

Office of the Statewide
EEO Coordinator
EEO Connection Newsletter

Issue 3
July 2025 – September 2025

Statewide EEO Coordinator's Message

Welcome to the latest edition of the EEO Connection newsletter. I hope you're having a great start to Summer!

The OSEEOC team has been working diligently to design and develop additional resources to assist statewide EEO professionals with enhancing their EEO programs. We are excited to announce that we will be publishing new resources to the online OSEEOC Toolkit for Fair Practices Officers, EEO Officers, and ADA Coordinators. The resources include, but are not limited to, an EEO program checklist, an EEO program overview outline for new hire orientation, a revised reasonable accommodation request form, and more. These resources will be available on the [DBM- OSEEOC](#) webpage beginning July 21, 2025. An email reminder will be sent to the statewide EEO community.

That said, turn to page 4 and read about the FY 2025 Annual Statewide EEO Report and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's 2025 EEO4 data collection. On pages 6-11, read about noteworthy rulings from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. On pages 15-17, read about the upcoming training opportunities. That's not all: turn the page to read more.

Nicole Webb, MBA, SHRM-CP
Statewide EEO Coordinator

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Office of the Statewide EEO Coordinator

Mission

- Administer and enforce state equal employment opportunity laws and policies.
- Promote a work environment free of any unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.
- Assist in building a well-diversified workforce for Maryland State Government employees and job applicants.

Ask the OSEEOC Team

Q: Can an employee file a complaint of discrimination with an external regulatory agency?

OSEEOC Answer:

Yes. An employee may elect to pursue an allegation of employment discrimination within the Maryland State government, and/or they can also file a complaint with the two external regulatory agencies (i.e., Maryland Commission on Civil Rights and U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission). Simultaneous complaints are permitted.

Q: How does an employee know if they qualify to file a Maryland Whistleblower Law complaint?

OSEEOC Answer:

There are three criteria required to have a Maryland Whistleblower Law complaint: (1) complainant reports a protected disclosure, with the intention of exposing a violation of law, regulation, policy, or danger to the public; (2) complainant's agency takes or refuses to take any personnel action as a reprisal against the complainant; and (3) a causation between (1) and (2), meaning the complainant must demonstrate a causal connection between the protected activity and the personnel action.

Q: What are an employee's options if they disagree with the OSEEOC's investigation findings of a Maryland Whistleblower complaint?

OSEEOC Answer:

For whistleblower complaints, when permitted, a complainant may appeal to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) either (1) within 10 days after receiving a decision, or (2) when a decision is not issued within 60 days after the complaint is filed and the complainant requests a hearing. Within 45 days after the close of the hearing record, OAH shall issue a written, final decision.

EEO Spotlight

Preparing for the FY 2025 Annual Statewide EEO Report and EEOC EEO-4 Data Collection

Each year, the Office of the Statewide EEO Coordinator (OSEEOC) publishes the Annual Statewide EEO Report, which provides a comprehensive overview of workforce demographics, personnel actions, reasonable accommodations, and discrimination complaints across all Executive Branch agencies. This report, mandated by Maryland law, may be used as a data tool for decision-making across state government. While the development of this report is the responsibility of the OSEEOC, agencies across state government must submit their agencies FY 2025 EEO program data to the OSEEOC no later than Friday, August 8, 2025, so that it can be incorporated into the annual report. The OSEEOC is also hosting information sessions (i.e. Understanding the Annual Statewide EEO Report: What You Need to Know!) to assist EEO Professionals statewide with compiling this data for timely submission.

Simultaneously, agencies must prepare for the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) State and Local Government Information Report (EEO-4) Data Collection. The mandatory biennial data collection requires all state and local governments with 100 or more employees submit workforce demographic data including but not limited to race/ethnicity, sex, job category and salary band. While the EEOC has yet to release guidance on the 2025 data collections for submissions, the OSEEOC is closely monitoring for updates and preparing so that we can work directly with the state agencies Human Resources and EEO teams to collect data in a timely manner. The OSEEOC will be sure to provide updates as they become available.

