

INTOUCH WITH EEO

Equal Employment Opportunity
Newsletter vol. 3 issue 2

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Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR): Can Resolve Disputes

ADR is a valuable tool used by the Department of the Army's EEO office for preventing and resolving a comprehensive variety of conflicts and is facilitated by a certified third-party neutral (mediator). The use of ADR is a pro-active, effective, collaborative process that is available to the workforce. Mediation is the Army's preferred method to facilitate open communication for the disputing parties to candidly express their concerns and issues in a judicious manner and mutually resolve complaints in an amenable manner.

By engaging in mediation during either the informal or formal phase of the EEO complaint process, it does not take away your due process if a mutually satisfactory Negotiated Settlement is **not** agreed upon, the process continues. Ultimately, settling the dispute will be the decision of the aggrieved or complainant and not the mediator.

History of ADR: The Administrative Dispute Resolution Act (ADRA) was passed by Congress in 1996, which requires all agencies to promote and use ADR methods to resolve disputes. President Clinton, in 1998 issued an Executive Order requiring all federal agencies to develop a policy to promote greater use of ADR EEO and non-EEO (workplace) disputes.

For more information on ADR, please contact the EEO office:
APGEE0299@army.mil

Monique N. Moore



Accessibility, Usability, and Inclusion

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) is a set of technical standards that, when applied, make online content accessible for all users, including people with disabilities, but accessibility is solely focused on people with disabilities to access and use a product or service, whereas usability is not, it focuses on the overall ease of use, such as an unambiguous navigation of the web.

Accessibility- methods people with disabilities can equally recognize, understand, navigate, and interact with websites and tools. This also help to eliminate barriers that could otherwise prevent people with disabilities from enjoying the same benefits as those without a disability.

Usability- refers to how easy it is for a user to navigate and interact with a website. It includes factors such as site speed, ease of use and the overall user experience.

Inclusion- Is about diversity and including everyone to the greatest degree possible and accommodating people who have historically been excluded. It also addresses a broad range of issues including:

- accessibility for people with disabilities;
- access to a quality of hardware, software, and internet connectivity;
- computer literacy and skills;
- economic situation;
- education;
- geographic location;
- culture;
- age, including older and younger people;
- and language

Accessibility primarily focuses on people with disabilities and information, along with user interface presented to users in ways they can perceive. This includes some features such as text size, color contrast and keyboard navigation. Some have age-related practical limitations and may not identify these as disabilities. Accessibility concentrates on these conditions as well:

- vision- serious difficulty seeing, including reduced contrast sensitivity, color perception, and near-focus, making it difficult to read web pages;
- physical ability- difficulty walking or moving including reduced dexterity and fine motor control, making it difficult to use a mouse and click small targets;
- hearing- difficulty hearing higher-pitched sounds and separating sounds, making it difficult to hear podcasts and other audio, especially when there is background noise;
- cognitive ability-serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions, making it difficult to follow navigation and complete online tasks.

[Accessibility, Usability, and Inclusion | Web Accessibility Initiative \(WAI\) | W3C](#)

Why Inclusion?



Inequality and exclusionary behavior threaten cohesion and limits our ability to remain innovative and solve problems. This in turn can cause a rise in tension and can cause workplace instability and conflict. The first step in reducing the impact of inequality and exclusion is education.

Inclusion is the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity – in people, in the ideas they generate, and in the processes used to make decisions and solve problems. It is the process of creating an environment in which all individuals feel respected, valued, and supported, and have equal opportunities to participate, learn, and grow. Inclusion is not just about diversity, but also about creating an environment where differences are leveraged to drive innovation, creativity and better decision making. It is about creating a culture where all employees feel a sense of belonging and are empowered to bring their authentic selves to work. It requires ongoing effort and commitment to create a culture of inclusion, where all employees feel valued, respected, and included in the organization. Inclusion leads to a more diverse range of perspectives, ideas, and experiences, which can drive innovation and creativity in problem-solving and decision-making.

When employees feel included and valued, they are more likely to be engaged and satisfied with their work, leading to higher productivity and retention rates. Inclusion leads to a more diverse and representative workforce, which can lead to better understanding and service of customers and clients from diverse backgrounds. Inclusion encourages open communication and collaboration among employees from diverse backgrounds, leading to more effective problem-solving and decision-making. Employees who feel included and valued in their workplace are more likely to be loyal to the organization and stay longer. Inclusion promotes teamwork and collaboration, leading to greater productivity and success for teams and the organization as a whole. Inclusion promotes employee health and well-being by reducing stress and promoting a sense of belonging. Organizations with a culture of inclusion are more likely to attract top talent and have a better reputation in the community.

