

E O C NEWS

EYES RIGHT ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

"What may seem harmless, or even an insignificant remark could do a lot of harm." This is one of the lessons that stood out for Corporal Onika Williams during the virtual public education session conducted by the Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC) for 30 Senior Enlisted Advisors to Command of the Trinidad and Tobago Regiment.

The eager participants were well engaged at the session, which focused on the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace. EOC conducts virtual sessions with organisations on discrimination-related

matters, free of charge. The session was conducted via Zoom on 30 April and was facilitated by Legal Officer, Lorelei Wong. She stressed that prevention is the most effective way an employer can address harassment in the workplace. Employers should adopt and enforce a clear sexual harassment policy, train and retrain employees at least once a year, and take all complaints seriously.

Ms. Wong imparted on the group that "experiencing sexual harassment is one of the most difficult situations a person can face in the workplace and while employers are responsible for ensuring that

employees do not face such situations, we all need to treat each other with respect." If someone complains about sexual harassment, immediate actions should be taken to investigate the complaint. Participants were encouraged to consider factors that may cultivate sexual harassment in the workplace and take the necessary steps to minimize them.

To request a virtual session, send an email to: communications@eoc.gov.tt.



GET TO KNOW US

HOW TO LODGE A COMPLAINT

Complaints can be lodged online via:

Website:
<https://equalopportunity.gov.tt>

Email: complaints@eoc.gov.tt
(down the complaints form from the website and email the completed form)

In person: The EOC office located at #55-57 Manic Street, Chaguanas.

THE COMPLAINT PROCESS:

Step 1: After receiving the complaint form, the matter is assigned to a Legal and Investigating Officer and an acknowledgement letter is sent to the complainant.

Step 2: If the complaint has met the requirements under the Equal Opportunity Act, the investigation process begins.

Step 3: If the investigation concludes that the complaint may be resolved by conciliation, the matter is referred to conciliation. A notice would be issued to the complainant, the respondent and any other relevant persons to attend a conciliation session at a specified date, time and place.

Step 4: If the matter was not resolved at the stage of conciliation, complainants can request that the matter be referred to the Equal Opportunity Tribunal for adjudication.

—LET'S TALK CULTURE—

One of the impacts of COVID-19, is that many cultural activities are being cancelled. In Trinidad and Tobago, we have a multitude of cultures and as a society, we celebrate with our compatriots. There are non-Hindus who cook roti and don traditional Indian wear for Divali, non-Muslims who make sawine for Eid-ul-Fitr and non-Christians who celebrate Christmas. Even though COVID-19 measures keep us far apart, it is these shared cultural traditions that keep us together as a nation.

However, we still have

work to do. At the Equal Opportunity Commission, discrimination based on race and ethnicity is one of the most lodged complaint that we receive each year.

Learning and understanding different cultures help us to dispel negative stereotypes and personal biases about different groups.

On 21 May, United Nations Members commemorated World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development. Audre Lorde, Feminist and Civil Rights Activist perfectly sums up the importance of this occasion to promote culture and highlights the

significance of diversity as an agent of inclusion and positive change: "It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept and celebrate those differences".



Christine Cole
Conciliator /
Mediator

Racine Paul
Human Resource
Officer I (Ag.)

EOC WELCOMES NEW COMMISSIONER

Join us in welcoming to the board, Dr. Krystal-Jane Verasammy. Our newest member brings over a decade of experience as a chartered Counselling Psychologist. She is passionate about improving access to psychological therapies and reducing societal and self-stigma.

Dr. Verasammy took her oath of office and received her Instruments of Appointment from the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on 25th May 2021.



Dr. Krystal-Jane Verasammy



Global Accessibility Awareness Day

In an era when technology has become the mainstay of our lives, it's even more important to make digital applications and websites more inclusive, usable, and accessible to persons who are disabled.

Equal access removes barriers and unlocks the possible.

Find us on

#GAAD
MAY 20