

# Harassment in the Workplace



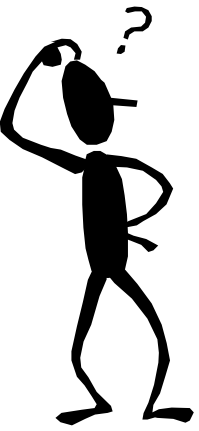
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# By the end of this training, you will:



- Be able to identify what constitutes harassment in the workplace;
- Know how to avoid and prevent harassing behavior;
- Know what to do should you become a victim.



# WHAT IS HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE?



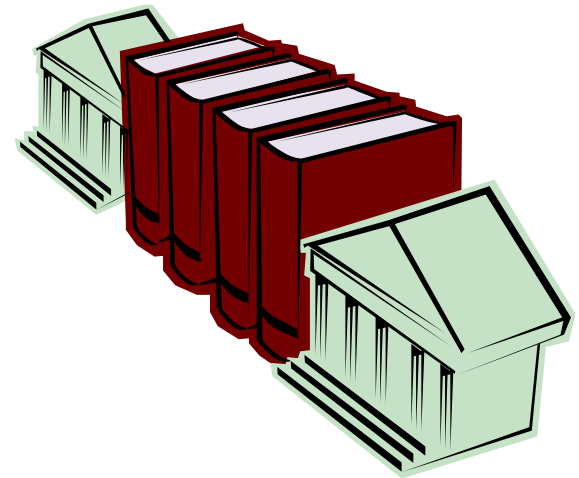
# Harassment



- Unlawful harassment is unwelcome intimidation, ridicule, insult, comments, or physical conduct based on a person's race, color, religion, sex (whether or not of a sexual nature), national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, retaliation or any other protected group.



# Quid Pro Quo Harassment



- Harassment is unlawful when an employee's acceptance or rejection of such conduct explicitly or implicitly forms the basis for an employment decision affecting the employee. This type of harassment is known as Quid Pro Quo; the Latin expression meaning "this for that". This type of harassment is usually associated with sexual harassment complaints.

# Hostile Work Environment



- Harassment is also unlawful when the conduct or comments have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an abusive, intimidating or offensive work environment. This type of harassment usually **does not** result in a tangible related personnel action.

Remember that Federal, State, and local laws,  
including Executive Orders protect  
all State employees from unlawful harassment  
in the Workplace





# Harassment Can Be Based On...



- Sex, Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity...not including a co-worker in work-related activities because of their sex, sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Age...whether you are 18 or 80, age related jokes, cartoons or comments are not acceptable.

# Harassment Can Be Based On...



- **Religious** beliefs or practices or non-beliefs or practices.



- Your **Nationality**, place of origin, or association with a group of people who share a common language, culture, or ancestry.

# Harassment Can Be Based On...



- **Race**...whether white, black, Asian, Indian or any other race or color.
- **Disability**...whether a physical or mental disability.



Harassment can include sending inappropriate emails, text messages or pictures that may offend, degrade or intimidate someone...



displaying offensive objects, posters or pictures  
in your work area...





