

# URGE

## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

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### URGE Complaints and Reporting Policy for United States Geological Survey (USGS)

This is what was found by Einstein Pod at USGS on policies for handling complaints, the reporting process, resources, and possible outcomes. Several answers (denoted with asterisks) were shared by the USGS Subpods. Some information was public; most is only available to employees on the intranet. NOTE: This is a draft based on USGS policies, but we are actively working with our Fellowship Program to obtain permission to declare an affiliation with them.

- **The link(s) to the reporting policy at our organization are only available to USGS employees via the intranet, but are listed here:**
  - [Link](#) - USGS Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity Policies
  - [Link](#) - USGS Complaints Process for employees
  - [Link](#) - USGS Anti-Harassment Policy
  - Are reporting policies regularly reviewed? What is the process for changing policy?\*
  - Anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies are dictated by Federal Law and are reinforced by the Director of the USGS on an *annual* basis:
  - [DEO-Policy-Statements-EEO-NonDiscrim-FY2019.pdf \(usgs.gov\)](#)
    - [DEO-Policy-Statements-Diversity-Inclusion-FY2019.pdf \(usgs.gov\)](#)
    - Process for changing policy isn't clear, but would likely require change in Federal Law.
  - Are the rates of reporting made publicly available (e.g. # of reports each year)?\*
  - Rates of complaints are not made publicly available (at least we don't think they are), however, older data can be viewed internally on the [EEO Internal site](#).
  - The DOI provides data in the form of a *USGS No Fear Act Report* that can be viewed on a public website [here](#), that indicates the number of complaints per fiscal year back to 2016, including the number of repeat offenders, complaints by basis and issue, disciplinary actions taken, processing time, and complaints dismissed or withdrawn.
- **What mechanisms are available for reporting complaints, bias, microaggressions, harassment, and overt racism?**
  - [Link](#) to the staff of the DEO; Chief is Regina Neal-Mujahid
  - Employees first file a pre-complaint, then meet with an EEO counselor. Employees initiate contact with an EEO counselor within 45 days of the harassment. The EEO Counselor is then tasked to gather information from both involved parties. Complaint policy states that the "EEO Counselor, serving as a neutral fact finder, will gather the critical data, interview key witnesses, and work between" the two parties to try to achieve resolution



## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

- Reports cannot be made online. The process includes a Pre-Complaint and Formal Complaint process, and it does not appear that complaints can be made anonymously.
  - Who do in-person and online reports go to? Director, Office of Civil Rights, Department of the Interior; or the Chief, Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity (DEO), USGS, National Center. Formal complaints can also be filed with the Office of the Secretary of the Interior.
  - Who has access to see reports?  
The EEO Counselors have access; according to the internal site, they are:
    - James Mays, Counseling & Mediation Manager, [jmmays@usgs.gov](mailto:jmmays@usgs.gov)
    - Felicia Ellis, Lead EEO Counselor, [fellis@usgs.gov](mailto:fellis@usgs.gov)
    - Lorri Jackson-Reid, EEO Counselor, [lireid@usgs.gov](mailto:lireid@usgs.gov)
    - Monica Hodnett, EEO Counselor, [mhodnett@usgs.gov](mailto:mhodnett@usgs.gov)
  - From the site: “If a complainant does not agree with the FAD issued by the Departmental Office of Civil Rights, the complainant may appeal said decision to the Office of Federal Operations at EEOC. This administrative appeal must be filed within 30 days of receipt of the FAD. An appellate review by the Office of Federal Operations of the Final Agency Decision will be conducted and a final decision rendered. If the complainant disagrees with the final administrative appeal decision, the complainant may then file a civil action in Federal District Court.”
  - Police are not involved in the process, although Are police included in the process? When and how? Are individuals accompanied by an advocate or someone from the organization?\*
  - Police are brought into the process if it is determined that legal action is likely to be required.
- **What are the outcomes or consequences for reported individuals?\***
    - Use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (mediation/ombudsperson) strongly encouraged by EEO office
    - Consequences depend on the findings of an investigation. Consequences generally take the form of training (workplace sensitivity, bias training, etc.). Disciplinary action and termination are possible outcomes, but only for individuals found to have egregiously violated EEO laws.
  - **What resources are available for individuals reporting?**
    - Counselors are named above.



## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

- Protection against retaliation is spelled out in the anti-harassment memo linked here: [370.734.1 - Anti-Harassment Policy and Implementing Procedures \(usgs.gov\)](#)
- **What resources are available to groups raising issues or proposing changes?**
  - Affinity groups are available