

## Equal Opportunity Office

### Leaders Guide to Equal Opportunity

<p>Equal Opportunity is a combat multiplier. All leaders are bound by regulation to treat all soldiers with dignity and respect (AR 600-20, Chapter 6).</p> <p>This pamphlet serves as a guide to help leaders in identifying and addressing potential instances of discrimination based on the six tenets of Equal Opportunity; discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender, and Sexual Harassment.</p> <p>This guide serves to assist leaders in addressing potential distractors in the accomplishment of the mission, and in maintaining moral, cohesion, and discipline in their units.</p> <p>Questions pertaining to more serious Equal Opportunity matters should be addressed through the chain of command, or referred to your unit Equal Opportunity Representative or Brigade EO Advisor. The contact number for your EO Advisor is located at the end of this pamphlet.</p> <p>The following explains, in brief, the types of EO factors that a leader may be faced with. This is a general review and should be used in conjunction with unit training and EO doctrine:</p>
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### Handling EO Issues and Complaints

Issues should be addressed by the leaders as they occur. It is this rapid response to soldier's concerns that strengthens the confidence in the chain of command.

#### Leaders should:

- immediately address issues with their soldiers. Open dialogue to get to the root of the problem.
- Include unit EO Representatives in the conflict resolution process.
- Present concerns to the chain of command for their support and guidance.
- Seek guidance and assistance from the Brigade EO Advisor.

The intent is to resolve issues at the lowest level. Informal complaints should be quickly addressed and resolved. Formal complaint procedures can be found in Appendix E of AR 600-20.

#### EO Phone Numbers:

Your EO Advisor is:

### Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is defined as:

- **Unwelcome** sexual advances or requests for sex.
- Making sex a condition of a soldiers career advancement, pay, or receiving any of the benefits guaranteed them, regardless if the soldier submits to or rejects the sexual proposal.
- Any conduct of a sexual nature, physical or not, direct or indirect, that has the potential of interfering with a soldier's duties and the successful completion of their duties and can create a "hostile work environment." This includes conversations about sex, sexually explicit materials, pinup posters in the work area, sexually explicit screensavers or backgrounds, etc.
- Examples include: Catcalls, reference to body parts with sexual undertones, blocking, blowing kisses, references about "how good one looks", extended staring or glares, etc.

The Army has a "Zero Tolerance" policy with regards to Sexual Harassment. It is the responsibility of every soldier, NCO, and Officer to identify, address, and eradicate Sexual Harassment in the unit.

Any member of the chain of command found to have knowledge of, condone, or participate in acts of Sexual Harassment are subject to administrative or judiciary actions.

### Race, Color, and National Origin:

Racial discrimination can include things such as bad mouthing particular races, the telling of ethnic or racial jokes, or negative references to people based on their race. Treating soldiers unfairly based on race is not conducive to good order and discipline.

Color and national origin often times go hand in hand with racial discrimination.

- discrimination of color can happen by members of the same group.
  - National origin addresses soldiers who were not born in the United States.
- A leader must understand that the same types of discriminatory practices as stated above are also included when addressing discrimination based on color or national origin.

Leaders and soldiers must be aware of their behavior and conduct when addressing each other, or talking about others. Labeling based on these three tenets of discrimination is all too common a “slip” of the tongue, and must be addressed immediately.

Often times, as sections grow closer, the personnel get comfortable in their day to day interaction. This is great for morale, but leaders must be aware of negative behavior, and address it.

### Race, Color, and National Origin:

Racial discrimination can include things

Leaders should demonstrate the most appropriate conduct and behavior for their soldiers to emulate.

Leaders must make every attempt to ensure they and their soldiers take special care in not making derogatory comments about others, or perpetuating stereotypes about others.

### Gender Discrimination:

The bias treatment of men and women in the Army is a problem that must not be allowed to flourish. With the exception of policy with regards to the treatment of men and women, leaders should take special care not to discriminate against males or females.

Examples:

- Women are only allowed in the orderly rooms, not in the motor pool and are not allowed “heavy duties.”

- Males must supervise females, and if a female is present for counseling, another male or female must be present.

Gender discrimination is not as wide spread as other discrimination, but it still exists. Leaders must remember to allow all soldiers under their care and command to excel to the best of their abilities.

One important note to remember, Gender discrimination should not be confused with Sexual Harassment. They are not the same.

### Religious Discrimination:

**Religious discrimination** is defined as:

- The unequal treatment of soldiers based on religion, religious practices, or beliefs.

**AR 600-20, Chapter 5, para 5-6** covers in great detail religious accommodations.

Leaders must be aware that spiritual needs and fulfillment are essential to unit moral and cohesion. However, discriminating against soldiers based on religious beliefs undermines the effectiveness of a unit. Some discriminatory practices include:

- not allowing soldiers to worship during non-traditional worship periods (Sunday vs. Saturday or evening worship).

- Dietary considerations, such as not allowing for special meals, vegetarian or Kosher MIRE's, etc.

- Derogatory remarks about any religion or religious practice, regardless of the type, against soldiers.

Soldiers must also understand that they must request specific accommodations through the chain of command, and that mission will dictate if the request can be approved.

Leaders should, whenever possible, accommodate the spiritual or religious needs of their soldiers, even if the needs are different than those of the leader and others in the unit. In doing so, the leader strengthens the faith of soldiers in the chain of command.