



February 2012

## Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy

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### **POLICY SCOPE**

This policy applies to all 100% owned or controlled subsidiaries of Verizon Communications Inc. ("Verizon"). This policy applies to all locations where employees work or represent Verizon, including the workplace, customer and vendor premises, and company sponsored activities.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Verizon's policy is to provide equal employment opportunity (EEO) to all persons without regard to *race, color, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, national origin, disability, marital status, citizenship status, veteran status, military status or other legally protected classifications*. Verizon does not discriminate on the basis of any protected classification listed above, or other categories protected under federal, state or local law.

Verizon is committed to a workplace free from unlawful discrimination and harassment and will not tolerate discriminatory or harassing behavior of any kind. This commitment extends beyond that which may be required by law and strives to maintain a work environment totally free from discrimination or harassment. This zero tolerance policy applies to any conduct that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Prohibited harassment includes verbal, physical or other behavior that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of that person's *protected classification* (above). Such harassment, and the discriminatory treatment of others based on their protected classification, is unacceptable regardless whether it is instigated by employees or non-employees, including contractors, interns, customers, vendors, suppliers and visitors.

It is also the policy of Verizon to take appropriate Affirmative Action to assure equal opportunity for all applicants and employees, without regard to race, gender, disability status and veteran status. Verizon invites all employees to voluntarily self identify on the basis of race, gender, veteran status or disability, for coverage under Verizon's Affirmative Action program. Disability related information will be kept confidential.

Verizon will make reasonable accommodations for the physical/mental impairments of employees or applicants if doing so will enable the employee or applicant to perform the essential functions of a position that he/she holds or is seeking, so long the accommodation would not cause an undue hardship to the business.

It is also the policy of Verizon to reasonably accommodate an employee's religious beliefs, practices and observances, unless doing so results in undue hardship to the company. However, employees may not impose their religious beliefs on other employees, customers, business suppliers or other stakeholders.

### **Protection from Retaliation**

Verizon prohibits any form of retaliation against applicants or employees for filing a complaint, reporting alleged violations or for cooperating in a company investigation. Committing any act of retaliation alone can be cause for appropriate corrective action, including termination of employment.

### **RESPONSIBILITY - EEO**

All employees are expected to adhere to this policy in their day-to-day working relationships and in carrying out their job responsibilities. Violations of this policy will result in appropriate corrective action. This can include termination of employment for severe violations, even for a first offense. Severe violations may include, but are not limited to, use of offensive racial or ethnic slurs or other abusive or offensive language, or unwanted and inappropriate touching of a sexual nature.

Supervisors/managers are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and for providing a work environment free from any form of discrimination or harassment. Management is also responsible for ensuring that all employees under their supervision are fully aware of this policy and appropriate complaint procedures (below). Managers who have knowledge of conduct that violates company policy and fail to take the proper corrective action steps, or who otherwise condone such conduct, will themselves be subject to corrective action up to and including termination of employment. Supervisors/local management must notify Human Resources whenever they become aware of any unlawful discrimination or harassment matters. Human Resources is responsible for consulting with local supervision, conducting an investigation, where appropriate, and recommending corrective action when warranted.

### **RESPONSIBILITY - Affirmative Action**

Human Resources is responsible for the coordination and facilitation of Verizon's Affirmative Action Program with Verizon managers and supervisors. Questions regarding the administration of this policy should be referred to Human Resources. The company's veterans/disabilities affirmative action plan is available for review during regular business hours upon request to Human Resources through the VZ Ethics and EEO GuideLine at 800-856-1885 or online at [www.verizonguideline.com](http://www.verizonguideline.com). Any inquiries, contacts or documents received from the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) must be immediately referred to Human Resources.

### **RESPONSIBILITY - Accommodations**

Employees or applicants are responsible for informing their management team or Human Resources of the need for accommodation. If you need accommodation for a disability in order to perform the essential functions of your job, contact your supervisor and your local Human Resources department for assistance. The Human Resources department will work with you to determine potential reasonable accommodations if doing so will enable you to perform the essential functions of your position. Business necessity, operational considerations, work rules and co-worker impact may be considered in determining the nature of any accommodation to be made. Employees and applicants should not be placed in positions where, with or without reasonable accommodation, there would exist a direct threat to the safety or health of themselves or others.

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

An individual who believes he/she has been subjected to, or is aware of, unlawful discrimination, harassment or retaliation should immediately bring their concerns to:

- his/her supervisor or manager;
- local Human Resources Department; or
- the VZ Ethics and EEO GuideLine at 800-856-1885 or online at [www.verizonguideline.com](http://www.verizonguideline.com).

Complaints will be treated in a confidential manner and information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis. All complaints will be properly investigated. Any unlawful acts of discrimination, harassment or retaliation will be addressed and remedied in an appropriate manner up to and including termination of employment.

Complaints received from an external governmental agency must be immediately submitted to the appropriate Human Resources group for proper handling and response.

#### **Disclaimer Statement**

This policy is not a contract of employment or a legal document between you and the Verizon company that employs you, or Verizon Communications Inc. or any of its subsidiaries. Thus, it must not be construed as a guarantee of employment or a promise regarding the terms and conditions of employment, either express or implied.

This policy may be changed by the company at any time without notice. Employment with Verizon is "at will," which means that you or Verizon may terminate your employment, at any time, with or without cause, with or without notice, for any reason not prohibited by law, unless governed by a collective bargaining agreement or specific contract of employment. This at will employment relationship may not be modified except in a written agreement signed by the employee and an authorized representative of Verizon.