EEO Spotlight

Maryland's Leadership in Ethical AI Policies for Hiring and Public Service

Maryland is emerging as a national leader in the responsible and ethical use of artificial intelligence (AI) in hiring and public service. In 2024, Governor Wes Moore took a major step forward by establishing the Governor's Artificial Intelligence Subcabinet through Executive Order 01.01.2024.02, which was later codified into law (Chapter 496, Acts of 2024). The Subcabinet ensures that AI systems deployed across state agencies adhere to key principles of fairness, transparency, and accountability. For more information, visit the [AI Subcabinet page](#).

In addition to this, Maryland made significant strides in 2020 by becoming one of the first states to regulate the use of AI in hiring with the passage of House Bill 1202. This law mandates that employers obtain express consent from candidates before using facial recognition technology in interviews. By addressing concerns related to bias, privacy, and fairness, Maryland is setting a benchmark for ethical AI practices in employment. Explore the law further through [Workable's guide](#).

Looking ahead to 2025, Maryland's commitment to AI ethics is only growing. The state plans to expand its AI policies with new safeguards, including enhanced transparency in AI decision-making, a deeper integration of AI ethics into public policy, and the development of a more comprehensive accountability framework. Through these initiatives, Maryland aims to serve as a model for other states looking to harness the power of AI responsibly, while ensuring the protection of civil rights and equitable access to opportunities. For more information, visit the [2025 Maryland AI Enablement Strategy and AI Study Roadmap](#).

To further support state employees, Maryland has launched free AI training in partnership with InnovateUS. This training equips staff with the tools to use AI responsibly, recognize and mitigate bias, and remain compliant with Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) regulations. This initiative reflects Maryland's broader commitment to improving government services through AI, while actively working to minimize the reinforcement of existing disparities. For more on the training program, read this [statement from DoIT](#).

Noteworthy Ruling

United Parcel Service Settles EEOC Sexual Harassment Charge

The United Parcel Service (UPS) in Santa Barbara, California, will pay \$10,000 and furnish other injunctive relief to settle a sexual harassment charge filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) on behalf of a member of a class of injured parties.

An EEOC charge of discrimination was filed on Dec. 6, 2021, alleging that UPS created a hostile work environment by failing to address ongoing sexual harassment by a coworker, along with denial of promotion due to sex. The EEOC investigated the allegations and found reasonable cause to believe that UPS violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 when it failed to remedy sexual harassment in the workplace for the individual who filed the charge, along with a class of female coworkers who were also affected by the harassment in the workplace.

Without admitting liability, UPS entered into a conciliation agreement with the EEOC. While the original charging party chose to pursue the matter on her own, the EEOC conciliated the case for one remaining class member. The company agreed to pay \$10,000 to the impacted class member, provide training to all employees at the Santa Barbara UPS service center, and permanently affix the UPS “Golden Rules” on the inside of the bathrooms within the same service center. Additionally, UPS will post a notice to all employees about the resolution of this charge and their rights under federal anti-discrimination law at the Santa Barbara location. The EEOC will monitor compliance for the agreement’s three-year term.

Click here to read more: <https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/united-parcel-service-settles-eeoc-sexual-harassment-charge>

Noteworthy Ruling

EEOC Wins \$405,083 Jury Verdict Against St. Petersburg Senior Living Facility

A federal jury awarded \$405,083 to a veteran in a disability discrimination case against a St. Petersburg, Fla. senior living facility and its operating companies, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) announced. According to the EEOC's suit, The Princess Martha, the senior living facility managed by TJM Property Management and TJM Properties Inc., violated federal law when they denied a reasonable accommodation and refused to hire a veteran who applied for a job.

