

Office of the Statewide  
EEO Coordinator  
**EEO Connection Newsletter**

**Issue 2**  
**April 2026 – June 2026**

**Statewide EEO Coordinator’s Message**

Welcome to the latest edition of the EEO Connection newsletter, a quarterly publication for state of Maryland government employees. The Office of the Statewide EEO Coordinator team appreciates your readership and support. As we begin the second quarter of 2026, we’re excited to share some updates and news.

First, the OSEEOC is excited to announce the implementation of the Notice of Non-Retaliation and Non-Retaliation in the Workplace information session, which will take effect on April 1, 2026. A memorandum was emailed on Monday, March 16th, to the Statewide EEO Community regarding the purpose of the new document and information about upcoming information sessions. There will be two sessions offered in April, and the registration information can be found on page 11.

Second, the OSEEOC has published a revised version of the State of Maryland Equal Employment Opportunity Investigations for State Law Enforcement Officers policy and procedure. This revision was due to the Law Enforcement Bill of Rights (LEBOR) being repealed in 2021 and replaced with the Maryland Police Accountability Act of 2021. The revised policy can be found at <https://dbm.maryland.gov/eo/Pages/EEOStatutes.aspx>

Thirdly, the OSEEOC will host professional development opportunities from April 2026 to June 2026. Registration information can be found on pages 11-13. In addition, meeting invitations will be sent directly to EEO Professionals for the next ADA Coordinators meeting and Statewide EEO group meeting. Therefore, please accept the invitations if you plan to attend.

With that said, turn to page 4 and read about Governor Moore’s statement on the passing of Reverend Jesse Jackson . On page 5, read about how the EEOC and OPM Issue FAQs on Federal Sector Telework to Accommodate Disabilities. On pages 6-9, read about noteworthy rulings. 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 Fair Practices Officers and EEO Officers obtain assistance from the Employee Complaint Assistance Program (ECAP) to have external investigators assist with conducting investigations so that they can be concluded in a timely manner and in compliance with SPP 5-212. Also, through ECAP, can the external investigator assist with facilitating training and providing coverage when the requesting agency's EEO office is experiencing a staff shortage?**

**OSEEOC Answer:**

No, this is not how ECAP was intended to be utilized. The OSEEOC established ECAP to address state agencies' periodic need for assistance from an external investigator, due to special circumstances that might impair or be perceived to impair the agency's ability to perform an objective investigation. Through ECAP, participating EEO Officers may volunteer based on their availability to conduct investigations for sister agencies upon request in the event of a conflict. For example, 1. The accused is the agency head or the investigator's immediate supervisor; 2. The investigator has a relationship, either personal or professional, with the complainant, the respondent, or both; 3. The investigator, due to personal reasons, feels they cannot be objective; or 4. Other situations are to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**Q: Can Human Resource professionals attend the statewide EEO trainings and meetings, since their work often overlaps with EEO's?**

**OSEEOC Answer:**

Yes, HR professionals within state government that are interested in attending should contact the OSEEOC team at [oseeoc.dbm@maryland.gov](mailto:oseeoc.dbm@maryland.gov) to register for trainings and meetings.

# EEO Spotlight 1

## Governor Moore Statement on the Passing of Reverend Jesse Jackson

**Published: 2/17/2026**

Governor Wes Moore released the following statement regarding the passing of Reverend Jesse Jackson.

“Today, Maryland mourns the passing of Reverend Jesse Jackson—a giant of the civil rights movement and a champion for the dignity of working people.

“Of the many shoulders that we stand on, Jesse Jackson’s were amongst the broadest. He led with love and reminded all of us of our voice and our power. Reverend Jackson was a trailblazer who never waited for permission or to ask for a seat at the table—he insisted on it, and he widened that table for generations to come.

“Reverend Jackson spent his life turning pain into purpose and protest into progress and organizing communities to make those promises real.

“Dawn and I send our deepest condolences to the Jackson family and to all who loved him and were shaped by his life’s work. We pray that Reverend Jackson may enjoy eternal peace and a well-deserved rest.”

**Read more at: <https://governor.maryland.gov/news/press/pages/Governor-Moore-Statement-on-the-Passing-of-Reverend-Jesse-Jackson.aspx>**

## EEO Spotlight 2

### EEOC and OPM Issue FAQs on Federal Sector Telework to Accommodate Disabilities

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), together with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), provided federal agencies with a [joint technical assistance document](#) addressing telework as a reasonable accommodation for federal employees with disabilities.

This joint technical assistance document is structured as an accessible FAQ and helps agencies comply with recent instructions from the President to return the executive branch to in-person work, consistent with applicable law. It also helps agencies continue meeting their responsibilities to provide equal employment opportunity and reasonable accommodations to employees with disabilities under the standards of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended.

Among other topics, this joint-technical assistance helps federal agencies determine when employees' requests for telework accommodations may be granted, modified, or denied. And it gives agencies information about effectively structuring their processes for telework accommodations moving forward.