Without proper understanding and buy-in from leadership, efforts to promote inclusion may not be fully supported and may lack the necessary resources and funding. Some employees may resist changes to the organizational culture and may not be open to embracing diversity and inclusion. Measuring the success of inclusion efforts can be challenging and may require the use of multiple metrics and methods. Inclusion efforts may be hindered if the workforce is not diverse and representative of the communities the organization serves. Even with inclusion efforts in place, unconscious bias can still exist, leading to discrimination and exclusion. Without proper engagement and communication, employees may not fully understand or buy into the importance of inclusion and may not take an active role in promoting it.

Culture refers to the shared values, beliefs, and practices that shape the way people think, feel, and behave within an organization. It is the foundation upon which an organization is built and is reflected in the way things are done, the way people interact with each other, and the way decisions are made. Culture encompasses the organization's mission, vision, and values, as well as the unwritten rules and expectations that guide behavior and decision-making. A strong culture can promote employee engagement, satisfaction, and loyalty, and can lead to better performance and results for the organization. A culture can be positive and inclusive, or negative and exclusive, depending on the values, beliefs and behaviors that are reinforced.

References: The Winters Group, 2018. Moving Beyond Equality. <https://www.wintersgroup.com/>

Black History Month

Black History Month is celebrated annually in February to honor and commemorate the rich history and achievements of African Americans. The celebration of Black History Month began in 1926 as "Negro History Week," according to historian Carter G. Woodson. Since then, it has grown to become a national holiday that offers a concentrated space for discussing the sometimes-overlooked stories and important events in Black history. During this month, we have the chance to reflect on the hardships and triumphs that African Americans have faced in the fight for freedom, equality, and justice. Black History Month pays tribute to a wide range of historical events, including the civil rights struggle, that influenced American culture.



The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was a landmark piece of legislation that aimed to eliminate discrimination in different aspects including race, color, religion, sex, and national origin. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was among those who pushed for the movement, as he was a charismatic leader and advocate for equality. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., championed non-violent resistance against racial injustice and through his speeches, he pushed for legislative change to address racism. The Act improved job prospects and workplace fairness, resulting in a more inclusive atmosphere for all employees. Several adjustments to the Act have been made over time to ensure that all workers are free of gender discrimination. When Black

history is honored people from all racial and ethnic origins become more accepting, compassionate, and cohesive. The practice draws attention to the connections between many communities and promotes acceptance, tolerance, and knowledge of cultural variety.

Black history stimulates critical thinking on the continuous fight for racial equality and social justice. From the analysis, Black history celebration encourages conversation, action, and advocacy in order to fight systemic racism, discrimination, and injustice in the past as well as the present. Black History Month honors the accomplishments of Black people and communities, which inspires and empowers people from all walks of life. It provides role models and instances of excellence, leadership, and resilience, igniting a sense of pride and confidence that makes it possible to recognize the richness and diversity of Black traditions.

References

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https://knowledgequest.aasl.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/KNOW_49_4_CBC_46-48.pdf





March is Women’s History Month and the 2024 theme is “Women Who Advocate for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.” The theme for this year is dedicated to celebrating women who are committed to eliminating bias and discrimination from our society and institutions. By recognizing Women’s History Month each year, we are showing that we understand the significance of women’s accomplishments and contributions made to society.

