



# DISCRIMINATION

“Education is important because, first of all, people need to know that discrimination still exists. It is still real in the workplace, and we should not take that for granted.”

Alexis Herman

23rd U.S. Secretary of Labor

# Introduction

Discrimination means treating some people differently from others. Discrimination is not only wrong, but it endangers our society as a whole. When we make distinctions solely based on gender, color, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age and not by their performance abilities, we inevitably prepare ourselves and our organizations for failure.

# Overview

- Define Discrimination
- Identify Types of Discrimination
- How Discrimination is measured on the DEOCS
- Discuss Favorable Impacts of Discrimination
- Unfavorable Impacts of Discrimination
- Strategies to Decrease Discrimination
- Summary

# Discrimination

DEOCS description: A perception that military members or employees of the organization are denied equal opportunity or are a victim of an unfair employment practice by virtue of their race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, etc.

# Types of Discrimination

**Age Discrimination** - Age discrimination involves treating an applicant or employee less favorably because of his or her age. Discrimination can occur when the victim and the person who inflicted the discrimination are both 40 or older.

<https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/age.cfm>

**Disability Discrimination** - Disability discrimination occurs when an employer or other entity covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, or the Rehabilitation Act, as amended, treats a qualified individual with a disability who is an employee or applicant unfavorably because she has a disability.

<https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/age.cfm>

**National Origin Discrimination** - National origin discrimination involves treating people (applicants or employees) unfavorably because they are from a particular country or part of the world, because of ethnicity or accent, or because they appear to be of a certain ethnic background (even if they are not).

<https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/publications/fs-nator.cfm>

# Types of Discrimination

- **Race/Color Discrimination** - Race discrimination involves treating someone (an applicant or employee) unfavorably because he/she is of a certain race or because of personal characteristics associated with race (such as hair texture, skin color, or certain facial features). Color discrimination involves treating someone unfavorably because of skin color complexion.
- Race/color discrimination also can involve treating someone unfavorably because the person is married to (or associated with) a person of a certain race or color. Discrimination can occur when the victim and the person who inflicted the discrimination are the same race or color. [https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/race\\_color.cfm](https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/race_color.cfm)

# Types of Discrimination (Cont.)

**Religious Discrimination** - Religious discrimination involves treating a person (an applicant or employee) unfavorably because of his or her religious beliefs. The law protects not only people who belong to traditional, organized religions, such as Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism, but also others who have sincerely held religious, ethical or moral beliefs. <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/age.cfm>

**Sex-Based Discrimination** - Sex discrimination involves treating someone unfavorably because of that person's sex. Discrimination against an individual because of gender identity, including transgender status, or because of sexual orientation is discrimination because of sex in violation of Title VII. For more information about LGBT-related sex discrimination claims, for more information see: [http://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/wysk/enforcement\\_protections\\_lgbt\\_workers.cfm](http://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/wysk/enforcement_protections_lgbt_workers.cfm)

# Types of Discrimination (Cont.)

**Harassment** - Harassment is unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information. Harassment becomes unlawful where 1) enduring the offensive conduct becomes a condition of continued employment, or 2) the conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create an environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive. Harassment does not have to be of a sexual nature, however, and can include offensive remarks about a person's sex.

<https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/harassment.cfm>

# How Discrimination is measured on the DEOCS:

## 1. Discrimination based on \_\_\_\_\_ does not occur in my workplace.

- a. Race/Color/National Origin
- b. Religion
- c. Sex
- d. Sexual Orientation
- e. Age (Civilian Only)
- f. Disability (Civilian Only)
- g. Equal Pay (Civilian Only)
- h. Genetic Information (Civilian Only)
- i. Pregnancy (Civilian Only)

# How Discrimination is measured on the DEOCS: (Cont.)

**2. Racial slurs, comments, and/or jokes are used in my workplace.**

**3. Sexist slurs, comments, and/or jokes are used in my workplace.**

**4. I believe I can use my chain of command/supervision to address concerns about discrimination without fear of retaliation/reprisal.**

# Impacts of Non-Discrimination

## **Favorable impacts of the perception that discrimination is not occurring**

- It increases perceptions that all members are treated respectfully, fairly, and equitably
- Decisions are made based on merit and performance
- Members of all demographics are recruited, hired, retained, and promoted without preferential treatment

# Impacts of Discrimination

## **Unfavorable impacts of the perception that discrimination is occurring**

- Qualified individuals not being afforded the same opportunities for promotion, advancement, training, etc.
- Lack of diversity in key positions within the unit
- Demeaning jokes being told, stereotypes being perpetuated, questioning of specific group's values, etc.
- Contributions of a certain group are discounted or minimized

# Strategies

## **Educate members on different group cultures**

- Invite local minority leaders to discuss the historical background of discrimination towards their group (race, religion, national origin, gender)
- Frequently offer different types of cultural events to raise awareness
- Arrange a group outing to an event, show, or cultural site to learn about a group first hand
- Provide cultural-competence training to members to increase open-mindedness and cultural awareness

# Strategies (Cont.)

## **Examine strategies to address discrimination and decrease discomfort**

- Encourage perspective taking and role play in an open and safe environment
- Educate members on how stereotyping and social categorization influence attitudes and behavior
- Train members on how to recognize discrimination; and intervention strategies if observed

# Strategies (Cont.)

## **Create a unit climate where members feel comfortable informing leadership of discrimination**

- Provide anonymous channels to submit complaints
- Ensure members are assessed based on their knowledge, skills, abilities/attitudes
- Investigate allegations of discrimination in a timely manner
- Limit information about allegations to only those who are involved or need to know

# Summary

No one should be made to feel embarrassed, ashamed or inadequate based on their race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, etc. Choices about how we treat people can be based on prejudices, stereotypes and bias'. Our choices should be based on how we would want to be treated, with dignity and respect.