



Colleagues,

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency attracts highly skilled and motivated staff who are dedicated to our shared mission of protecting human health and the environment. EPA employees deserve – and should expect – a workplace that is free of harassment. It has been the EPA's longstanding policy that harassment of any kind will not be tolerated in the workplace, and I am reaffirming this important policy with this memorandum.

Harassment based on race; color; religion; sex, including pregnancy, gender stereotyping, gender identity, gender expression or transgender status; national origin; sexual orientation; disability; age; protected genetic information; status as a parent; marital status; political affiliation or prior protected Equal Employment Opportunity activity is prohibited. In addition, the EPA will not tolerate other types of harassment based on conduct that is threatening, intimidating, and/or bullying.

EPA Order 4711, Procedure for Addressing Allegations of Workplace Harassment¹, provides detailed information about the EPA's administrative process for reporting, promptly inquiring and, as needed, taking immediate and appropriate action to address complaints of harassment. Employees should report harassment of any kind to their first-line supervisor immediately. If the first-line supervisor is the alleged harasser, the harassment should be reported to the second-line supervisor in his or her chain of command, a higher-level supervisor or to an EPA human resources official. Employees should know that they will not be retaliated against based on their participation in the complaint process identified in EPA Order 4711 and that complaints of harassment are kept confidential to the extent possible.

I expect all Assistant Administrators, Associate Administrators, Regional Administrators, their deputies and other senior managers to be familiar with the procedures outlined in EPA Order 4711. I also expect that all individuals working at the EPA – employees, supervisors and non-employees – will not engage in or be subjected to unlawful and prohibited harassment.

Although the procedures in EPA Order 4711 are separate and independent of the EEO process, EPA employees may also use the EEO discrimination complaint process to file a complaint of harassment based on protected EEO classes or activities. To invoke the EEO process, EPA employees must contact an EEO counselor within 45 calendar days of an alleged incident of harassment. Should you have any questions related to the EEO complaint process, please contact the EPA Office of Civil Rights at (202) 564-7272.

A number of resources are available for employees who have concerns about potential workplace harassment or who want to learn more about the EPA's anti-harassment policy and procedures. A 30-minute training video is available on the Skillport electronic training system (search for: Anti-Harassment Procedures Training for EPA Employees). For questions about EPA Order 4711, the EPA Office of Human Resources is available at (202) 564-4606.

Thank you for your commitment to ensuring the EPA workplace is free of unlawful and prohibited harassment.

Andrew R. Wheeler
Acting Administrator

¹ EPA issued Order 4711 in 2015 and it is available at
<http://intranet.epa.gov/ohr/rmpolicy/ads/orders/order-4711.pdf>