

**SECRETARY OF LABOR**  
**WASHINGTON, D.C. 20210**

**August 26, 2022**

**Equal Employment Opportunity Policy**  
**U.S. Department of Labor**

As the Secretary of Labor, I believe we all must do our part at the Department to protect and enrich not only the legal tenets of equal employment opportunity (EEO) but also greater principles of equity, civil rights, anti-racism, and equal treatment. Working together in this endeavor, we will cultivate an environment that is diverse, inclusive, equitable, accessible, and free of discrimination, and one that maximizes our ability to fulfill the Department's mission.

Though we have taken steps towards addressing inequality and emphasizing the importance of diversity and inclusion, systemic racism and the damage it does to historically underserved communities nevertheless continues to persist in our society. We must take an explicit stand against racism and discrimination, including by understanding how our unique identities intersect with one another. In addition, we must take affirmative steps to ensure there are no inequities in our policies and programs that serve as barriers to equal opportunity, and we must seek to constructively advance equity and racial justice.

For this purpose, "equity" means the consistent and systemically fair and just treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander, and other persons of color; women; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.<sup>1</sup>

To best realize EEO in our approach to continue advancing equity, we must make certain that Department of Labor (DOL) employees, applicants, and contractors are treated fairly and consistently on the basis of merit. DOL employees, applicants, and contractors are protected from discrimination and prohibited personnel practices by Federal statutes and regulations, Presidential Executive Orders, and Federal case law. As such, no employee will be denied equal employment opportunity, subjected to harassment, retaliated against, or denied equal pay or compensation because of race (including dress and grooming), color, ancestry, national origin (including ethnicity, accent, and use of a language other than English), religion or religious creed (including reasonable accommodation of religious beliefs or practices), physical or mental disability (including reasonable accommodation of physical or mental disability), medical condition, genetic information, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, lactation, abortion, and related medical conditions and procedures), sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, intersex conditions, age, parental status, marital status, military or veteran status, citizenship, political affiliation or belief, or any other prohibited factor.

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<sup>1</sup> Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, January 20, 2021.

Employees shall not be subjected to discrimination due to their membership in a protected group; the perception of membership in a protected group; or association with members of a protected group. To better protect all employees in the exercise of their rights under Federal civil rights statutes, we also prohibit DOL managers, supervisors, and employees from engaging in unlawful retaliation. Unlawful retaliation occurs when an individual intimidates, harasses, and/or takes any other action(s) reasonably likely to deter protected EEO activity, and the individual takes this action because the targeted person engaged in EEO activity. Protected EEO activity includes opposing a practice made unlawful by, engaging in a right extended by, or participating in any stage of administrative or judicial proceedings under, relevant employment discrimination laws, including requesting a reasonable accommodation for a disability or sincerely held religious belief or practice.

We continue to value our role as the Government's lead organization for disability employment policy, particularly our emphasis on inclusion, equity, accessibility, and intersectionality in promoting disability inclusive workplaces by reasonably accommodating employees with disabilities. As such, we will promptly and without unreasonable scrutiny provide effective reasonable accommodations that enable qualified employees with disabilities to perform the essential functions of their jobs and enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment that are equal to those enjoyed by other DOL employees.

We are all responsible for upholding and advancing equal employment opportunity at DOL. The Department remains committed to educating managers, supervisors, employees, and contractors on their rights and responsibilities under federal law and holds them accountable for the effective implementation of related EEO and diversity programs. To accomplish this, DOL will develop, implement, and mandate appropriate training for managers and supervisors, and encourage participation for DOL employees. Any DOL employee found to have engaged in any prohibited conduct will be held accountable for their actions, up to and including removal from Federal service.

DOL agencies will widely publicize this policy and the procedures available for filing complaints; address allegations and remedy any violation of this policy swiftly and appropriately; provide for accountability by including an EEO and reasonable accommodation element in the performance standards of every DOL manager and supervisor; and take additional appropriate actions to provide full support to DOL's internal programs related to nondiscrimination, equal opportunity, and diversity. This policy and the EEO complaints program generally are separate and apart from the Department's Harassing Conduct Policy and Procedures, although both reflect the Department's commitment to address allegations of improper discriminatory or harassing conduct proactively and effectively. The Civil Rights Center (CRC) is responsible for implementing the EEO complaints policy and program, whereas agency Workplace Equality Compliance Offices (WECOs) are responsible for administering the Department's Harassing Conduct Policy and Procedures.

In addition to current mandatory training on EEO-related topics, DOL will further expand course offerings made available through LearningLink as well as those offered in-person and virtually by the CRC and the Office of Human Resources (OHR) in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management (OASAM), as well as other entities.

CRC and OHR will work with any DOL agency to conduct assessments and to provide requested training on the EEO-complaint filing process, Reasonable Accommodations, Alternative Dispute Resolution, and other appropriate topics. Finally, CRC will vigorously ensure compliance so that this pledge is reflected in the practices of the Department.

I am deeply committed to building a workplace that advances diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. I am similarly committed to advancing long-term organizational and culture change to create a workplace where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. To realize our potential and ability of cultivating a diverse and inclusive work environment, I encourage all employees to strictly adhere to and promote the spirit of this EEO policy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Martin J. Walsh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

MARTIN J. WALSH