The procedures established in the DAO-202-955 are different from the equal employment opportunity (EEO) programs of the Department. Both processes may run at the same time.

The DAO-202-955 is the process is focused solely on immediate and follow-on actions by management. The DAO provides an expedited process for management to review allegations of harassment, stop actual incidents of harassment, and take disciplinary actions as appropriate. The DAO process is triggered whenever management is made aware of an incident or allegation of harassment or assault committed because of an EEO protected class such as sexual harassment or sexual assault.

The EEO complaint process is focused on providing remedial relief to the impacted person affected by the discriminating harassment. This process is solely for the impacted persons and can only be initiated by the impacted person. It is a legal right for impacted persons to seek EEO counseling with NOAA OICR or an EEO office within 45 days of a harassing event.