ANGELS CENTER OF HOPE

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy

https://angelscenterofhope.org/

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EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO) POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Angels Center of Hope(ACOH) is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to all qualified individuals and maintaining a workplace that is fair, inclusive, respectful, and free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

As a nonprofit organization operating in Louisiana, USA, we believe that employment decisions should be based on an individual's qualifications, skills, experience, professional conduct, and ability to perform the essential functions of the position.

The organization prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, military or veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, Louisiana state, or local law.

This commitment applies to all aspects of employment, including recruitment, hiring, selection, compensation, promotion, training, professional development, performance evaluation, discipline, termination, and other conditions of employment.

The organization is committed to ensuring that all employees and applicants are treated with dignity, fairness, and respect.

2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Establish the organization's commitment to equal employment opportunities.
2. Prevent discrimination and unfair treatment in all employment practices.
3. Promote merit-based recruitment, selection, and advancement.
4. Ensure fair access to training, compensation, and professional development.
5. Provide reasonable workplace accommodations as required by law.
6. Prevent workplace harassment, intimidation, and retaliation.
7. Establish clear procedures for reporting and addressing discrimination complaints.
8. Promote a respectful and inclusive working environment.
9. Ensure compliance with applicable federal, state, and local employment laws.

3. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy applies to:

- Board members involved in employment decisions.
- Executive Director and senior management.
- Full-time and part-time employees.
- Temporary and seasonal employees.
- Job applicants and prospective employees.
- Interns and trainees.
- Volunteers, where applicable to organizational conduct and opportunities.
- Supervisors and managers.
- Recruitment agencies and employment representatives.
- Contractors and consultants, where applicable to workplace conduct.

All individuals involved in recruitment, supervision, management, and employment decisions are expected to uphold this policy.

4. PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

The organization prohibits unlawful employment discrimination based on:

- Race.
- Color.
- Religion.
- Sex.
- Pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions.
- Sexual orientation.
- Gender identity.
- National origin.
- Age, where protected by applicable law.
- Disability.
- Genetic information.
- Military or veteran status.
- Any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, Louisiana state, or local law.

Employment decisions shall not be influenced by stereotypes, personal prejudice, favoritism, or unlawful discriminatory considerations.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN RECRUITMENT AND HIRING

The organization shall ensure that recruitment and hiring practices are fair, transparent, and based on legitimate job-related qualifications.

The organization shall:

1. Advertise employment opportunities through appropriate recruitment channels.
2. Establish clear job descriptions and selection criteria.
3. Evaluate applicants based on qualifications, skills, experience, and job-related requirements.
4. Avoid discriminatory language in job advertisements.
5. Conduct interviews using fair and consistent selection procedures.
6. Maintain appropriate recruitment and selection records.
7. Provide equal consideration to qualified applicants.
8. Avoid discriminatory questions or practices during recruitment.
9. Provide reasonable accommodations during the application and interview process where required by law.

No applicant shall be denied employment because of a protected characteristic.

6. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

The organization shall provide equal employment opportunities in all areas of employment, including:

6.1 Compensation and Benefits

Employees performing comparable work shall be compensated fairly and in accordance with applicable equal pay and wage laws.

Compensation and benefits decisions shall be based on legitimate factors such as job responsibilities, qualifications, experience, performance, and applicable compensation policies.

6.2 Promotion and Career Advancement

Promotion decisions shall be based on merit, qualifications, performance, experience, and organizational needs.

No employee shall be denied advancement opportunities because of a protected characteristic.

6.3 Training and Professional Development

All eligible employees shall have fair access to training, professional development, mentorship, and opportunities to improve their skills.

6.4 Performance Evaluation

Performance evaluations shall be objective, consistent, documented, and based on job-related performance standards.

6.5 Discipline and Termination

Disciplinary actions, suspensions, demotions, and termination decisions shall be based on legitimate organizational reasons and applied consistently without unlawful discrimination.

7. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

The organization shall provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities and accommodate sincerely held religious beliefs and practices, as required by applicable law.

The organization shall also provide reasonable accommodations related to pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions where required by law.

Accommodation requests shall be considered individually and through an appropriate interactive process.

Employees and applicants may request accommodations through the Executive Director or designated Human Resources representative.

The organization shall protect confidential medical and accommodation-related information and maintain such information separately from general personnel records where required by law.

8. PREVENTION OF WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

The organization strictly prohibits unlawful discrimination, workplace harassment, intimidation, and inappropriate conduct.

Prohibited conduct includes:

- Discriminatory remarks, insults, or offensive jokes.
- Unwelcome sexual advances or inappropriate sexual comments.
- Threatening or intimidating employees because of protected characteristics.
- Excluding employees from opportunities for discriminatory reasons.
- Creating a hostile or offensive working environment.
- Unequal treatment in compensation, assignments, or advancement because of protected characteristics.
- Retaliating against individuals who raise concerns or participate in investigations.

This policy applies to workplace interactions, work-related events, organizational travel, training activities, and other work-related settings, including electronic communications.

9. REPORTING DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

Employees and applicants who believe they have experienced or witnessed discrimination or harassment are encouraged to report their concerns promptly.

Reports may be made to:

- The immediate supervisor.
- The Executive Director.
- The Human Resources Officer.
- The designated Equal Employment Opportunity Officer.
- The Board Chairperson, where management is involved or where another reporting channel is inappropriate.