The EEOC presented evidence at trial showing that the applicant disclosed to The Princess Martha's hiring manager that she is a veteran with post-traumatic stress syndrome and took medication to treat the condition, which would cause a drug test to fail. Thereafter, the applicant took the required drug test and made repeated attempts to provide proof of her legally prescribed medications, but The Princess Martha made no attempts to accommodate her and revoked her job offer. At trial, a top management official admitted that The Princess Martha submitted false information to the EEOC.

Such alleged conduct violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The EEOC filed its suit (EEOC v. Princess Martha, LLC, et al., Civil Action No 8:22-cv-2181-CEH-TGW) in U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its conciliation process.

The Tampa jury of eight returned a unanimous verdict finding that the applicant had a disability, disclosed the disability to The Princess Martha, and that the facility refused to accommodate her in the application process. The jury awarded \$5,083 in back pay, \$50,000 in compensatory damages, and \$350,000 in punitive damages. The jury also found that the two other defendants, the TJM entities, were integrated enterprises with The Princess Martha.

Click here to read more: <https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-wins-405083-jury-verdict-against-st-petersburg-senior-living-facility>

Noteworthy Ruling

Ned NoMad to Pay \$100,000 in EEOC Disability Lawsuit

Entities that own or operate The Ned NoMad hotel and members' club in Manhattan will pay \$100,000 to one former employee to settle a disability discrimination lawsuit filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, The Ned NoMad refused to accommodate an employee who provided a medical note stating that her knee condition limited her standing or walking to 30 minutes. The employee needed to use a stool only while at the host stand performing clerical work and checking guests in; she was able to perform all the essential functions of her host job, including walking guests to their destination in the hotel. The hotel refused to allow her to use a stool and terminated her employment.

Such alleged conduct violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities. The EEOC filed suit in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York (EEOC v. TNNY Hotel, LLC, Ned NY 28th, LLC, Soho House & Co Inc., and TNNY Restaurant, LLC, Case No. 1:24-cv-6487) after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its conciliation process.

In addition to \$100,000 in monetary relief to the employee, the consent decree resolving the litigation enjoins the Ned NoMad from denying reasonable accommodations to employees with disabilities because of image or guest-preference concerns. It also requires The Ned NoMad to update its employee handbook to identify the provision of a stool to a host as a possible reasonable accommodation; train its managers and employees on the provision of reasonable accommodations; and regularly report to the EEOC on its handling of accommodation requests and complaints of disability discrimination.

Click here to read more: <https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/ned-nomad-pay-100000-eeoc-disability-lawsuit>

Noteworthy Ruling

Bob's Tire to Pay \$250,000 in EEOC Sex, Race, National Origin Harassment and Retaliation Lawsuit

Bob's Tire Company, Inc., a used tire scrap and recycling facility in New Bedford, Massachusetts, will pay \$250,000 and provide other relief to settle a sex, race, national origin harassment and retaliation case filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, the company's owner and a co-worker subjected a class of Hispanic laborers to egregious and constant harassment, which included inappropriate and unlawful comments, gestures, and slurs relating to sex, national origin and race. At least one employee complained to the owner about the harassment but, instead of taking remedial action, the owner retaliated against the complaining employee by mocking him for being in a romantic and/or sexual relationship with the harassing co-worker, effectively condoning the illegal harassment in the workplace.

This alleged conduct violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination, including harassment, based on sex, race and national origin, and prohibits retaliation against employees who object to such discrimination. The EEOC filed suit in U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts (Civil Action No. 1:24-cv-10077-AK) after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its conciliation process.

Click here to read more: <https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/bobs-tire-pay-250000-eeoc-sex-race-national-origin-harassment-and-retaliation-lawsuit-0>

Noteworthy Ruling

EEOC Sues CEMEX Construction Materials Florida for Religious Discrimination

CEMEX Construction Materials Florida, LLC, which manufactures and delivers building construction materials, violated federal law when it failed to accommodate an employee's request to wear a close-fitting skirt over her pants as required by her religion, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) charged in a lawsuit.