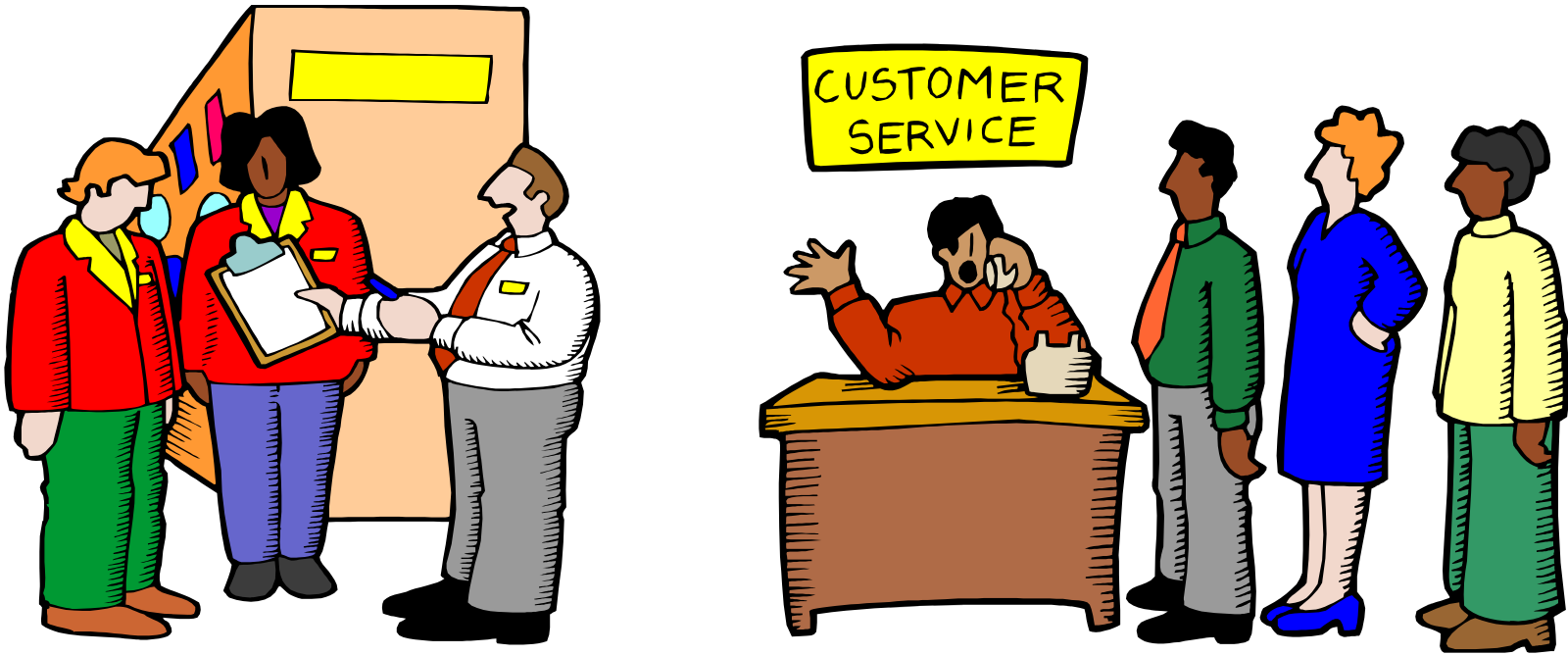
**gossiping or spreading rumors about a co-worker...**



telling insensitive jokes about a person...



looks or gestures that threaten, intimidate or humiliate a co-worker.



Harassment can occur not only with co-workers or someone in management, but even non-employees, such as contractors, consultants, delivery persons, vendors or customers.





Harassment may occur at conferences, work parties, dinner with clients, or other events that an employee may represent the agency.



**Let's look at some  
examples of unlawful Harassment  
in the workplace.**







At the yearly holiday office party,  
Janet's boss reveals his dislike of Asians.  
He constantly criticizes her  
work during their  
telephone conversations.

This could be defined as **hostile work environment harassment** due to race and/or nationality based on Janet's boss's comment that he doesn't like Asians.