“President Trump has given a clear directive to the federal workforce to return to in-person work to the maximum extent possible consistent with applicable law. These FAQs use the EEOC's existing guidance to address common questions on how federal agencies can comply with that presidential directive while also complying with their obligations to provide reasonable accommodations under the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act,” **said EEOC Chair Andrea Lucas**. “In these FAQs, the EEOC and OPM remind federal agencies of the importance of engaging in the interactive accommodations process while they continue to serve the American people efficiently and effectively.”

Click here to read more: <https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/eeoc-and-opm-issue-faqs-federal-sector-telework-accommodate-disabilities>

# Noteworthy Ruling 1

## Louisville Comedy Club Will Pay \$372,500 to Conciliate EEOC Sexual Harassment Charges

Louisville Comedy Club will pay \$372,500 in monetary relief and furnish extensive injunctive relief to resolve a finding of sex discrimination and retaliation by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in a conciliation agreement, the federal agency announced.

The conciliation follows an EEOC investigation into charges where the agency found that employees were subjected to sexual harassment by a manager. The investigation also found that the club failed to comply with mandatory federal reporting requirements and failed to post the “Know Your Rights: Workplace Discrimination is Illegal” poster.

“We are pleased that Louisville Comedy Club is committed to ensuring that their employees work in an environment free of harassment and to complying with federal reporting requirement,” **said Richard Burgamy, acting EEOC Indianapolis District Director.** “Recognizing and addressing sexual harassment is critical to maintaining a workplace where employees are treated with dignity and the law is upheld.”

Click here to read more: <https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/louisville-comedy-club-will-pay-372500-conciliate-eeoc-sexual-harassment-charges>

## Noteworthy Ruling 2

### **Amer Sports Winter & Outdoor Company to Pay \$350,000 in EEOC Age Discrimination and Retaliation Case**

Amer Sports Winter & Outdoor Company, also known as ASWO, a global recreational gear company with employees throughout the United States, will pay \$350,000 and provide other relief to settle a lawsuit alleging unlawful retaliation under the Age Discrimination and Employment Act (ADEA), the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) announced.

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, a Boulder, Colorado-based employee complained multiple times to human resources and management about age discrimination during an organizational restructuring, expressing his belief that the company placed younger, less experienced employees in newly created leadership roles without posting the positions or giving older, more experienced employees the opportunity to apply.

When the employee complained that these actions constituted age discrimination, his regional manager and the company's human resources representative warned him not to escalate his complaint further. ASWO never investigated the employee's complaints; instead, when the employee elevated his complaint to the company's global vice president, ASWO terminated him less than six weeks later, according to the suit.

"The EEOC is committed to holding employers accountable for retaliation and to safeguarding employees who exercise their rights under federal anti-discrimination laws," said **Mary Jo O'Neill, regional attorney for the EEOC's Phoenix District Office**. "Employers must not be permitted to engage in any conduct that would punish or otherwise dissuade employees from speaking up to oppose age discrimination."

**Click here to read more:** <https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/amer-sports-winter-outdoor-company-pay-350000-eeoc-age-discrimination-and-retaliation-case>

## Noteworthy Ruling 3

### YMHA to Pay \$100,200 to Resolve EEOC Religious Discrimination and Retaliation Charge

The Young Men's and Women's Hebrew Association (YMHA/YWHA) of Washington Heights and Inwood agreed to provide \$100,200 to a former employee to settle a religious discrimination and retaliation charge filed with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency announced.

The EEOC's investigation found that the YMHA violated federal law when it failed to provide a Christian employee with a religious accommodation to allow her to attend Sunday services and meetings required of her as a church leader, and then retaliated against her, forcing her to quit in 2022.

“We commend the YMHA for revising its policies and implementing training that will have a lasting impact on employees seeking accommodations for their sincerely held religious beliefs,” **said Arlean Nieto, acting director of the EEOC's New York District Office.** “A reminder to employers: Title VII applies to all aspects of an individual's religious observance, practice and belief. When religion conflicts with a work requirement, employers must provide an accommodation, unless doing so would cause an undue hardship.”

The YMHA's alleged conduct violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits religious discrimination because of an individual's religion and requires employers to reasonably accommodate the employee's religious observance or practice unless doing so would cause undue hardship. Title VII also prohibits retaliation by an employer because a worker engaged in protected activity, such as making a request for a religious accommodation.

Click here to read more: <https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/ymha-pay-100200-resolve-eeoc-religious-discrimination-and-retaliation-charge>

## Noteworthy Ruling 4

### Rex Healthcare to Pay \$150,000 in EEOC COVID-19 Vaccine Religious Accommodation Suit

Rex Healthcare, Inc., a private, non-profit health care provider in Raleigh, will pay \$150,000 and furnish other relief to settle a U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) religious accommodation lawsuit, the federal agency announced.

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, Rex Healthcare unlawfully denied a remote employee's request to be exempted from the provider's mandatory COVID-19 vaccine policy as a religious accommodation.