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, CEMEX refused to allow an employee, who is an Apostolic Christian, a religious accommodation that allowed her to wear a skirt over her work pants. The company denied the accommodation because of its policy against loose-fitting clothing. The employee only wore close-fitting skirts over her work pants and was in compliance with company policy. Ultimately, the company forced the employee to choose between wearing a skirt or losing her job. The employee chose to continue wearing a skirt, which led to her termination.

Such alleged conduct violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination because of an individual's religion and requires employers to reasonably accommodate an employee's religious observance or practice unless doing so would cause an undue hardship. The EEOC filed suit (EEOC v. CEMEX Construction Materials Florida, LLC, Case No. 8:25-cv-1454) in U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its administrative conciliation process.

Click here to read more: <https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-sues-cemex-construction-materials-florida-religious-discrimination>

Noteworthy Ruling

EEOC Sues Criswell Chevrolet for Refusing to Accommodate Disabled Veteran

Criswell Chevrolet, Inc., one of Maryland's largest independent car dealership groups, violated federal law by refusing to allow a parts department worker to have a service dog at work as a reasonable accommodation for his post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) resulting from combat duty in the Iraq War, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) charged in a lawsuit.

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, Criswell Chevrolet summarily denied the parts department worker's request to bring a service dog to his workplace in order to help control his panic attacks brought on by PTSD. Criswell Chevrolet also refused to offer or propose alternative accommodations. The employer's demand that the employee continue to work while suffering panic attacks, and without any accommodation to control or prevent the attacks, forced the employee to quit, the EEOC said.

Such alleged conduct violates the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which prohibits employers from denying a reasonable accommodation absent undue hardship and without engaging in the interactive process. The EEOC filed suit in U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland (EEOC v. Criswell Chevrolet, Inc., Civil Action No. 8:25-cv-01632-TDC), after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its conciliation process. The EEOC seeks back pay, compensatory damages and punitive damages for the employee, and injunctive relief to remedy and prevent future discrimination based on disability.

Click here to read more: <https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-sues-criswell-chevrolet-refusing-accommodate-disabled-veteran>

Diversity Corner

Work is broken. Gen Z Can Help Fix It



Photo credit: Ted.com

In her TED Talk, *"Work is Broken. Gen Z Can Help Fix It,"* Amanda Schneider explores how Gen Z's values and behaviors are reshaping the workplace. Drawing from extensive research, she highlights that Gen Z views hybrid work as a natural norm—not a challenge—and emphasizes the importance of transparency, inclusivity, and asynchronous communication. Schneider argues that embracing Gen Z's approach can lead to a more flexible, human-centered work environment that benefits all generations. Her insights challenge traditional workplace structures and advocate for a bold shift toward adaptability.

Amanda Schneider is the founder and president of ThinkLab, the only research firm dedicated to studying the intersection of design and business. A recognized thought leader, her insights have been featured in Forbes, MIT Sloan Management Review, Huffington Post and leading design industry publications. She is also the host of the Design Nerds Anonymous podcast, where curiosity meets innovation.

Click to view the video:

https://www.ted.com/talks/amanda_schneider_work_is_broken_gen_z_can_help_fix_it_mar_2025?language=en

Diversity Corner

How Distributed Work Can Unlock Your Potential



Photo credit: Ted.com

In her TED Talk titled *How Distributed Work Can Unlock Your Potential*, Avani Prabhakar explores how remote and asynchronous work models can empower individuals and organizations. Prabhakar highlights that distributed work allows employees to perform at their best, regardless of location, by offering flexibility and reducing the emphasis on traditional office presence. She notes that 92% of Atlassian employees report doing their best work, with one-third experiencing improved focus. This shift has particularly benefited introverts, who may excel in environments that value thoughtful communication over spontaneous interactions. Furthermore, she argues that focusing on "how" work is done—through intentional collaboration and support—rather than "where" or "when," can unlock human potential and foster a more inclusive, efficient, and balanced work environment.

