



VMM-263 Commanding Officer's Equal Opportunity & Standards Policy Letter

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness ..."

Thunder Chickens, as Marines and Sailors, we must uphold the standards of treatment as recognized by our Founding Fathers and our heritage as America's Naval Service demands for each and every person on our team. Discrimination, sexual harassment, and hazing are fundamentally inconsistent with our core values of honor, courage, and commitment. Further, they violate the Uniform Code of Military Justice and our DoD and Service orders. If you are a victim of harassment, discriminatory conduct, or hazing, I encourage you to use your chain of command as appropriate to report or resolve the situation. If you observe this type of behavior, it is your duty to immediately address the situation through your chain of command. I submit to you the two areas for which there will be a "zero tolerance" policy:

1. Discrimination and Sexual Harassment. Discrimination is defined as the illegal treatment of a person or group based on race, religion, color, national origin, age, or sex. Sexual harassment (a form of discrimination) is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, concerning any terms of a person's job, pay, or career;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a person is used as a basis for career or employment decisions affecting that person; or
- Such conduct that unreasonably interferes with the individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

We will strive to resolve discrimination or sexual harassment problems early and at the lowest possible level through the Informal Resolution System. If a formal complaint is appropriate, we recommend use of the Request Mast process. Additionally, Marines and Sailors are encouraged to seek advice and assistance from our squadron Equal Opportunity (EO) Representative, or MAG 26's EO Representative if desired. EO Representatives are available to answer questions and will assist any person filing discrimination or sexual harassment complaints.

2. Hazing. Hazing is a crime and will be reported and dealt with as such. Having earned the title Marine or Sailor through the Naval Service's prescribed manners, we have achieved the only "right of passage" expected of us.

This direction applies to any and all forms of harassment, discrimination, and hazing. Those who engage in, condone, or falsely report such allegations will be subject to administrative and/or disciplinary action. No matter how insignificant these acts appear at the time, they erode our cohesion and detract from our mission accomplishment. I expect all Thunder Chickens to

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take care of each other and treat each and every member of our team with dignity, equality, and respect. Nothing less is acceptable.



T.P. MITALSKI
Commanding Officer