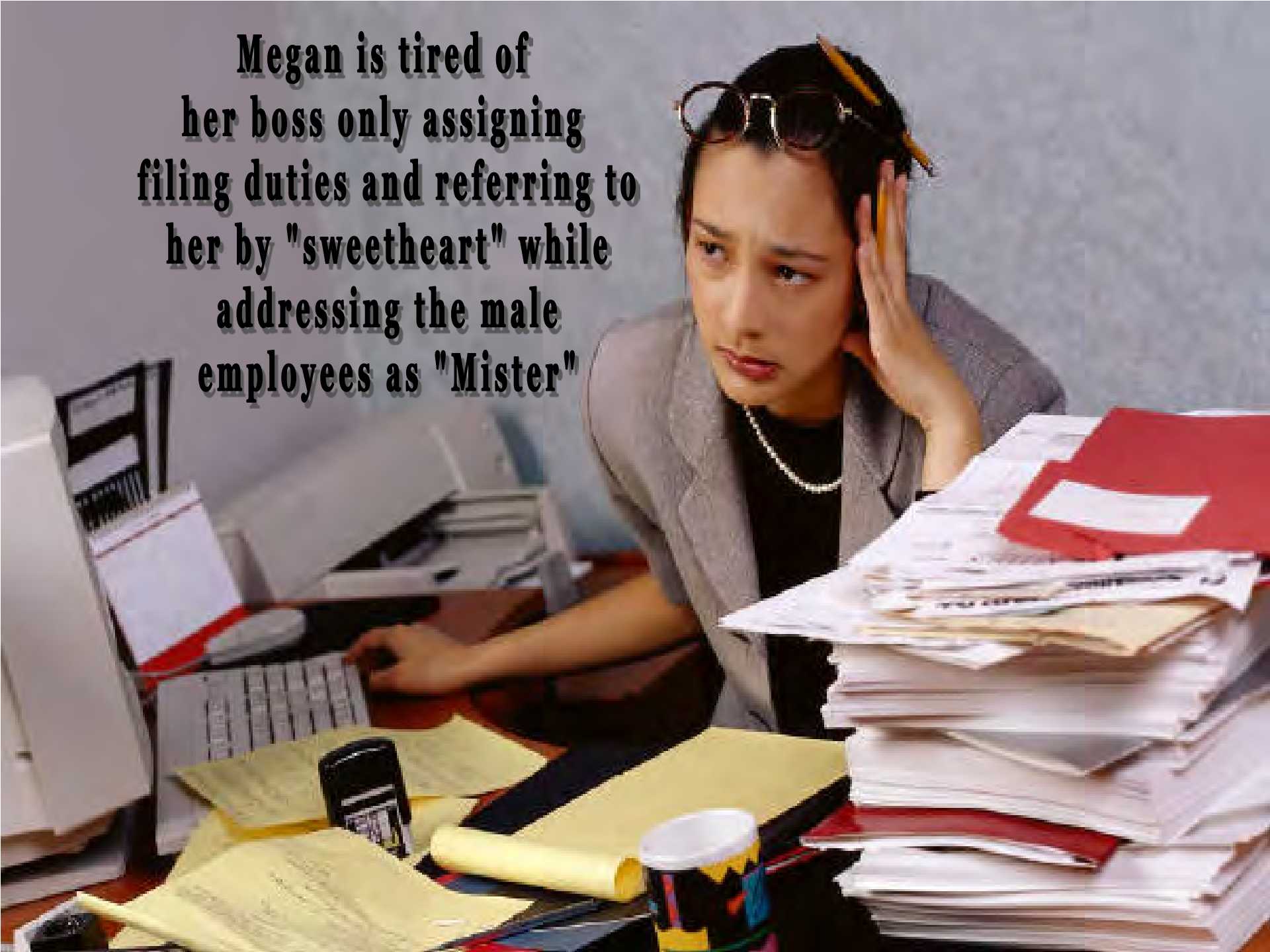
After September 11th, a number of Raj's co-workers stopped talking to him.  
Raj overhears Bill telling jokes to other coworkers  
about the agency hiring so many "Middle East Employees"



This could be considered harassment based on **nationality** or **origin**. The other employees may not direct their jokes at Raj, but he can hear them. Therefore, they could be creating a **hostile working environment** for Raj and other employees. The victim does not have to be the person harassed, but could be anyone affected by the offensive conduct.



**Megan is tired of  
her boss only assigning  
filing duties and referring to  
her by "sweetheart" while  
addressing the male  
employees as "Mister"**



This harassment is based on **sex**. Megan's boss's comments displays his bias thinking about women in the workplace.



**Carol whispering  
around Lillie in the office  
about her sexual orientation  
could result in a  
"Hostile Working Environment"**

Tom constantly tells Susan that her "wheelchair" takes up too much space in the office.

Secretly, he's trying to get her to quit.

An illustration of a man and a woman sitting at a desk. The man, on the right, is older with white hair and a beard, wearing a dark suit and a red tie. He is looking at a stack of papers on the desk. The woman, on the left, is wearing a purple dress and is sitting in a wheelchair. She is looking towards the man. The background is a simple blue wall with a window showing a city skyline.



