

The Office of Equal Employment Services

The Office of Equal Employment Services (OEES), within the Department of Human Resource Management, enforces the Governor's Executive Order, which prohibits discrimination against state government employees and applicants for state government employment. All individuals shall be afforded an equal employment opportunity without regard to race, gender (including sexual harassment sexual orientation, gender identity and pregnancy), color, national origin, religion, age, veteran's status, political affiliation, or disability. The Executive Order also prohibits retaliation against those persons filing a complaint or persons participating in the investigation of a complaint. Also, the OEES enforces Title II of the Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act (GINA) which prohibits the use of genetic information in making decisions related to any terms, conditions, or privileges of employment.

Consultation

Individuals seeking confidential advice on discrimination issues may call the OEES at (800) 533-1414 or (804) 2252136 to speak with a State EEO Specialist between 8:15am and 5:00pm weekdays. Messages may be left after regular work hours. The Specialist will:

- Listen to your concerns.
- Explain the relevant employment laws and state policies.
- Advise you on your options for resolving your concerns.
- Refer you to other state and federal agencies for assistance, if necessary.
- Explain how to file a complaint with OEES.

Filing a Complaint

- State government employees and applicants for state government employment may file a Discrimination Complaint on-line or print and complete a form with OEES within 180 days of the last alleged discriminatory act.
- Attach any supporting documentation, including the Witness Identification Form.
- The Complaint Form may be sent by mail, fax or electronically at the contact information shown below.
- OEES will promptly notify you in writing whether your complaint has been accepted for investigation.

Contact Information for OEES

(800) 533-1414 Toll Free
(804) 225-2136 Richmond Area
For 1TYITDD users, please call thru Relay 711
(804) 371-7401 Fax
Internet Address:
www.dhrm.virginia.gov/employeerelations.html

Mailing Address:
Department of Human Resource Management
Office of Equal Employment Services
101 North 14th Street, 12th Floor
Richmond, VA 23219

Investigation

OEES conducts comprehensive investigations of allegations of discrimination. Once a complaint has been accepted, it will be assigned to a Specialist to investigate. OEES will:

- Conduct a thorough investigation and keep you advised of the progress of your case.
- Request documentation from the agency.
- Interview witnesses.
- Conduct an on-site investigation, if necessary.
- Upon completion of the investigatory process, both you and the agency will be forwarded a letter regarding the findings.
- Seek appropriate remedy if discrimination is found to have occurred.
- Efforts will be made to complete an investigation within 120 days of it being assigned to an investigator, pending staff resources.

Certain cases may be suitable for mediation

Some cases may be selected for resolution through mediation rather than having a full investigation conducted. While an individual may seek to mediate his complaint, not all cases will be suitable for this process; OEES will determine whether or not it is appropriate. Mediation may be ideal because:

- It allows the complainant and the respondent to take ownership of the outcome.
- Participation is voluntary. An individual can always choose to have an investigation conducted instead.
- A mediator facilitates communication among the participants and helps them express their issues and provides a safe and positive environment in which do so.
- Everything that takes place in a mediation session is confidential.
- Most cases are resolved within 30 days, saving time and resources.