



**FARM CREDIT SYSTEM INSURANCE CORPORATION POLICY STATEMENT CONCERNING
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND DIVERSITY
NV #24-02**

Effective Date: September 23, 2024

Effect on Previous Action: Replaces NV #23-03 (August 15, 2023).

Source of Authority: Farm Credit Act of 1971, as amended (Act), sections 5.53 and 5.58 (12 U.S.C. §§ 2277a-2 and 12 U.S.C. § 2277-a-7); Bylaws of Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation (as revised), BM-12-SEP-06-05; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Pub. L. 88-352), as amended (42 U.S.C. § 2000e *et seq.*) (which includes the Pregnancy Discrimination Act); section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 791); Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (Pub. L. 96-54), (5 U.S.C. § 3112); Equal Pay Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. § 206 (d)); Age Discrimination in Employment Act (29 U.S.C. § 621 *et seq.*); Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (42 U.S.C. § 2000ff); Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (42 U.S.C. 2000gg *et seq.*); Executive Order 11478, as amended by Executive Orders 13087 and 13152; Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act) (5 U.S.C. § 2301); EEOC Regulation 29 C.F.R Part 1614; EEOC Management Directives including MD-110 and MD-715; EEOC Enforcement Guidance: Vicarious Employer Liability for Unlawful Harassment by Supervisors, No. 915.002 (6/18/99); EEOC, “Model EEO Programs Must Have an Effective Anti-Harassment Program” (10/18/05).

WHEREAS, the Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation Board (Board) finds:

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, protects individuals against employment discrimination on the basis of race,

color, religion, national origin, and sex (including, but not limited to, discrimination based on gender, gender identity, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions);

- The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended, protects individuals who are 40 years of age or older from employment discrimination based on age;
- Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, prohibits employment discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities who work in the Federal Government and requires Federal agencies to provide reasonable accommodation to employees or job applicants with disabilities, unless doing so would cause undue hardship;
- The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 prohibits employment discrimination based on an individual's genetic information;
- The above laws also make it illegal to retaliate against a person because he or she filed a complaint, participated in discrimination or harassment complaint proceedings, or opposed discrimination;
- Executive Order 11478 (Equal Employment Opportunity in the Federal Government), as amended by Executive Orders 13087 and 13152, includes prohibitions on Federal employment discrimination based on sexual orientation and status as a parent;
- The No FEAR Act requires Federal agencies to be accountable for violations of antidiscrimination and whistleblower protection laws; and,
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) regulations at 29 CFR § 1614.102, as well as various EEOC guidance documents, provide standards and guidelines for Federal agencies to establish and maintain continuing affirmative programs to promote equal opportunity and to identify and eliminate discriminatory practices and policies.

THEREFORE, the Board adopts the following policy statement and attachment:

The Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation (Corporation) affirms its commitment to the principles embodied in the Federal laws, regulations, and executive orders that establish equal employment opportunity and prohibit employment discrimination. It is the policy of the Corporation to provide equal opportunity for all employees and applicants for employment and to prohibit discrimination in Corporation policies, program practices, and operations. All Corporation employment decisions will be made without regard to race, color, religion, sex (including, but not limited to, discrimination based on gender, gender identity, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), national origin, age, disability, genetic information, status as a parent, or reprisal for raising or participating in a discrimination or harassment complaint or opposing discriminatory or harassing employment practices. The Corporation will make reasonable accommodations for qualified applicants for employment and employees with physical or mental

disabilities under the law. Additionally, the Corporation will provide reasonable accommodations based on applicants' and employees' religious beliefs or practices, consistent with Title VII.

It is the Corporation's policy to provide a work environment free from unlawful discrimination and to protect all employees from harassment of any kind. The Corporation begins prompt, thorough, and impartial investigations within 10 days of receiving notice of harassment allegations. The Corporation also will not tolerate retaliation against any employee for reporting harassment or for aiding in any inquiry about harassment. An employee or applicant who believes they have been discriminated against must initiate contact with an EEO Counselor within 45 days of the date of the matter alleged to be discriminatory or, in the case of personnel action, within 45 days of the effective date of the action. Although the EEO complaint process is managed by the Director of the Office of EEO and Inclusion, FCSIC uses experienced outside vendors to perform EEO services. An employee or applicant wishing to enter the EEO process may contact an EEO Counselor at the following numbers: toll free phone 1-844-322-3233, TTY 703-883-4352.

