



MDMR STATEMENT REGARDING DISCRIMINATION, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN EMPLOYMENT, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

The MDMR is an equal opportunity employer and provider of programs and services. It is the policy of the MDMR that an individual's political affiliation, race, color, handicap, religion, religious creed, sex, national origin (including language), disability, age or genetic information will not be considered in personnel or management decision. The fundamental goal of the MDMR is to provide a workplace that is free of any form of discrimination.

The MDMR is committed to a zero-tolerance policy of any and all discriminatory practices, including language practices. Any employee who practices discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action.

COMPLAINT FILING PROCEDURES:

Any applicant, employee, or program recipient who is aware of any discriminatory practices and/or harassment, should file a complaint promptly as set forth below:

1. Complaints will be submitted in writing via the Discrimination Complaint Form (attached) to the MDMR Executive Director, except when the alleged violator is the MDMR Executive Director, whereas complaints will be submitted to the Executive Director of the Mississippi State Personnel Board (statepersonneldirector@mspb.ms.gov) for proper processing in accordance with the Mississippi State Employee Handbook. Complaints made by or on behalf of the complainant(s) must be signed by the complainant(s). A formal complaint should be filed within 30 days of the alleged occurrence when possible, but no later than 90 days after the alleged occurrence.
2. Prior to any formal compliance review or investigation by MDMR staff, the complaint must be in a written format that identifies the specific allegation. The written allegation statement must include the following:
 - a. Date of the alleged discrimination; or, date the complainant became aware of the alleged discrimination; or, the date on which the conduct was discontinued or the latest instance of the conduct.
 - b. A detailed description of the issues, including the names and job titles of those individuals perceived as parties in the complained of incident, and the applicable program or activity that the alleged act of discrimination is regarding.
 - c. Whether the alleged act of discrimination is based on race, color, national origin, disability, age, or sex, or other federally protected class.
 - d. The written allegation statement must be signed by the complainant.

3. Individuals needing assistance in filing a complaint may contact the Director of Internal Affairs to obtain information about how to file a complaint in an alternative format or other languages. The contact information is:

Glen Terrell, Internal Affairs Director
Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, MS 39530
4. All written complaints of discrimination will be referred as a matter of routine procedure to MDMR's legal counsel.
5. Within fifteen (15) working days of receipt of a written complaint, the complainant(s) will be provided written acknowledgment that the complaint has been received. Complainants will also be made aware of their right to file a complaint with the appropriate federal assistance agency in accordance with that federal agency's regulations.
6. The Internal Affairs Director will contact appropriate MDMR staff who will be given subsequent steps to investigate or resolve the complaint after consultation with the appropriate department and Legal Counsel.
7. All complaints and subsequent related documents will be added to the files maintained by the Internal Affairs Office.
8. All applicants and/or contractors that are the subject of an ADA written complaint shall be notified in writing by the MDMR Executive Director at the time that the complainant receives the acknowledgment referenced in #5 above.
9. Failure of the complainants to cooperate in the filing, investigation and/or resolution of a complaint will be considered cause for the MDMR to issue a determination that further investigation is not supported by the available information; and shall be considered basis for a finding of probable non-compliance.
10. Within forty-five (45) days of the receipt of a written complaint, the complainant(s) will receive a written notice of action taken on all complaints as a status report. Such a notification is to include:
 - a. Identification of any referrals to legal counsel or other affected parties
 - b. Status of the MDMR's review or investigation
 - c. Request(s) for any additional information

Complaint Review Report. A written complaint review report will be prepared by the Internal Affairs Director for review by the MDMR Executive Director, Legal Counsel, and Human Resource Director as appropriate. This report will be used as the basis of finding(s) or determination(s) and may be used to report non-compliance findings.

Moreover, MDMR will establish and maintain an internal manual and computerized tracking system for all filed ADA complaints.


MDMR Executive Director

3-27-2024
Date



MDMR DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT FORM

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) is committed to providing a discrimination free environment. If you feel you have been a victim of discrimination, including unlawful harassment, please complete the following information and forward this form in a sealed envelope marked "Confidential" to the MDMR Title VI Civil Rights Act Coordinator **within 30 days** of alleged discrimination incident when possible, **but no later than 90 days** of alleged discrimination.

Please Print:

Name: _____ Date: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Date of Discriminatory Act: _____

Basis of Discrimination or Harassment. Mark the applicable box(es):

- ☐ Race ☐ Color ☐ Sex ☐ Religion ☐ National Origin ☐ Age ☐ Disability
☐ Genetic Information ☐ Veteran

Event(s) Leading to this Complaint: (Specify relevant dates, times, location(s) and pertinent activities/events):

(Use the back of this form or additional paper to continue if more space is required)

Signature of person filing the complaint

Date

Your complaint **will** be carefully reviewed, and a determination made regarding the need for an investigation. Thank you for providing the Department with an opportunity to promote a work environment free from discrimination. The agency will make every effort to resolve the complaint within 45 days of receipt. You will be periodically notified of the status of your complaint.

Return To: Joe Spraggins, Executive Director, Title VI Civil Rights Act Coordinator
Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, MS 39530

If Complaint is in reference to the Executive Director, submit your complaint to Glen Terrell, Internal Affairs Director, MDMR, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi MS 39560