SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

MAY 14 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTIBUTION C
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SUBJECT: Air Force Equal Opportunity (EO) and Non-Discrimination Policy Memorandum

The welfare of our Airmen, military and civilian, is my most important priority, and I am fully committed to ensuring each Airman is provided the dignity and respect they so rightfully deserve. Air Force policy is simple: Unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment of any kind will not be tolerated or condoned by anyone. Additionally, at no time should any reprisal action be taken against any member or employee who participates in an EO process or discloses possible EO violations. Any Airmen, military or civilian who violates this policy may be subject to discipline.

Unlawful discrimination against civilian Airmen entails failing or refusing to hire or promote, discharging, or otherwise discriminating against any individual with respect to compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment because of a person's race, sex, color, religion, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, or prior EO activity. In the military equal opportunity context, discrimination is any unlawful action that denies equal opportunity to persons or groups based on their race, color, sex, national origin, or religion. Unlawful harassment includes creating an intimidating, hostile working environment for another person on any of the above stated bases. Unlawful sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, particularly when submission to such conduct is made directly or indirectly a term or condition of employment, or when an employment decision is based on the person's submission to or rejection of such conduct. Harassment may include sexual jokes and comments, sexual propositions, comments about a person's body parts, uninvited physical contact, and any sexual picture or statement communicated through computer systems or telephones. In addition, discrimination against civilian Airmen on the basis of sexual orientation is prohibited by Executive Order 13087 and may be grounds for discipline. Discrimination against military members on the basis of sexual orientation is inconsistent with Department of Defense and Air Force policy, and punishable under the UCMJ.

Commanders at all organizational levels will be held accountable for creating a workplace free of unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment and they will develop policies of their own that reinforce their support for Air Force equal opportunity policy and programs (consistent with AFPD 36-27, *Equal Opportunity* and AFI 36-2706, *Equal Opportunity Program, Military and Civilian*). It is the duty of each commander to: (1) ensure all Airmen, military and civilian, under their supervision are aware of this policy and know they should report violations, without fear of reprisal or retaliation; (2) ensure complaints are properly investigated; (3) take appropriate corrective action when a violation is found; and (4) provide

their local EO Office a written memorandum regarding EO issues worked within the unit, to include commander directed investigations. In order to facilitate healthy work and living environments, commanders shall conduct organizational climate assessments within 120 days after assuming command and at least annually thereafter while retaining command.

Workplace disputes should be resolved promptly and at the lowest possible level. Civilian Airmen who believe they have been subjected to unlawful discrimination or unlawful harassment must report it promptly to their supervisor or their local EO Office. Military Airmen who believe they have been subjected to unlawful discrimination or unlawful harassment should attempt resolution at the most appropriate level within the chain of command. If a superior, military or civilian, is alleged to have engaged in the offending conduct, the report should be made promptly to the next level or with the local EO Office. While Airmen generally cannot pursue claims of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation through the EEO or MEO process, such discrimination should still be reported to the supervisory chain and may result in discipline for the offenders. Reports of unlawful discrimination or harassment may also be made to the Air Force Discrimination Hotline at 1-888-231-4058 or the National Guard Bureau's EO Hotline at 703-607-5462 or 1-800-371-0617. The Air Force will protect the confidentiality of Airmen reporting unlawful discrimination and harassment to the greatest extent permitted by law. Failure to report, or any undue delay in reporting, may hinder the Air Force's ability to prevent or correct unlawful behavior.

The Air Force's greatest asset is our people. I expect all Airmen to maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct at home and abroad, and I will accept nothing less.

Deborah Lee James
Secretary of the Air Force