Furthermore, the Corporation will seek to build and maintain a workforce that reflects the rich diversity of individual differences evident throughout this nation. The Corporation values individual differences as enriching and complementary to our organization. When individual differences are respected, recognized, and valued, diversity becomes a powerful force that can contribute to achieving superior results. Therefore, we will endeavor to create, maintain, and continuously improve on an organizational culture that fully recognizes, values, and supports employee diversity. The Corporation is committed to promoting and supporting an inclusive environment that strives to provide to all employees, individually and collectively, the chance to work to their full potential in the pursuit of its mission. When a barrier to someone achieving this goal exists, we will strive to remove this barrier.

Moreover, the Corporation is committed to increasing the representation of disabled veterans (defined as someone who is entitled to compensation under the laws administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs or someone who was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability) within its organization. Our nation owes a debt to veterans who are disabled as a result of their service. To honor these disabled veterans, the Corporation will place emphasis on making vacancies known to disabled veterans and providing opportunities for employing disabled veterans.

The Corporation expects full cooperation and assistance from everyone associated with recruitment, hiring and firing, development, transfer, promotion, layoff or recall, training, compensation, assignment or classification of employees, provision of benefits, or other terms and conditions of employment to assure that such actions are free of unlawful discrimination and support the Corporation's equal employment opportunity and diversity policies.

In addition, the Corporation will implement procedures for employees and applicants for employment to seek resolution of discrimination and harassment complaints in accordance with Federal law and regulations.

OVERALL OBJECTIVES:

- The Corporation is committed to ensuring that all employees and applicants for employment enjoy equality of opportunity from the Corporation regardless of their race, color, religion, sex (including, but not limited to, discrimination based on gender, gender identity, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), national origin, age, disability, genetic information, status as a parent, or reprisal for raising or participating in a discrimination or harassment complaint or opposing discriminatory or harassing employment practices.
- The Corporation will comply with all applicable EEOC regulations and guidelines for a Federal organization of its size and configuration. This includes maintaining a continuing affirmative program to promote equal opportunity and to identify and to eliminate discriminatory practices and policies; implementing procedures for employees and applicants for employment to seek resolution of discrimination and harassment complaints; and implementing procedures for qualified employees and applicants with disabilities to seek reasonable accommodation.

DATED THIS 24th DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2024

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD

ASHLEY
WALDRON

Digitally signed by
ASHLEY WALDRON
Date: 2024.09.24
09:23:02 -04'00'

Ashley Waldron
Secretary to the Board

Attachment: Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation Policy Statement Regarding Harassment

**FARM CREDIT SYSTEM INSURANCE CORPORATION
POLICY STATEMENT REGARDING HARASSMENT**

DEFINITION:

Harassment is unwelcome verbal or physical conduct based on race, color, religion, sex (including, but not limited to, discrimination based on gender, gender identity, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), national origin, age, disability, genetic information, status as a parent, or reprisal for raising or participating in a discrimination or harassment complaint or opposing discriminatory or harassing employment practices when the conduct results in a *tangible employment action* or creates a *hostile work environment*.

1. *Tangible Employment Actions* include:

- Hiring.
- Firing.
- Promoting.
- Denial of promotions.
- Demoting.
- Suspending.
- Removing.
- Reassigning.
- Negative performance evaluations.
- Withholding training or denying opportunities to compete for awards and recognition.
- Job assignments designed to limit career progression.
- Any other action that significantly affects one's employment status.