An individual does not have to report a concern to the person alleged to have engaged in misconduct.

If a complaint involves the Executive Director or designated EEO Officer, the individual may report directly to the Board Chairperson or another independent board representative.

10. COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

All complaints shall be handled seriously, fairly, and promptly.

Upon receiving a complaint, the organization shall:

1. Acknowledge receipt of the complaint where contact information is available.
2. Document the nature of the concern.
3. Assess whether immediate protective measures are necessary.
4. Assign an impartial person to review the complaint.
5. Conduct an appropriate and objective investigation.
6. Interview relevant individuals and review available evidence.
7. Maintain appropriate confidentiality.
8. Determine whether corrective or disciplinary action is necessary.
9. Document the outcome and actions taken.
10. Communicate appropriate information to the individuals involved, consistent with privacy requirements.

Where necessary, an external investigator or qualified employment attorney may be engaged.

The organization shall not discourage employees from filing complaints with appropriate government agencies.

11. PROTECTION AGAINST RETALIATION

Retaliation against anyone who reports discrimination, participates in an investigation, requests a legally protected accommodation, or exercises a protected employment right is strictly prohibited.

Retaliation includes:

- Threats or intimidation.
- Unfair disciplinary action.
- Demotion or unjustified termination.
- Exclusion from employment opportunities.

- Harassment or hostile treatment.
- Unfair changes to working conditions.
- Any adverse action intended to punish an individual for exercising protected rights.

Any employee found to have engaged in retaliation may face appropriate disciplinary action.

12. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGEMENT

The Executive Director and management team shall:

- Implement and enforce this policy.
- Ensure recruitment and employment decisions are fair and consistent.
- Provide appropriate employee orientation and training.
- Address discrimination and harassment concerns promptly.
- Maintain appropriate employment records.
- Support reasonable accommodation procedures.
- Prevent retaliation against employees who raise concerns.
- Ensure supervisors understand their responsibilities.
- Report significant policy violations to the appropriate governing authority.

13. RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYEES

All employees are expected to:

- Treat coworkers, applicants, supervisors, and other individuals with respect.
- Avoid discriminatory or harassing conduct.
- Support equal employment opportunities.
- Comply with organizational employment policies.
- Report suspected discrimination or harassment.
- Cooperate honestly with authorized investigations.
- Refrain from retaliatory conduct.

14. TRAINING AND AWARENESS

The organization shall provide appropriate training and information regarding equal employment opportunity.

Training may include:

- Understanding workplace discrimination.
- Preventing harassment and retaliation.
- Fair recruitment and selection.
- Reasonable accommodation procedures.
- Respectful workplace communication.
- Employee rights and responsibilities.
- Reporting and complaint resolution procedures.

Supervisors and managers with employment decision-making responsibilities shall receive appropriate guidance on implementing this policy.

15. RECORD KEEPING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The organization shall maintain appropriate records relating to:

- Recruitment and selection.
- Employment decisions.
- Compensation and promotion.
- Training and professional development.
- Accommodation requests.
- Discrimination and harassment complaints.
- Investigations and corrective actions.

Records shall be maintained securely and retained in accordance with applicable federal and state requirements.

Medical and genetic information shall be treated as confidential and maintained separately where required by law.

16. EXTERNAL COMPLAINT AND ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Employees and applicants may have the right to file complaints with appropriate federal or Louisiana civil rights agencies.

Relevant agencies include:

1. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
   Website: https://www.eeoc.gov/
   Telephone: 1-800-669-4000
2. Louisiana Commission on Human Rights (LCHR)
   Website: https://gov.louisiana.gov/page/lchr

Employees are not required to exhaust the organization's internal complaint process before contacting an appropriate government agency.

Applicable filing deadlines and procedural requirements may vary depending on the law and circumstances.

17. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LAWS

The organization shall administer this policy in accordance with applicable employment laws and regulations, including:

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- The Equal Pay Act of 1963.
- The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended.
- The Pregnancy Discrimination Act.
- The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, where applicable.
- The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008.
- The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.
- The Louisiana Employment Discrimination Law, Louisiana Revised Statutes(R.S)23:301 et seq.
- Louisiana Revised Statutes(R.S)23:332 concerning intentional discrimination in employment.
- Other applicable federal, Louisiana state, and local employment laws.

Where applicable law provides greater protection or additional obligations, the law shall prevail.

18. POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Board of Directors and Executive Leadership shall oversee implementation of this policy.

The organization shall review this policy at least annually or whenever there are significant changes in applicable laws, organizational operations, or employment practices.

Any necessary revisions shall be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval.

19. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

ACOH is committed to creating and maintaining a workplace where every qualified individual has an equal opportunity to contribute, develop professionally, and succeed.

We recognize that fairness, respect, accountability, and equal opportunity strengthen our workforce and improve our ability to serve the communities and individuals who depend on our programs.

All employees, managers, supervisors, and board members are expected to support and uphold this policy.

20. BOARD APPROVAL AND ADOPTION

This Equal Employment Opportunity Policy has been reviewed and adopted by the Board of Directors of Angels Center of Hope.

Approved by: ACOH Board of Directors

Date of Approval: January 5,2025