Although in 2019 and 2020 Rex Healthcare approved the employee's requests for a religious exemption from the company's flu vaccine requirement, it denied each of her four requests for an exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine requirement, rejecting her sincerely held religious belief that receiving vaccines is inconsistent with God's will, and despite the information she provided in support of her position. Ultimately, the company fired her in November 2021 for refusing to comply with the COVID-19 vaccine mandate, according to the suit.

“Even when faced with unique challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, employers must comply with federal civil rights law,” **said Melinda Dugas, regional attorney for the EEOC's Charlotte District.** “The EEOC will continue to take action when an employee's right to religious freedom has been unnecessarily restricted.”

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. Rex Healthcare, Inc., Case No. 5:24-cv-00739-BO) in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its administrative conciliation process.

Click here to read more: <https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/rex-healthcare-pay-150000-eeoc-covid-19-vaccine-religious-accommodation-suit>

# 2026 Diversity Calendar

## April 2026

<b>Date</b>	<b>Holiday</b>
April 2	World Autism Awareness Day
April 22	Earth Day

## May 2026

<b>Date</b>	<b>Holiday</b>
May 25	Memorial Day (State offices are closed)

## June 2026

<b>Date</b>	<b>Holiday</b>
June 19	Juneteenth (State offices are closed)

# Meetings and Trainings April 2026

## April 2026

**Non-Retaliation in the Workplace - Information Session - Virtual Session**

**Date:** Wednesday, April 15, 2026

**Time:** 10:00 am - 11:30 am

**Click here to register:** <https://forms.gle/Gbo5TxqvNaDAMdT4A>

**Non-Retaliation in the Workplace - Information Session - Virtual Session**

**Date:** Wednesday, April 22, 2026

**Time:** 10:00 am - 11:30 am

**Click here to register:** <https://forms.gle/cGhGWhtevcXXDFgi7>

# Meetings and Trainings May 2026

## May 2026

### Statewide EEO Program Overview - **Virtual Session**

**Date:** Monday, May 4, 2026

**Time:** 10:00 am - 11:30 am

**Click here to register:** <https://forms.gle/ujxNaN1dcmy9mPjZ9>

### MD Whistleblower Law Information Session: **Virtual Session**

**Date:** Tuesday, May 5, 2026

**Time:** 10:00 am – 11:30 am

**Click here to register:** <https://forms.gle/o2kWViDxP3ExegTJ7>

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

**Date:** Wednesday, May 6, 2026

**Time:** 10:00 am – 12:30 pm

**Click here to register:** <https://forms.gle/QgfCMysxcxwft6eX9>

### Reasonable Accommodation Requests and the Interactive Process – A Hands-on Approach: **Virtual Session**

**Date:** Thursday, May 14, 2026

**Time:** 10:00 am – 12:30 pm

**Click here to register:** <https://forms.gle/ZTEKRzvb1vEnWPPf6>

# Meetings and Trainings June 2026

## June 2026

### **ADA Coordinators Meeting – Virtual Session**

**Date:** Wednesday, June 3, 2026

**Time:** 10:00 am – 11:30 am

**Please note: A meeting invitation will be sent to all ADA Coordinators.**

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

**Presented by:** Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR)

**Date:** Wednesday, June 3, 2026, and Thursday, June 4, 2026

**Time:** 9:00 am – 3:00 pm each day

**Click here to register:** <https://forms.gle/gEPS93PiYwFkSD866>

### **Statewide EEO Group Meeting - In person**

**Date:** TBA

**Location:** TBA

**Time:** 10:00 am – 12:00 noon

**Please note: A meeting invitation will be sent to Fair Practice Officers, EEO Officers and ADA Coordinators.**

### **2026 Virtual ADA Conference for State and Local Governments**

**Free Web Event**

**Date:** June 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**Click here to register:** <https://mailchi.mp/gsfic.ga.gov/ada-conference-2?e=bc685b80e>

# Resources for EEO Professionals

**Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)**  
[dors.maryland.gov](http://dors.maryland.gov)

**US Department of Labor**  
[www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov)

**Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**  
[www.dbm.maryland.gov/employees/Pages/EAP.aspx](http://www.dbm.maryland.gov/employees/Pages/EAP.aspx)

**Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)**  
[www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov)

**Job Accommodation Network (JAN)**  
[askjan.org](http://askjan.org)

**Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR)**  
[mccr.maryland.gov](http://mccr.maryland.gov)

**Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)**  
[www.shrm.org](http://www.shrm.org)

**Maryland Department of Disabilities**  
[mdod.maryland.gov](http://mdod.maryland.gov)

**Out & Equal Workplace Advocates**  
[outandequal.org](http://outandequal.org)

**Chimes**  
[chimes.org](http://chimes.org)

**Maryland LGBT Chamber of Commerce**  
[mdlgbt.org](http://mdlgbt.org)

# OSEEOC Team

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EEO Compliance Coordinator