1. It is the policy of the VA Palo Alto Health Care System (VAPAHCS) to provide equal opportunity in employment for all employees and applicants for employment regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information or parental status. It is the policy of VAPAHCS to maintain a work environment that is free of any form of unlawful discrimination, including all forms of workplace harassment (both sexual and non-sexual). Equal opportunity covers all personnel/employment programs, management practices, and decisions including, but not limited to, recruitment/hiring, merit promotion, transfer, reassignments, training and career development, benefits, and separations. Discrimination against employees based on protected genetic information, or on information about a request for or the receipt of, genetic services is prohibited. No individual on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identification, genetic information or parental status shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in a federally conducted education, training program or activity. Any federally conducted programs or activities operated with VA funds will comply with established Limited English Proficiency (LEP) guidance. All employees will be provided prompt, fair, and impartial review and adjudication of complaints involving issues of employment discrimination.

2. Complaints of discrimination must be brought to the attention of an Office of Resolution Management’s (ORM) EEO Counselor within 45 calendar days of the date of occurrence of the alleged act of discrimination by calling 1(888)-737-3361 (1-888-737-EE01). Procedures for initiating and processing individual complaints of discrimination may also be discussed with an ORM EEO Counselor, or with the VAPAHCS EEO Program Manager.

3. VAPAHCS is committed to compliance with the ORM’s procedures for processing complaints of harassment through the Anti-Harassment Office (AHO), in order to ensure that immediate and appropriate corrective actions are taken to eliminate harassing conduct regardless of whether the conduct violated the law or whether an employee pursues an EEO complaint. Matters can be reported to an individual's immediate supervisor or second-line supervisor, the VAPAHCS Anti-Harassment
Coordinator (AHC), or the AHO through the ORM’s Resolution Support Center (RSC) by calling 1(888) 566-3982. Veterans, applicants, federal and non-federal employees can call the AHO through the RSC 1-888-566-3982. A RSC Specialist will help callers determine if harassment allegations are covered by VA’s anti-harassment policy and procedures, and whether any other avenues exist to address the concerns.

4. VAPAHCS will promote a positive, continuing affirmative program designed to proactively prevent harassment or discrimination, eradicate barriers to employment to achieve a representative workforce, with special emphasis on minorities, women, disabled individuals, and disabled Veterans. Reprisal against one who engages in protected activity will not be tolerated, and VAPAHCS supports the rights of all employees to exercise their rights under civil rights statutes.

5. Supervisors and managers are reminded of the importance of our EEO responsibilities. These responsibilities have been incorporated into the VAPAHCS performance appraisal system, strategic plan, and are re-emphasized through administrative staff meetings and supervisory training programs.

6. VAPAHCS is committed to complying with The Equal Employment Opportunity, Diversity and Inclusion, No FEAR, and Whistleblower Rights and Protection Policy Statement. A summary of these policies are outlined in Attachment A. Questions may be directed to Beth Stovall, EEO Program Manager/ Anti-Harassment Coordinator, at extension 65113.

Thomas J. Fitzgerald, III
Interim Director

Attachment

This bulletin is automatically rescinded on July 31, 2017.