



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
Federal Housing Finance Agency

400 7th Street SW, Washington DC 20219

June 15, 2020

TO: FHFA-OIG Employees and Applicants

FROM: 
Laura S. Wertheimer, Inspector General

SUBJECT: Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Anti-Harassment Policy

It is the Federal Housing Finance Agency Office of Inspector General's (FHFA-OIG) policy to adhere to the principles of equal employment opportunity to ensure all employees and applicants have an equal opportunity for employment without regard to race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex (including sexual harassment, pregnancy, gender identity or gender expression, and sexual orientation), national origin, age (40 years of age or above), disability (physical or mental), family medical history or genetic information, political affiliation, status as a parent, marital status, or military service or any other non-merit based factor. Upon request and as appropriate, FHFA-OIG will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities.

As Inspector General, I am committed to providing a work environment free of discriminatory policies and practices where our workforce and those seeking to enter our workforce are treated fairly and consistently on the basis of merit. Accordingly, I will continue to make positive efforts to ensure that management practices and employment decisions at FHFA-OIG are based on business needs, job requirements and individual qualifications.

FHFA-OIG employees and applicants are protected by federal laws, Presidential Executive Orders, and other directives and policies banning employment discrimination and harassment. These protections extend to all management practices and employment decisions, such as recruitment and hiring, performance, discipline, promotions, training, termination, and all other terms and conditions of employment.

Harassment in this context is defined as conduct that is so severe or pervasive enough to create a work environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or offensive. Unlawful harassment includes, but is not limited to: harassing comments posted on social media, including internet sites; epithets; slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts; verbal or written jokes; or other written or graphic materials (including electronic media) displayed or circulated in the workplace that degrades a person or group.

Sexual harassment is also unlawful. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to: offensive remarks about a person's gender, unwanted or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, as well as other conduct of a sexual nature when: 1. The submission to or rejection of such conduct is made a condition of the employee's continued employment, or used as the basis for any employment decisions affecting the employee; or 2. The conduct, if unwelcome and severe or pervasive, creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment, or unreasonably interferes with an employee's work environment.

Employees who believe they are experiencing unlawful discrimination or harassment should bring their concerns to the attention of their supervisor, a member of management, or to the FHFA-OIG EEO Program Manager. FHFA-OIG takes allegations of unlawful discrimination and harassment very seriously and will conduct a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation of any such alleged conduct, and take remedial action where appropriate based upon that investigation. FHFA-OIG will maintain the confidentiality and the privacy of the persons involved, to the greatest extent possible, consistent with its goal of conducting a thorough and complete investigation. Any employee found to have engaged in unlawful discrimination or any form of harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Additionally, retaliation in any form against an employee or applicant who reports what he or she reasonably believes to be unlawful discrimination or harassment is strictly prohibited. All employees and applicants must be able to exercise their right to elect the EEO process, oppose unlawful discriminatory practices, and engage in whistleblowing or exercise any other appeal right provided by law without fear of retaliation.

All FHFA-OIG management and supervisory personnel have an affirmative duty and are required to set the tone for the enforcement of this policy. Executives, managers and supervisors have a special obligation to proactively prevent unlawful discrimination and harassment, and protect from retaliation those employees who report such matters. I expect all management and supervisory personnel who become aware of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation to take immediate and appropriate corrective action to prevent the occurrence and/or reoccurrence of the misconduct. This also includes cases where management and supervisory personnel should have known about any discriminatory or harassing conduct and failed to take prompt and appropriate corrective action.

Any employee, former employee, and/or applicant for FHFA-OIG employment who believes that he or she has been the subject of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation in violation of this policy should contact the FHFA-OIG EEO Program Manager. Contact must be made within **45 calendar days** of the action alleged to be discriminatory or harassing, within **45 calendar days** of the effective date of an alleged discriminatory personnel action, or **45 calendar days** from the date he or she became aware of the discriminatory action. All contact will be handled in a discreet and confidential manner to the greatest extent possible.

Each of us must adhere to the highest standards of accountability, commitment, professionalism, and stewardship. By supporting this policy, we can protect and advance the spirit and principles of fairness and equal opportunity at FHFA-OIG.

If you have any questions regarding this policy or FHFA-OIG's EEO complaint process, please contact Josui Watson, FHFA-OIG EEO Program Manager, at Josui.Watson@fhfaig.gov, or phone: (202) 730-0369 or VA Relay 711 (TTY).