



To: All University Faculty, Staff, and Union Representatives

From: Letissa C. Reid, J.D., Associate Vice President, Office of Institutional Equity

Date: February 21, 2023

Subject: Affirmative Action Plan Update and Distribution of Policy Statements

The University of Connecticut's 2022 Affirmative Action Plan for Employment (*Plan*) was approved by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities on June 8, 2022. The *Plan* reports the University's good faith efforts towards diversifying the workforce of the University, attaining goals, and achieving equal employment opportunity.

All employees are invited to review and comment on the 2022 *Plan* until February 28, 2023. A copy of the *Plan* is available for review and comments in the following locations:

- [The Office of Institutional Equity \(OIE\)](#)  
Wood Hall, 241 Glenbrook Road  
Storrs, CT 06269
- [The Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities \(CHRO\)](#)  
450 Columbus Boulevard  
Hartford, CT 06103

All comments or questions are welcome and may be sent to:

[Letissa C. Reid, J. D.](#)

Associate Vice President  
Office of Institutional Equity  
Wood Hall, Unit Box 4175  
241 Glenbrook Road  
Storrs, CT 06269-4175  
860-486-2943

The following policies and procedures have been included in the *Plan*, distributed to every employee through OIE's webpage and the University's policy website, and posted throughout the University:

- [Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity](#)
- [Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Related Interpersonal Violence](#)
- [Policy Statement: People with Disabilities](#)
- [University of Connecticut Discrimination Complaint Procedures](#)

## **Policy Posting Obligation**

As in previous years, OIE will satisfy the statutory requirement of policy distribution to employees via this notification and mail distribution as necessary. Additionally, policies will be posted in visible locations throughout the University.

## **Employee Demographic Data**

As a federal contractor, the University is required to annually report demographic data about the workforce, which includes disability and veteran data. To ensure the most accurate demographic profile of the current employee population is reported, all employees are requested to voluntarily provide their demographic information including race/ethnicity, gender, disability, and veteran status.

In January 2022, to fulfill the University's compliance obligation to periodically provide an opportunity for employees to update their demographic information OIE, in collaboration with the Office of Human Resources, invited employees to voluntarily update race/ethnicity, veteran status and disability status. Employees can update their demographic data, at any time, in [the Core-CT Self-Service System \(ess.uconn.edu\)](https://ess.uconn.edu) in the Personal Information Section. Detailed instructions can be found at [Personal Information Job Aid](#). All demographic information is kept confidential and only used in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, used for federal and state aggregate reporting only, and does not affect current employment status.

## **Recruitment, Compliance, and Diversification**

As a federal contractor and state agency, the University's recruiting and hiring activities are audited regularly by government enforcement and other external units. Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, Department Heads, Hiring Managers, and Search Committee Chairs are accountable for ensuring compliance with state and federal regulations and record-keeping requirements concerning recruitment and applicant evaluation activities, and progressive and proactive recruitment programs.

To assist search committees and hiring departments, OIE is available for consultation about the search process, compliance obligations, best practices in building diverse pools of qualified applicants, and objective evaluation techniques.

## **Compliance Obligations for Searches**

Training: Search committee members are required to complete search committee training before serving on a committee. OIE facilitates training workshops providing information about conducting an AA/EEO compliant search and hiring process. Search Committee Training is currently available as a web-based training course. Search committee training status is verified prior to interview approval of all searches. To enroll in a training session please visit OIE's [website](#).

OIE Search Review: The Employment Equity staff in OIE substantively reviews search files for faculty and staff (classified and unclassified) at the pre-interview and pre-offer stages of the search process for compliance with AA/EEO regulations. At the pre-interview stage, the review ensures that proactive recruitment strategies were implemented by search committees and hiring departments. Additionally, the review ensures that disposition reasons for applicant ranking are qualification related, objective, and specific. Following a recommendation from the Commission on Human Rights in the Affirmative Action Plan evaluation, staff is working to ensure that applicant evaluations at all phases of the search include more detailed explanations of the committee's qualification-based reasoning for rejecting and selecting applicants for interview or hire.

### **Diversity and Sexual Harassment Prevention Training**

OIE, in partnership with ODI, offers state-mandated instructor-led Diversity Awareness Training and Sexual Harassment Prevention Training via WebEx monthly. Additionally, Sexual Harassment Prevention Training is offered as a self-paced fully online course that can be accessed by logging into [Learning at Work](#). Both trainings are required for all University and UConn Health employees within 6 months of hire and graduate assistants within their first semester as assistants. For further information, please visit OIE's [website](#).

### **Discrimination Complaint Management**

OIE's Staff investigators are responsible for addressing concerns regarding employee conduct pursuant to UConn's [non-discrimination policies](#). These policies are constructed to provide the same or similar protections as those contained in state and federal law and regulation regarding discrimination and discriminatory harassment. OIE is responsible for reviewing, and where applicable, objectively investigating complaints of discrimination and harassment to determine if employee conduct violates the University's non-discrimination policies and making recommendations that are designed to mitigate the effects of discriminatory conduct.

OIE also assists with developing and implementing the University's non-discrimination and affirmative action policies, procedures, and programs and offers information, consultation, and training to the University community on these areas of focus.

Additional information about reporting discrimination and [OIE's complaint process](#) can be found online at [www.equity.uconn.edu](http://www.equity.uconn.edu). If you have a specific question or need further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact a member of OIE at (860) 486-2943 or by email at [equity@uconn.edu](mailto:equity@uconn.edu).

### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance Activities**

OIE monitors the University's compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. In this regard, OIE is responsible for resolving allegations of discrimination based on disability; ensuring University compliance with all laws and regulations related to the ADA; and providing consultation,

information, and referral to appropriate resources for disability-related issues. More information can be found online at [www.accessibility.uconn.edu](http://www.accessibility.uconn.edu) or by contacting OIE at (860) 486-2943 or by email at [equity@uconn.edu](mailto:equity@uconn.edu).

The Department of Human Resources processes and facilitates requests for employee workplace accommodations. If you believe that you may need an accommodation, or if you are a supervisor or manager who has been presented with an employee request for an accommodation, please contact the ADA Case Manager at (860) 486-2036 or via email at [ryan.bangham@uconn.edu](mailto:ryan.bangham@uconn.edu).