This is possible **Disability Harassment** based on Tom's comments to Susan about her wheelchair.





**Phyllis is denied a promotion  
by her boss, after rejecting  
his sexual advances...**

***She hates  
coming to work.***



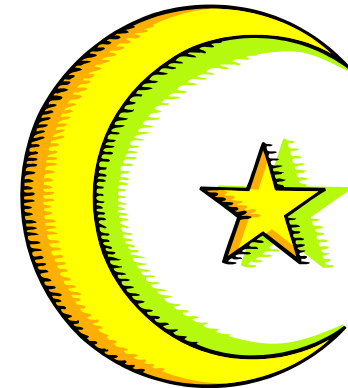
It is possible that Phyllis's boss is taking such action against her because of rejection to his sexual advances.





Monica refuses to approve Stuart's leave request during the Jewish Passover observance. She states that she was not "kosher" with him taking off during this time of the year.

Stuart is being treated differently based on his **religion**. The comment by his supervisor displays possible bias thinking in regards to religious practices.





**Sam and Jeff as well as  
Jane and Paula are  
"domestic partners"  
who are  
also protected  
against harassment  
in the workplace.**



Harassment can result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment.



**If you feel that you are being  
harassed,  
What Should You Do?**





If you feel comfortable enough, inform the offending person that his or her conduct is unwelcome and should cease immediately. The alleged harasser may have some reason to believe that the behavior may be welcome. Otherwise...

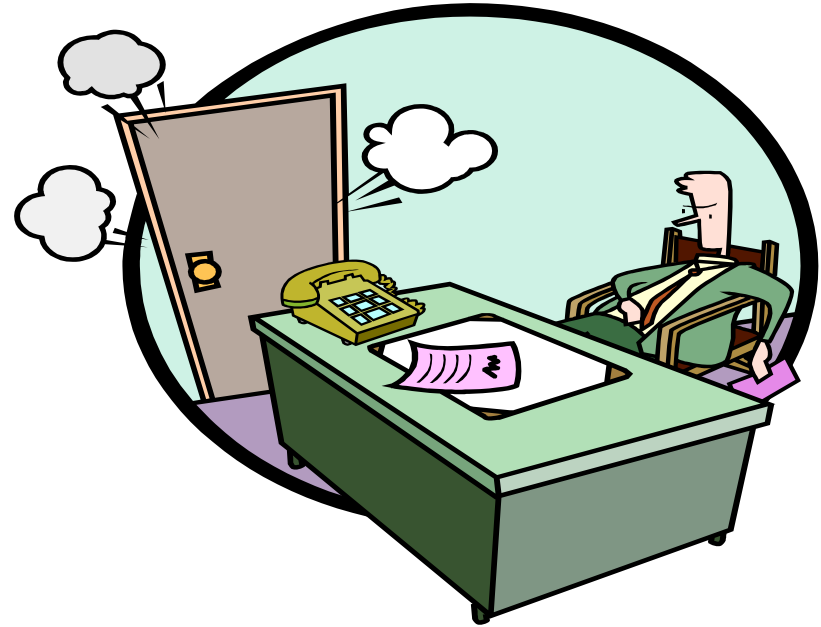


**Report any type  
of harassment to  
your EEO Officer  
or supervisor  
immediately.**



**Laws are in place to protect employees from unlawful harassment. Your filing rights may be found in State Personnel and Pensions Article § 5-203. All harassment should be reported.**





**Retaliation against an employee for filing a complaint or participating in an investigation is not permitted. This can also lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment.**

*What Can You Do  
To Prevent  
Harassment?*



- Strive
- To
- Operate
- Professionally

- **THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK!**
- **Consider how you would react if the same behavior were directed toward your spouse, significant other, or family member.**
- **Ask yourself whether you would act the same way in front of your spouse, significant other, or child.**
- **Avoid behavior that demeans, degrades, abuses, or shows disrespect to any individual.**





