STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION

Department of Consumer Protection

Discrimination Complaint Process

As required by section 46a-68-89 of the Affirmative Action regulations, this process addresses complaints alleging discrimination, including but not limited to harassment, based upon any legally protected class, including race, color, religious creed, age, sex, (including pregnancy, sexual harassment) sexual orientation, workplace hazards to reproductive systems, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, ancestry, intellectual disability, genetic information, learning disability, physical disability (including, but not limited to, blindness), past or present mental health disability or criminal record. Retaliation complaints are also covered under the DCP discrimination complaint process. Additionally, any member of the public alleging discrimination in the provision of services, activities, programs or benefits of the Department of Consumer Protection related to a qualifying disability may use the DCP Discrimination Complaint Process.

The DCP Discrimination Complaint Process will be distributed annually to all employees and will be posted on both the agency's intranet and internet website. All employees shall also be notified of the right to file with Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) as the state's enforcement agency and those complaints shall be filed with the CHRO within **180** days of the alleged discriminatory treatment. Each new employee upon appointment shall receive and acknowledge a copy of the DCP Discrimination Complaint Process. Any person requiring a copy of this process in an alternate form should contact Dorian Lord, Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist, via phone at (860) 713-5309 or email at dorian.lord@ct.gov.

All employees are expected to cooperate fully with all administrative complaint investigations and any actions taken by DCP as a result of such investigations.

Counseling

DCP is committed to providing a work environment in which all people are treated with respect and dignity. Accordingly, the Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist (Dorian Lord) and staff of the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit are available to counsel employees with questions and concerns about DCP anti-discrimination policies. Any individual requesting counseling will meet with the Equal Employment Opportunity staff in a private area. Issues discussed during such counseling sessions will be kept as confidential as possible, consistent with DCP legal obligations.

During such counseling sessions, the participants will be advised of their rights under state and federal anti-discrimination laws and the right to file directly with CHRO or other appropriate enforcement agency to ensure that legal options for filing with these agencies remain available. Participants will be provided with applicable DCP policies and will be given a copy of the DCP Discrimination Complaint Process. Dorian Lord may be contacted at (860) 713-5309 and is located on the 5th floor of the State Office Building at 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford.

Internal Complaint Process

All complaints alleging discrimination or retaliation should be filed as soon as possible after the alleged act of discrimination or retaliation, and absent extenuating circumstances, no later than thirty (30) days from the date of the alleged act.

Complaints may be made verbally or in writing to the Equal Employment opportunity Unit or the DCP Human Resources Division. The DCP Human Resources Division shall promptly forward any complaint alleging discrimination or retaliation to the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit for investigation. Accommodations to the filing process will be made available for persons with disabilities upon request. The filing date of the complaint is the day the complaint is received in the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit or Human Resources Division.

Each complaint must contain the following:

- The full name and address of the complainant;
- The full name and work address of the respondent;
- A brief description of the alleged act(s) of discrimination and location(s);
- The date(s) of the alleged act(s);
- The complainant's protected class(es);
- The complainant's signature and date.

1.) The Equal employment Opportunity Unit shall notify the respondent (person(s) against whom the complaint is filed) that a complaint has been filed.
2.) The Equal Employment Opportunity Unit shall notify the Commissioner, and when appropriate, the Director(s) of the business center where the parties work, of necessary details of the allegations.
3.) A member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit shall try to facilitate conciliation between the complainant and the respondent where there is an indication that both parties are willing to work together towards a resolution.
4.) If no conciliation agreement is possible, the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit shall continue with the investigatory process, keeping the Commissioner and Director of the business center fully informed on its progress.

5.) The Equal employment Opportunity Unit shall investigate all complaints and prepare a summary of the finding for administrative review. The investigative process shall not exceed ninety (90) days.

6.) The Equal Employment Opportunity Unit will notify the complainant, respondent and the parties listed above of the final determination in writing. In this notification, the complainant shall be advised of his or her avenues of appeal if he or she is not satisfied with the decision.

7.) If the complaint disagrees with a finding that the complaint is not substantiated, he or she may file a written appeal with the Commissioner of Consumer protection within ten (10) business days of receipt of the written documentation. The Commissioner (or designee) will contact the complaint to discuss the complaint and any possible resolutions.

8.) All complaints retain the right to pursue a remedy through other administrative, collective bargaining, and/or legal channels or with the appropriate enforcement agencies.

9.) If the investigation of the complaint indicates a policy violation occurred, the findings will be reviewed by the Commissioner (or designee), who will determine appropriate disciplinary action.

10.) The Equal employment Opportunity Unit shall maintain all records of affirmative action complaints, investigations, outcomes, and their disposition. Records so retained shall be confidential, except where disclosure is required by law. These records are subject to examination by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities annually, through its Affirmative Action Plan, of all discrimination complaints and any remedial actions taken. The Equal Employment Opportunity Unit will review all records of complaints and their dispositions annually to discern any pattern(s) of discrimination.

Legal Remedies

In addition, any person who believes he/she has been the subject of any act of unlawful discrimination may file a written complaint of discrimination with:

1.) Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO)
Capitol Region Office, 999 Asylum Avenue, 2nd Floor
Hartford, CT 06105
(860) 566-7710
(860) 566-7710 (TDD also)
(860) 566-1997 (FAX)

Complaints must be filed with the CHRO no later than one hundred and eighty (180) days after the alleged act of discrimination occurred.

2.) Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
(800) 669-4000 (Voice)
(800) 669-6820 (TDD)

Complaints must be filed with the EEOC no later than three hundred (300) days after the alleged act of discrimination occurred.

3.) Department of Justice (DOJ)
Office of the Americans with Disabilities Act
P.O. Box 6618
Washington, DC 2507
(202) 514-0301 (Voice)
(202) 514-0383 (TDD)

4.) Any other state, federal, or local agency, including the United States Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, that enforces law concerning discrimination in employment.

Protection from Retaliation

DCP strictly forbids retaliation against employees reporting discriminatory acts or participating in internal or external investigations. Agents of DCP shall not retaliate against, coerce, intimidate, threaten, harass, or interfere with any individual exercising his or her rights under federal or State law or because an individual aided or encouraged any other individual in the exercise of rights granted or protected by federal or state law. DCP will take any appropriate administrative actions necessary to prevent and/or correct any retaliatory measures. All employees are strongly urged to report all instances of retaliation to Dorian Lord, Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist, at (860) 713-5309 or to Deborah Craig, Human Resources Specialist, at (860) 713-5313.

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