As chief people officer at Atlassian, Avani Prabhakar leads teams supporting nearly 12,000 distributed employees globally. Her role focuses on building the processes, policies and practices to unlock each employee's full potential — particularly as new technologies and post-pandemic work habits have changed business.

Click to view the video:

https://www.ted.com/talks/avani_prabhakar_how_distributed_work_can_unlock_your_potential?autoplay=true

2025 Diversity Calendar

July 2025

Date	Holiday
July 4	Independence Day
July 14	International Non-Binary People's Day

August 2025

Date	Holiday
August 7	Purple Heart Day
August 9	International Day of World's Indigenous People
August 31	International Day of People of African Descent

September 2025

Date	Holiday
September 1	Labor Day
September 10	World Suicide Prevention Day
September 11	Patriot Day

Meetings and Trainings

July 2025

ADA 35 Weekly Webinar Series

Date: Tuesdays, starting July 8, 2025 to July 29, 2025

Time: 11:30 am to 1:00 pm

Click here to register: <https://adata.org/anniversary-event/ada-35-weekly-webinar-series>

Statewide EEO Program Overview - Virtual Session

Date: July 9, 2025

Time: 10:00 am to 11:30 am

Click here to register: <https://forms.gle/PZhWjgpm5UHaxQCr5>

JAN: Navigating Performance Discussions and the Accommodation Process – Virtual Session

Date: July 10, 2025

Time: 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Click here to register:

<https://askjan.org/events/index.cfm?calview=eventdetails&dtid=50C15401-C26A-41B3-36E7E59E52C7BA51>

Annual Statewide EEO Report: What you need to know! – Virtual Session

Date: July 11, 2025

Time: 10:00 am – 11:30 am

Click here to register: <https://forms.gle/6eE4pyBsQH7HkoUi9>

Meetings and Trainings

July 2025

MD Whistleblower Law Information Session - Virtual Session

Date: July 16, 2025

Time: 10:00 am to 11:30 am

Click here to register: <https://forms.gle/hPQq6mGmyi7jFx927>

Annual Statewide EEO Report: What you need to know! – Virtual Session

Date: July 18, 2025

Time: 10:00 am – 11:30 am

Click here to register: <https://forms.gle/CLYtaLmjbPPr1N4Q7>

Annual Statewide EEO Report: What you need to know! - Virtual Session

Date: July 23, 2025

Time: 10:00 am – 11:30 am

Click here to register: <https://forms.gle/s7BTNVtCk7knmXXX9>

Meetings and Trainings

August 2025

ADA Coordinators Meeting – Virtual Session

Date: August 6, 2025

Time: 10:00 am to 11:30 am

Click here to register: <https://forms.gle/VNkC2VPprqLfqePb7>

The Fundamentals of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act, State Disability Laws and Policies, and the Reasonable Accommodations Process – Virtual Session

Date: August 13, 2025

Time: 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Click here to register: <https://forms.gle/bUSgRSBwYdwqDvB5A>

Reasonable Accommodation Requests and the Interactive Process—A Hands on Approach: In Person Session

Date: August 20, 2025

Time: 10:00 am to 12:30 pm

Location: TBA

Click here to register: <https://forms.gle/K8CcN6G6Eb7mXPjK9>

September 2025

Sexual Harassment Prevention Training Train-the-Trainer – Virtual Session

Presented by: Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR)

Date: September 3, 2025 and September 4, 2025

Time: 9:00 am to 3:00 pm each day

Click here to register: <https://forms.gle/6UnJ8489csCXKDrM7>

Resources for EEO Professionals

Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)

dors.maryland.gov

US Department of Labor

www.dol.gov

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

www.dbm.maryland.gov/employees/Pages/EAP.aspx

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

www.eeoc.gov

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

askjan.org

Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR)

mccr.maryland.gov

Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)

www.shrm.org

Maryland Department of Disabilities

mdod.maryland.gov

Out & Equal Workplace Advocates

outandequal.org

Chimes

chimes.org

Maryland LGBT Chamber of Commerce

mdlgbt.org

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