

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION
AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY REGULATIONS

Board of Governors for Higher Education
State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Adopted:	8/24/77 (BR)	07/02/81 (BG)	Legal Citation: 16-59-4 28-51
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I. Affirmative Action Planning

A. Affirmative Action Policy Statement

Each public institution of higher education (the University of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College and the Community College of Rhode Island) and the Office of Higher Education, the four units under the jurisdiction of the Board of Governors for Higher Education, shall adopt an affirmative action plan which shall comply with the Board of Governors Affirmative Action Policy and the guidelines promulgated by the State Equal Opportunity Office, and be consistent with all state and federal laws and regulations.

B. Responsibility for Affirmative Action

The chief executive officer has primary responsibility for all employment within the unit. The chief executive officer is accountable to the Board of Governors/Commissioner to assure that all personnel actions are consistent with affirmative action policies.

Each unit shall specify individuals to take responsibility for effective implementation of the unit=s affirmative action policy. These individuals have the responsibility to direct monitoring, administration, management and implementation of the unit=s affirmative action plan.

Each unit shall establish an affirmative action committee. Committee membership shall encompass a broad spectrum of the unit=s community, including women, minorities and disabled individuals, and should include representatives from all levels of staff. Members shall issue a program report in writing at least annually to the chief executive officer of the unit, and provision shall be made for the committee to have direct access to the chief executive officer of the unit on a regular basis.

C. Dissemination of Policy

Each unit shall implement specific and continuing steps to notify applicants for employment, students, employees, sources of referral of applicants for employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements within the state that it does not discriminate in its employment practices and that it is taking affirmative action to achieve and maintain a discrimination-free, harassment-free workplace.

D. Grievance Procedures

Each unit shall adopt and publish in appropriate publications grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of employee discrimination or harassment complaints. Employees should be periodically notified of the procedures, where they are published and who to contact for assistance. The grievance procedure must assure due process for all parties concerned and take into consideration promptness of handling, ease of accessibility, simplicity of procedures, and confidentiality.

Individuals with responsibility for the investigation of grievances shall have sufficient access to authority to ensure the correction of identified noncompliance.

A record of all grievances and their resolutions shall be maintained.

E. Personnel Practices B to ensure consistency with affirmative action plan:

Each unit shall take active steps to recruit members of groups not reasonably represented in the existing workforce.

Each unit shall ensure that its selection process is clear and equitable. Applications shall be screened on objective criteria only; the person or committee screening the applicants must be able to specify the evaluation criteria.

Each unit shall ensure that there is no impermissible discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, handicap/disability, or veteran status with respect to the payment of wages or the extension of employment benefits.

Each unit shall have non-discriminatory procedures for layoffs, recall from layoff, termination, promotion, involuntary transfer, disciplinary action and the provision of supplementary education.

Each unit shall promote a workplace free of harassment of all types, including sexual harassment (in accordance with Title 28, Chapter 51 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, as amended).

Each unit shall make provisions to inform its employees of the procedures relevant to the affirmative action plan.

F. Accommodations for Employees

Each unit must establish a policy on childbearing leave.

Each unit shall provide reasonable accommodation of facilities, job structures, work schedules, and equipment for disabled individuals when necessary to ensure equal access to employment.

Each unit, in response to an employee=s request, will provide reasonable accommodation for religious practices.

II. Review of Policies and Plans

A. The affirmative action policies of the Board of Governors, the three public institutions of higher education and the Office of Higher Education shall be reexamined and reaffirmed periodically.

B. There shall be periodic review of the State Equal Opportunity Office affirmative action guidelines by the Commissioner to determine if they are sufficient to achieve the purpose of the Board=s Affirmative Action Policy. Recommendations for changes when warranted will be made by the Commissioner to the Board of Governors.

C. The affirmative action plans of the three public institutions of higher education and the Office of Higher Education shall be submitted annually for review by the Commissioner.

D. The Office of Higher Education shall annually receive workforce statistics reports from each of the affirmative action officers in a standardized format.

III. Enforcement

The Board of Governors through the Commissioner shall have ultimate responsibility for enforcing and monitoring the implementation of these regulations and for ensuring compliance with these regulations.

The three public institutions and the Office of Higher Education shall submit on a date designated by the Commissioner, but not less than annually, reports or other documentation required to ensure compliance with these regulations. The Commissioner can, as deemed appropriate, conduct a field review of each institution=s organization or agency to determine compliance with these regulations.