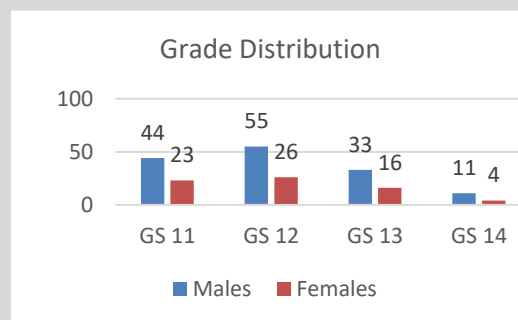
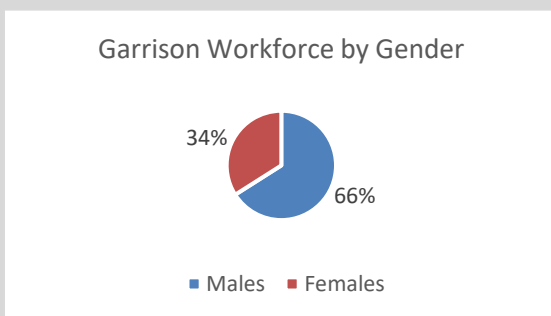
Women have had to face a lot of obstacles on their road to obtain equality. It’s no secret that women have not always have the right to vote, own property, or the right to be paid the same as their male counterparts. On June 10, 1963, President John F. Kennedy signed into law the Equal Pay Act, prohibiting sex-based wage discrimination between men and women performing the same job in the same workplace. In the following year on July 2, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson, signed the Civil Rights Act into law; Title VII bans employment discrimination based on race, religion, national origin, or sex.

Women didn’t obtain these rights without having to go through trials and tribulations. There were women that were trailblazers for change, and they deserve to be honored. The month of March is dedicated to honoring women’s contributions in US History, although it didn’t start off as a month-long celebration. In 1980 President Jimmy Carter issued the first presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8 as national Women’s History Week. The following year in 1981 the U.S. Congress passed a resolution establishing it as a national celebration. In 1987 the National Women’s History Project successfully petitioned Congress to expand the event to the entire month of March.



Women’s History Month is used to celebrate women who have fought for equity, justice, and opportunity in our Nation. Women have been fighting for securing equal rights and opportunities throughout our country’s history, these women have opened doors for subsequent generations. While we have made significant strides for equality, women still face barriers. Women still experience disparities in economic security, health care and additionally still being overlooked, underpaid, and undervalued.

The APG Garrison workforce population is made up of 283 employees that identify as female. 33.82% GS 11 personnel are female, 32.09% of GS12 personnel are female, 32.65% of GS 13 personnel are female, and 26.66% of GS 14 personnel are female.



[A Proclamation on Women's History Month, 2023 | The White House](#)
[Women's History Month 2024 \(womenshistorymonth.gov\)](https://www.womenshistorymonth.gov/)

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DISCRIMINATION IS PROHIBITED ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, RELIGION, SEX, (Gender and Pregnancy), NATIONAL ORIGIN, AGE (40+), PHYSICAL/MENTAL DISABILITY, REPRISAL (for Opposition and Participation) AND GENETIC (GINA) INFORMATION

Employees, former employees or applicants for employment and possible contractors at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland who believe they have been discriminated against, may initiate an informal complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Office.

Complaints must be initiated within **45 calendar days** of:

- The date of the incident giving rise to the complaint.
- The effective date of the personnel action giving rise to the complaint.
- The date the aggrieved became aware of or should reasonably become aware of the alleged discriminatory action or practice.

There are two stages to an EEO discrimination complaint: pre-complaint and formal. All complaints must begin at the pre-complaint stage before progressing to the formal stage of the EEO process.

The aggrieved individual may be offered an opportunity to participate in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). The Army's preferred method of ADR is mediation. A mediator (neutral, objective third party) brings the aggrieved and management together in an attempt to reach a mutually satisfactory solution to the employment matter.

EEO Email: APGEE0299@army.mil
EEO Website: <https://home.army.mil/apg/index.php/about/Garrison/EEO>

EEO, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility Engagements and EEO No Fear Trainings

During FY24 there will be several engagements and training opportunities for you to attend via Teams. EEO promotes a healthy working environment through various processing to include prevention. We foster prevention by educating the workforce on the elements of a healthy working environment. In support of that mission below are a list of upcoming training/development opportunities

Training/Development Opportunities

Unconscious Bias-April 9, 2024 @10:00

EEO No Fear non-supervisors May 14, 2024@10:00

EEONo Fearfor supervisors May 14, 2024 @1:00

Reasonable Accommodation- June 4, 2024 @10:00

Civility in Workplace - July 12,2024 @10:00

EEO No Fear non-supervisors August 6 2024 @ 10:00

EEONo Fearfor supervisors August 6, 2024 @1:00

Effective Communication - September 10, 2024 @10:00

Perceptions - October 15,2024 @10:00



All training will be conducted via Teams.
For in-person training or additional training dates please contact the EEO office at 410-306-2432 or APGEE0299@army.mil