



Commanding Officer, Headquarters and Support Battalion Equal Opportunity Statement



"We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men [and Women] are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness...."

-- The Declaration of Independence

Equality amongst the ranks is "self-evident" and non-negotiable within Headquarters and Support Battalion, within the Marine Corps, and within the Department of Defense. As such, this command will ensure equality of treatment and the opportunity for all personnel assigned to achieve their full potential based solely on character, competence, and contribution. Every member of this command is obligated to exercise fairness. Discrimination and sexual harassment will not be tolerated. To be clear, the definitions of discrimination and sexual harassment are:

- Discrimination is an act, policy or procedure denying a person or group equal opportunity based on color, age, sex, race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, physical or mental health disability.

- Sexual Harassment is a form of discrimination involving unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that, explicitly or implicitly, is a condition of a person's employment, position, pay or career advancement; or, unreasonably interferes with a person's work performance, or creates either an unprofessional, intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Any member of the command exposed to inappropriate, or perceived inappropriate, discriminatory behavior has the opportunity to seek redress, either formally or informally. Overall, the method of redress is the choice of the complainant alone and will not be influenced by command personnel. The Informal Resolution System (IRS) allows a Marine or Sailor the opportunity to address the issue at the lowest level possible. A command Equal Opportunity Representative (EOR) can assist any Marine or Sailor through this process. Issues that cannot be resolved with the IRS can be addressed formally through request mast or EOR referral to the Equal Opportunity Advisor. All equal opportunity complaints are protected communications to be handled in accordance with the Privacy Act and by only personnel with a need to know. All complaints will be reported immediately to the Battalion Commander. Outsiders who observe discrimination or sexual harassment have an obligation to address, correct, and report such incidents to the chain of the command.

Discrimination and sexual harassment are criminal offenses punishable under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). Appropriate actions for substantiated violations includes, but are not limited to, counseling, non-punitive letter of caution, security clearance revocation, adverse fitness report, nonjudicial punishment, court-martial, and administrative separation from service. Willfully submitting false allegations of discrimination or sexual harassment are considered false official statements and are also punishable under the UCMJ.

For more information, contact the Headquarters and Support Battalion Command Equal Opportunity Representative at 760-274-3767.

Semper Fidelis,

John R. Polidoro, Jr.
Colonel, United States Marine Corps
Commanding Officer, Headquarters and Support Battalion