

November 10, 2005

MEMORANDUM

To: All Employees

From: Secretary /signed/ Gale Norton

Subject: Policy on Equal Opportunity and Unlawful Discrimination

Early in my administration as Secretary of the Interior, I stated my firm commitment to all employees that unlawful discrimination in the Department would not be tolerated. This memorandum reiterates that my policy remains in place and that any type of unlawful discrimination or harassment based on race, religion, age, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or genetic information will not be tolerated.

In order to be a model employer in the federal government, we must have a productive and satisfied workforce, that is treated with dignity and respect and free from discrimination or harassment. I expect all employees to carry out the Department's policy on equal opportunity and to promote it through exemplary conduct and sensitivity to the rights of fellow employees and the public. Executives, managers and supervisors will be held responsible and accountable for promoting and ensuring equal opportunity in the Department's policies and practices, including those external programs that we conduct or for which we provide assistance. To that end, managers and supervisors are required to attend four hours of EEO/diversity training each year. We are all responsible for responding to complaints fairly and expeditiously and for taking appropriate steps to address improper and illegal behavior through appropriate disciplinary or administrative action.

A diverse workforce is a significant advantage in providing services to the culturally varied populations that we serve. The Department has in place a strategic plan for achieving and maintaining a highly skilled and diverse workforce. If we are to achieve diversity at all levels, managers and supervisors must ensure equal opportunity when making decisions in the areas of outreach, recruitment, hiring, promotions, training, and awards. I want the Department to have the most highly qualified and diverse workforce in Government. I rely on each of you to embrace this policy, to assist me in expanding opportunities for all employees of the Department, and to ensure that we work in an environment free of unlawful discrimination.