



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY STATEMENT

As an agency of Connecticut state government, the Department of Social Services (DSS) is an **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY** employer. In order to ensure that employees and job applicants are not subjected to unlawful discrimination, it is the DSS' policy to comply with all laws and regulations that prohibit employment discrimination and mandate specific actions for the purpose of eliminating any present effects of past discrimination. Equal employment opportunity is the purpose and goal of affirmative action.

In accordance with state law and regulations, this Department has established equal employment opportunity and affirmative action as immediate and necessary agency objectives. We are committed to its concepts, principles and goals. Prejudice and discrimination have no place in our agency and will not be tolerated. Equal employment opportunity and affirmative action are necessary to ensure the prevention of and, if necessary, eradication of discrimination and to achieve the goal of a diverse workforce truly representative of all segments of the population.

Our "**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**" **POLICY** means a system of employment practices under which individuals are not excluded from participation, advancement or benefits due to race, color, religious creed, age, sex, marital status, national origin, ancestry, intellectual disability, physical disability, past or present history of mental disability, learning disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, civil union status, genetic information, prior conviction of a crime or other factors which cannot lawfully be the basis for employment actions, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification. It also means an employment system in which neither intentional nor unintentional discrimination is present. The non-discrimination policy also prohibits any workplace harassment on the basis of protected group identity.

Our "**AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**" policy requires positive action, undertaken with conviction and effort, to overcome any present effects of past discrimination and remedy policies or practices adversely impacting on the full and fair participation of protected groups in the workforce. We recognize, for example, the hiring difficulties experienced by persons with disabilities and by many older persons, and will take appropriate action to provide persons in these protected classes with equal employment opportunity.

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Affirmative action plays a crucial role at all stages of the employment process, including, but not limited to, recruitment, interviewing, hiring, assignment, training, evaluation, promotion, compensation, discipline, layoff and termination. It also includes the public notification of employment opportunities. It requires that we make the good faith effort that may be necessary in all aspects of personnel administration to ensure that the recruitment and hiring of protected group individuals reflect their availability in the job market; that the causes of underutilization are identified and eliminated; that alternative approaches are explored; and that the terms, conditions and privileges of employment are equitably administered.

This Department pledges to administer our services in a fair and impartial manner. Our programs and facilities shall not be used in the furtherance of any discriminatory practice, nor shall this Department become party to any agreement, arrangement, contract or plan which has the effect of sanctioning discriminatory practices.

We have developed an Affirmative Action Plan to combat discrimination and remedy any present effects of past discrimination. A listing of those federal and state constitutional provisions, laws, executive orders, statutes and regulations mandating Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action is included in the Policy Statement section of the Plan.

The Department's affirmative action program is administered by our Affirmative Action Division.

This policy will be posted and distributed annually to all employees. Each employee has a right to review and comment on the Affirmative Action Plan at any time. Any comments concerning the Affirmative Action Plan and any questionable discriminatory actions should be immediately reported to:

Astread Ferron-Poole
Director of Administration
Affirmative Action Division
25 Sigourney Street
Hartford, CT 06106
Phone (860) 424-5040

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Our Affirmative Action staff is available to counsel employees regarding Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity issues and assist them in pursuing the Department's Discrimination Complaint Procedure.

As Commissioner of the Department of Social Services, I pledge my personal support and commitment to the achievement of the goals and timetables set forth in our Affirmative Action Plan. This Department is committed to taking aggressive action to ensure that any and all forms of discrimination are not present in our workplace or our employment processes. As Commissioner, I expect my management and supervisory staff to treat compliance with the state's Affirmative Action statutes and the Department's Affirmative Action Plan and Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Policy Statement as a top priority. I will hold all managers and supervisors responsible for the successful implementation of the policies, procedures and goals stated in this plan and statement.

This Department's policy also mandates that employees at every level shall support, value and respect the advancement of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity principles in our workplace community.



Roderick L. Bremby
Commissioner
March 31, 2014