MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Garrison Policy Letter #6-Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) and Harassment Prevention and Response Policy

1. References:
   c. DoD Directive 7050.06 (Military Whistleblower Protection), 17 April 2015.

2. Purpose. Fort Bragg leaders will provide Equal Opportunity and fair treatment for military personnel and Family members without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex (to include gender identity, or sexual orientation), and provide an environment free of unlawful discrimination and offensive behavior.

3. Policy. As the Commander, I am committed to ensuring Equal Opportunity is a guiding principle of our military establishment. The diversity of our nation is the strength of our Army as it allows each person to serve the nation to their fullest potential. Equal Opportunity is a combat multiplier and improves mission effectiveness. Our nation’s security and prosperity depend upon our ability to develop and employ the talents of a diverse population. In support of this, I will not tolerate any discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex (to include sexual identity), national origin, or sexual orientation. Nor will I tolerate acts of hazing and bullying or other behaviors that undermine the dignity and respect of Soldiers, Family members, and Civilian employees. This policy memorandum supersedes Garrison Policy Letter #6, Equal Opportunity (EO) Policy dated 15 November 2019.

4. The objective of the MEO program is to ensure all people are treated with dignity and respect. We can only realize this objective through the unified efforts of all Fort Bragg Garrison members. Leaders and supervisors at all levels have a personal responsibility in supporting this objective by recognizing and eliminating improper behaviors that violate the Army’s MEO policy. Only through teamwork and active leader engagement can we ensure all people are treated fairly. All personnel, regardless of race, color, religion, sex (to include sexual identity), national origin, or sexual
orientation have the right to carry out their jobs and achieve their potential based solely on their capability, merit, and fitness. Our mission requires trust and unit cohesion, which can be achieved only when individuals know they are treated fairly and with respect. Violations of the MEO policy will not be condoned or tolerated. All Soldiers will immediately report any violations of this policy to their chain of command, MEO advisors, or to the Inspector General's Office as appropriate. An additional option will be the MEO Hotline at (910) 929-8894.

5. Leaders and supervisors will remain proactive in preventing and eliminating discrimination. The MEO office provides advice and assistance to the unit; however, the commander is the organization’s MEO officer. Accordingly, the chain of command is the primary and preferred channel for resolving MEO issues. Complaints should be referred to the chain of command, but they may also be made to an Equal Opportunity Advisor as well as support agencies, such as the Inspector General, the Provost Marshal, the Chaplain, or the Staff Judge Advocate. However, Equal Opportunity Advisors are the only personnel authorized to take a formal MEO complaint should the situation dictate.

6. Leaders and supervisors are responsible for maintaining a positive EO climate within their organization. Leaders will treat all reports of MEO violations in accordance with paragraph 6-6 of AR 600-20. Allegations will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken based on the individual merits of each allegation. We have the responsibility to assist complainants, protect them from reprisal, investigate thoroughly and take action swiftly and fairly. All personnel must remain vigilant and proactive in creating an environment in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

7. I am committed to the Army Harassment Prevention and Response Program. It is consistent with preventing harassment (including hazing, bullying, discriminatory harassment, online misconduct, and other misconduct). Leaders and supervisors, especially those entrusted with the mantle of leadership, will lead by example and do what is right to prevent abusive treatment of others. Failure to do so brings discredit on the Army and may have strategic implications. Hazing, bullying, and discriminatory harassment of people or their property is prohibited. If a Service member feels they have been hazed, bullied or discriminated against through harassment they have every right to report the issue and use the complaint process.

8. Hazing. A form of harassment that includes conduct through which Soldiers or DA Civilian employees (who haze Soldiers), without a proper military authority or other governmental purpose but with a nexus to military service, physically or psychologically injures or creates a risk of physical or psychological injury to Soldiers for the purpose of: initiation into, admission into, affiliation with, change in status or position within, or a condition for continued membership in any military or DA Civilian organization. Hazing can be conducted through the use of electronic devices or communications, and by other means including social media, as well as in person.
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9. Bullying. A form of harassment that includes acts of aggression by Soldiers or DA Civilian employees, with a nexus to military service, with the intent of harming a Soldier either physically or psychologically, without proper military authority or other governmental purpose. Bullying is the exposure of an individual or group to physical and/or emotional aggression with the intent to cause distress or harm. Bullying may involve the singling out of an individual from his or her coworkers, or unit, for ridicule because he or she is considered different or weak. It often is indirect or subtle in nature and involves an imbalance of power between the aggressor and the victim. Bullying can be conducted through the use of electronic devices or communications, and by other means including social media, as well as in person.

10. Point of contact for this policy is the XVIII Airborne Corps Equal Opportunity Program Manager at DSN 910-907-2113 or MEO Hotline at 910-929-8894.

SCOTT PENCE
COL, AR
Commanding