiring, merit promotions, transfers, reassignments, training, career development, benefits, and separations. Employees, former employees, and applicants for employment who believe they have been subjected to unlawful discrimination or retaliation, either for opposing discrimination in the Department or for participating in protected EEO activities, are encouraged to contact their Bureau EEO Office or the Department’s Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Civil Rights for guidance and direction within 45 calendar days of either the discrimination or retaliation, or from the date on which they reasonably became aware of the discrimination or retaliation. Formal complaints of discrimination or retaliation that are filed and accepted will be thoroughly and timely investigated, and the facts of such investigations will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law and policy.

The engagement of all employees, former employees, and applicants for employment is invaluable to ensuring that the Department is welcoming to all and that we uphold our policy that all employees, former employees, and applicants have the right to raise allegations of discrimination and harassment without fear of retaliation. To better understand barriers to EEO, each of us must look beyond obvious unlawful actions, like discriminatory hiring and firing. We must expand our understanding to recognize more subtle barriers to EEO and strive to create and maintain workplaces that are free from all forms of harassing conduct, unlawful discrimination, and reprisal. In addition, we must foster workplaces that allow all employees to reach their full potential. Therefore, as appropriate, and in accordance with applicable law and policy, we must ensure employees and applicants are afforded reasonable accommodations as appropriate to enjoy the full terms, conditions, benefits and privileges of employment, and that managers and supervisors ensure equal opportunity for training and career development, promotions, awards, and recognition.

All Department personnel are responsible for complying with this policy statement, encouraging inclusion in the workplace, and fostering an environment that upholds integrity, dignity, and respect.

Creating a future that works for everyone starts here at home, because equity and inclusion must be a part of everything our team does. I am proud of the progress we have accomplished together, and I look forward to the improvements we will continue to make across our Department.



Deb Haaland