- **Recognize that the same remarks or gestures that seem acceptable to some people may be embarrassing, offensive, or unwanted by others.**
- **Ask yourself how you would feel if your behavior were captured on video, reported in print, or highlighted on the nightly news.**
- **Respect Everyone!**
- **Speak-up Against Harassment!**

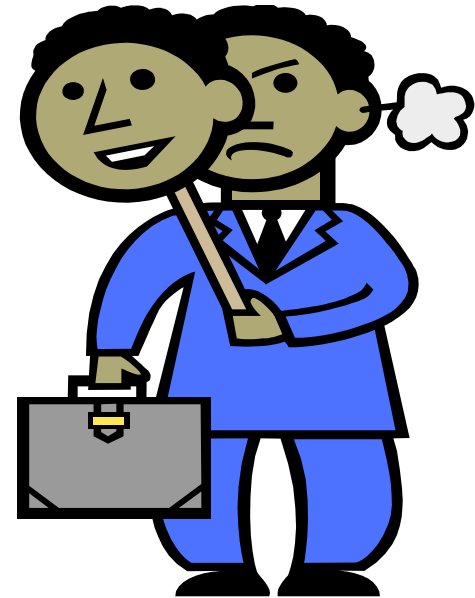
**Take this short quiz  
to see what you  
have learned!**

# Scenario A

If a person starts making jokes of a sexual nature in the workplace among his or her coworkers, and only one person is offended, can he or she file a complaint?

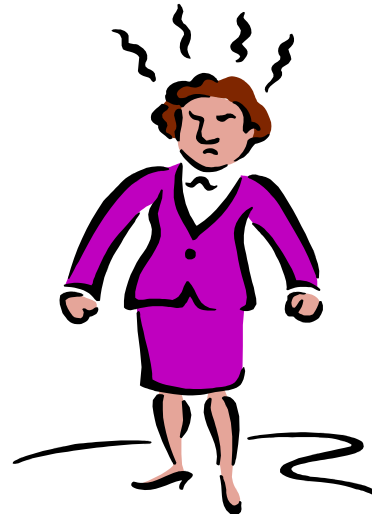


**Yes or No**



# YES!

Even if only one person is offended by the jokes, or comments, that person can make a complaint. Comments and/or jokes of a sexual nature are not appropriate for the workplace.





# Scenario B

There is nothing wrong with giving a coworker a hug if that is your way of greeting people in the workplace.



**True or False**

# FALSE!

**Anything more than a handshake may be perceived as unwanted advance or unwelcome. Even if you are a “hugging” kind of person, you never know how it will be received by another individual.**



# Scenario C

Only a manager or supervisor can be accused of harassment.



**True or False**

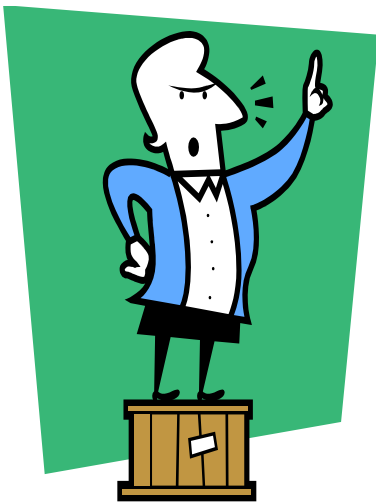
# **FALSE!**

**Anyone can be accused of harassment in the workplace, regardless of position or rank. That includes contractors, vendors, and anyone having interaction with employees in the workplace.**



# Scenario D

Employees have a right to express their personal beliefs about other nationalities because freedom of speech is their constitutional right.



**True or False**



# **FALSE**



**Employees under the authority of the State of Maryland are required to adhere to rules and guidelines regarding harassment.**

**Therefore, certain comments and gestures could be inappropriate for the workplace.**



**Remember that managers, supervisors,  
and coworkers all help maintain...**







**a workplace free of harassment and creates a positive working environment for all employees.**

# *Still have Questions?*



**contact your agency's  
EEO Officer.**



For further assistance, contact the Statewide EEO Coordinator at 410-767-3800