



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY
6700 TAYLOR AVENUE, SUITE 5902
FORT MEADE, MD 20755

March 20, 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY PERSONNEL

SUBJECT: Policy Memorandum #3 – Policy on Prevention of Workplace Harassment

To ensure a positive work environment we want every employee to understand the difference between culture and climate, and the effects of each upon the organization, component, unit, staff and team.

What is Culture? Culture is an organization's unique identity. It reflects the underlying assumptions about how the organization can be successful, based in early successes from the initial formation of the organization. These beliefs, values, and norms are often unspoken and removed from members' day-to-day awareness.

What is Climate? Organizational Climate stems from members' day-to-day experiences within the work environment and reflects members' shared perceptions of behaviors, practices and routines that are reinforced by coworkers and leadership.

It is the policy of Defense Media Activity (DMA) to provide employees with a work environment that is free from harassment. DMA personnel are responsible for acting professionally, not participating in harassing conduct, and promptly reporting such conduct. Every employee is responsible and accountable to act promptly to prevent and eliminate harassment in the workplace.

Although not every instance of inappropriate behavior may meet the legal definition of harassment, such behavior undermines morale and the Agency's mission. Harassment prohibited by this policy includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Any type of unwelcome conduct, epithets, slurs, stereotyping, intimidating acts, bullying, offensive jokes, and the circulation or posting of written or graphic materials that show hostility toward individuals.
- Acts of physical violence and implied or veiled threats of violence. Any form or manner of threatening or provoking remarks or threatening gestures in the workplace are prohibited.
- Offensive comments, pornographic images, or off-putting pictures or objects that interfere with an employee's ability to do their work.
- Other conduct that, while not unlawful, nonetheless violates the duty to treat others with dignity and respect. Examples include situations in which an individual is subject to unfair treatment that is not based upon a legally protected class, but upon some other

basis such as a personality conflict, disagreements, favoring other individuals without valid reasons, hazing, or in some extreme cases, poor leadership methods.

Harassment that is not based on a legally protected class must meet the standards in the above paragraphs to be considered a violation of this policy. Behavior that is unwelcome or offensive to a reasonable person and that interferes with work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment is prohibited.

All allegations of harassment must be evaluated under the totality of the circumstances, to include an assessment of the nature of the conduct and the context in which the conduct occurred. In some circumstances, a single incident of harassing behavior is prohibited harassment whereas, in other circumstances, repeated or recurring harassing behavior may be required to constitute prohibited harassment.

Employees may experience the effects of harassment when they are not the target of the harasser because of the negative work environment that may develop due to the harassment.

An individual who has witnessed harassment or believes he or she has been the target of harassment is encouraged to inform the offending person orally or in writing that such conduct is unwelcome, offensive and must stop. If he or she does not wish to communicate directly with the offending person, or if such communication has been ineffective, the matter should be reported to anyone in the supervisory chain of command/authority or to the DMA Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) office at (301) 222-6752, DSN 733-4752 or dma.meade.hqdma.mbx.dma-eeo@mail.mil.

Reports of harassment are fully kept confidential as possible in compliance with EEO regulations, as applicable, and the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended by Title 5, United States Code, Section 552a. Employees are protected from retaliation by Federal anti-discrimination laws. This includes employees who are reporting harassment or assisting another individual in reporting harassment, participating in a harassment inquiry report, or opposing any forms of discrimination or harassment.

Supervisors who observe, are informed of, or reasonably suspect incidents of possible harassment must immediately report such incidents to the Chief Operating Officer (COO) at dma.meade.hqdma.mbx.dma-management-activities-inquiries@mail.mil for an internal inquiry to begin within 10 days.

Failure to do so will be considered a violation of this policy and may result in disciplinary action. Upon receipt of a complaint, the COO (per the DMA Management Inquiry process), will determine if the harassment is based on EEO or other factors and either refer the complaint to EEO or coordinate the assignment of an investigator to conduct a prompt, thorough, and impartial management inquiry of the initial harassment allegation, and collaborate with the appropriate officials ensuring a decision is reached and, if necessary, take corrective action(s) within 60 days of receipt of the harassment complaint.

Supervisors should take effective measures to ensure no further apparent or alleged harassment occurs pending completion of an investigation, to include providing interim relief if appropriate. Information provided to officials will remain confidential to the extent possible and retaliatory action against an employee who raises a claim of harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

Where allegations of harassment are substantiated, supervisors and managers must take immediate and appropriate corrective and disciplinary actions, up to and including removal. DMA personnel who know or should know of unlawful harassment but fail to report or stop the behavior will be subject to appropriate discipline.

The internal inquiry is a management responsibility and is not part of the EEO complaint process. Any employee who desires to initiate an EEO complaint alleging harassment must contact an EEO counselor or the DMA EEO office at (301) 222-6752, DSN 733-4752 or dma.meade.hqdma.mbx.dma-eeo@mail.mil, within 45 calendar days of the date of the alleged harassment. A management inquiry does not impact the EEO time requirement. Therefore, employees may not wait until after an inquiry is conducted to enter the EEO process.

This memorandum replaces “Policy Memorandum #4 - Policy on Prevention of Workplace Harassment,” June 4, 2024, which is hereby canceled.

Max D. Lederer, Jr.
Acting Director