



Research, Education, and Economics
Agricultural Research Service

March 3, 2016

SUBJECT: Anti-Harassment Policy Statement

TO: All NEA Employees

FROM: Dariusz Swietlik, Director
Northeast Area

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dariusz Swietlik". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

As the Northeast Area Director, I am personally committed to developing and maintaining a diverse workforce by recognizing and embracing employee diversity and by encouraging each individual's perspective and ideas.

The Northeast Area is fully committed to a workplace free of harassment including sexual harassment for all employees, contractors, constituents, stakeholders, and applicants without regard to race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity and expression), age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, marital or familial status, parental status, or protected genetic information.

Each Director, Manager, and Supervisor has personal obligations and accountability to ensure that the workplace is free from harassment including bullying, epithets, slurs, intimidation, and any other form of discrimination. Discrimination of any form will not be tolerated and every member of this organization must be held accountable. Communication regarding the early awareness and resolution of complaints must be addressed and handled appropriately.

Harassment is unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, and/or age. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It is unlawful to harass a person (an applicant or employee) because of that person's sex. Harassment can include "sexual harassment" or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature.

Harassment does not have to be of a sexual nature, however, and can include offensive remarks about a person's sex. For example, it is illegal to harass a woman by making offensive comments about women in general.

Both victim and the harasser can be either a woman or a man, and the victim and harasser can be the same sex.

It is imperative that the Northeast Area's work environment is supportive to the rights of all employees. We must embrace diversity and appreciate the differences that each of us brings to the workplace. If an employee believes that he/she has been discriminated against and wishes to file an EEO complaint, contact the Office of Outreach, Diversity and Equal Opportunity (ODEO) at (202) 720-3410 or (800) 340-4289. Additional information related to EEO is located on the ODEO website at <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ODEO/>.

This policy is my personal commitment to assuring that the Northeast Area is free of harassment and sexual harassment for all employees. I am asking that this policy statement be posted in all work areas to ensure that the Northeast Area workforce is aware of and promotes a harassment-free workplace.