

## National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration 2022 Policy Statement on Equal Employment Opportunity

At NOAA, we are committed to delivering world-class science, data, services and innovative solutions to help the world adapt to our changing planet. In order for us to accomplish this highly ambitious mission, the ultimate key to our success is our people. For our people to succeed, we must dedicate ourselves to creating and cultivating an organizational culture that is conducive to excellence. A fundamental element of any such culture is the assurance of equal employment opportunity (EEO). For that reason, my leadership team and I are dedicated to doing all we can to guarantee EEO for all NOAA personnel in all aspects of their employment, from the moment they apply for a job until the day they leave the agency. This includes ensuring that our work spaces are free from discrimination and harassment.

To that end, NOAA will have no tolerance for any form of discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, transgender status, and pregnancy), national origin, age (40 years of age and over), genetic information (including family medical history), or disability (physical or mental), including the provision of reasonable accommodations for qualified applicants and employees with disabilities. Furthermore, retaliation against anyone who initiates a discrimination complaint, serves as witnesses, or otherwise opposes discrimination is strictly prohibited. These protections encompass all management practices and decisions, including recruitment and hiring practices, appraisal systems, promotions, and training and career-development programs.

Employees, applicants, and contractors, who believe they have been discriminated against, and want to initiate an EEO complaint, must contact the NOAA Office of Inclusion and Civil Rights within **45 calendar days** of the alleged discriminatory event or when they become aware of an alleged discriminatory act. If you wish to file a complaint, or want more information on the EEO complaint process, you can visit the OICR website at <https://www.noaa.gov/inclusion-and-civil-rights>, call them at 1 (800) 452-6728, (301) 713-0500, or email them at [noaa.oicr@noaa.gov](mailto:noaa.oicr@noaa.gov).

For any NOAA employee who feels compelled to file an EEO complaint, I strongly encourage you to take advantage of the EEO Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program. It is a valuable tool designed to resolve EEO disputes as quickly as possible through the use of mediation with impartial mediators. As a reminder, since 2018, participation in ADR is mandatory for managers and supervisors when an EEO Counselee elects this option.

If an employee is found to have discriminated against another employee, they may be subject to discipline. Pursuant to DAO 202-751, *Discipline*, the penalty for a first offense ranges from a minimum of a five (5) day suspension up to removal depending on the severity of the case. For a second offense, 30 days to removal, and if an employee is found to have been guilty of discrimination three (3) times they will be removed from the Agency.

As with other forms of discrimination, harassment at NOAA is also unacceptable and will also not be tolerated. I want to remind you of your responsibilities to eliminate harassment as outlined in Department Administrative Order (DAO) 202-955: *Allegations of Harassment*

*Prohibited by Federal Law and NOAA Administrative order (NAO) 202-1106: NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy.* Under these policies, NOAA managers and supervisors are responsible for preventing, documenting, and promptly correcting harassing conduct in the workplace.

Our organization will be most successful when our employees are able to realize their full potential. We can only achieve that when our employees know that they will be judged fairly based only on their merit and can express themselves without fear that they will be subjected to discrimination or harassment. To ensure that NOAA moves continues to move forward in this direction, I ask you all to remain vigilant and when you see inappropriate, discriminatory behavior or harassment that you report it. Collectively, we can change our culture and create an environment where people not only feel safe, but where they can be the best they can be and help us provide the best services we can to our nation and the world!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard W. Spinrad". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Richard W. Spinrad, Ph.D.  
Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere  
& NOAA Administrator