

Statement on Workplace Harassment
December 13, 2017

The National Institutes of Health is committed to maintaining a safe and civil organizational culture, one free from all forms of discrimination.

Policy Statement

At NIH, we commit to provide a workplace free of:

- Harassment, including sexual harassment
- Open or hidden verbal abuse (including offensive language)
- Hidden verbal abuse (intended to harm your reputation)
- Acts or deliberate inactions which demean or isolate you, or undermine you and your work
- Threats or intimidation
- Physical assault
- Damaging or destroying property
- Concealing or using a weapon

All NIH managers and supervisors are responsible for:

- Fostering a safe and civil work environment for all employees that is free from harassment, bullying, intimidation, violence, threats of violence, or other disruptive or inappropriate behavior. Any actions that run counter to NIH's [mission and goals](#) will be met with the appropriate consequences, regardless of who the offender may be.
- Reporting allegations of harassment and harm to self/others as soon as possible to the [NIH Civil Program](#) in the [Office of Human Resources](#).
- Understanding that management officials have an obligation to report allegations of harassment immediately and, therefore, cannot guarantee confidentiality to staff.
- Promptly conducting an inquiry and/or administrative investigation where there are allegations of harassment.
- Encouraging staff to report workplace violence concerns in a timely manner to the [Civil Program](#) and ensuring they have information on the resources outlined below.

All individuals physically located at an NIH facility or representing NIH at any place or time are responsible for:

- Conducting themselves in a civil and professional manner, reflecting respect for all individuals.
- Reporting any concerning behavior, including harassment or other forms of workplace violence, to a management official and/or the [Civil Program](#) as soon as possible.
- Learning how and encouraging others to effectively identify and handle stress and conflict.
- Understanding that factual and professional criticism of your work, which is not made on an unlawful basis, is not bullying or harassment.
- Maintaining awareness of security procedures including safeguarding identification badges and taking building access control seriously.
- Promptly reporting any domestic violence concerns that may affect the workplace and/or your safety and welfare, so that precautions may be taken, and support and resources may be offered.

NIH Resources

Inappropriate responses to stressful situations may lead to mounting tension. Timely access to resources can help prevent situations from escalating and allow distressed individuals to receive swift support. The following NIH resources can provide clarification regarding options and rights in a particular circumstance.

- [The NIH Civil Program](#) (301-402-4845) coordinates resources to prevent and address workplace harassment, bullying, intimidation, and violence. The Civil Program consists of three components: (1) Civil Coordinators who manage and track cases on a day-to-day basis; (2) a Response Team of experts who collaborate and share information to resolve cases employing multidisciplinary perspectives; and (3) an Advisory Committee that reports to the Deputy Director for Management, NIH.
- [The Employee Assistance Program](#) (EAP) (301-496-3164) provides strictly confidential, personalized consultation, short-term counseling, referral, and follow-up services to enhance personal and professional well-being. EAP is staffed by licensed, certified professionals in workplace wellness and behavioral health, and offers training and support to workgroups to address issues that affect the work environment. EAP is free to all members of the NIH workforce and their immediate family members.
- [The Office of the Ombudsman, Center for Cooperative Resolution](#) (301-594-7231) provides confidential and informal assistance to the NIH community in addressing lab and work-related issues. The OO/CCR is a neutral, independent, and confidential resource. Ombudsmen can help address lab or workplace conflict, improve communication and relationships, and create opportunities for organizational growth. They also clarify policies, provide referrals, help individuals consider options to analyze and address work-related conflicts and complex or sensitive situations, serve as mediators, facilitate discussions, and address systemic issues.
- [Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion \(EDI\)](#) (301-496-6301) provides information on employee rights and responsibilities in the EEO complaint process. They process complaints of discrimination based on discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment, as well as other allegations of discrimination, through the federal regulatory process in accordance with 29 C.F.R. §1614, EEOC Management Directive 110 and pertinent court decisions.