2. *Hostile Work Environment* occurs when anyone in the workplace engages in conduct so severe and pervasive that it creates a work environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or offensive.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Threats or reprimands.
- Intimidating acts, words, or gestures.
- Coercing acts.
- Emotional abuse, bullying, or stalking.
- Display of derogatory graphic or written material.
- Derogatory, offensive, or suggestive comments, slurs or jokes.
- Vulgar gestures or language.
- Unwelcome flirtations, advances, or touching.

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation (Corporation) does not tolerate harassment or retaliation against individuals who raise claims of harassment, report harassment, or otherwise participate in an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) or harassment inquiry or proceeding or for opposing discrimination or harassment. Any employee or agent of the Corporation found to have engaged in harassing behavior will be subject to discipline or adverse action.

This policy applies to all Corporation employees (whether supervisory or not); to all applicants for employment; and to third parties, such as contractors or any other nonemployees (consistent with the Corporation's control over third parties), in any Corporation-related setting, on or off Corporation premises. The Corporation begins prompt, thorough, and impartial investigations within 10 days of receiving notice of harassment allegations. The Corporation endeavors to protect the confidentiality of parties to a harassment complaint.

The Corporation's Chief Operating Officer (COO) is responsible for ensuring the Corporation complies with this policy.

The Corporation managers and supervisors will take responsibility for creating and upholding a harassment-free workforce; will commit to preventing harassment to their utmost ability; will immediately intervene to stop harassment when they become aware of it; will exercise independent judgment to report harassment to the COO even if the affected individual does not report it themselves; and will protect any employee or applicant who reports harassment or aids in any harassment inquiry from retaliation.

The Corporation employees are urged to protect their rights and those of others by reporting possible incidents of harassment through the procedures outlined in this policy.

COMPLAINT PROCESS:

Employees may choose to resolve a harassment complaint through the internal harassment complaint process or through other complaint processes. Both methods will result in a prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation. Job applicants may resolve a harassment complaint by pursuing an EEO claim, an Office of Special Counsel (OSC) complaint, or both, as appropriate, as discussed below. Employees planning to use both methods should be aware that there are strict time limits for filing a grievance or EEO complaint that will run simultaneously to the period in which the employee may attempt to reach an informal resolution.

A. Internal Harassment Complaint Process

If an employee believes someone in the workplace is harassing them in violation of this policy, the employee may choose to discuss the matter with any of the following individuals who may be able to assist them in resolving the matter or refer them to the appropriate person to resolve the harassment complaint:

- (a) The employee's supervisor;
- (b) The accused harasser's supervisor; or,
- (c) The Chief Human Capital Officer of the Farm Credit Administration (FCA), who is hereby designated as, and delegated the authority to act as, the Chief Human Capital Officer of the Corporation for this purpose.

The employee that is seeking a resolution and any individual named in (a) through (c) above may take any of the following steps to resolve the matter:

- Contact the accused harasser in person or in writing.
- Ask a resolving official to speak to the accused harasser about the employee's concern.
- Use mediation to address the concern.
- Explore other ways to resolve the concern.

Any individual listed in (a) through (c) above that is contacted by an employee regarding an act of harassment will inform the employee in the initial contact about the provisions in this policy relevant to the 15-day and 45-day time periods for filing a grievance or an EEO claim, respectively. (See discussion below.) Any individual listed in (a) through (c) above that helps the employee resolve the matter will record how the matter was resolved and provide a report to the COO.

B. Other Complaint Processes

Complaining employees may choose to pursue other complaint processes to resolve the complaint, depending on the nature of the harassment:

Corporation Grievance System: An employee may seek redress through the Corporation Grievance System for claims of harassment based on race, color, religion, sex (including, but not limited to, discrimination based on gender, gender identity, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), national origin, age, disability, genetic information, status as a parent, or reprisal for raising or participating in a discrimination or harassment complaint or opposing discriminatory or harassing employment practices.

An employee must submit a grievance within 15 calendar days from the date on which they knew or had reason to know about the issue, condition, or occurrence that is the subject of the grievance. A grievance presented beyond this time limit may be rejected as untimely, but an exception may be granted if the grievant can demonstrate that extenuating circumstances precluded the submission of the complaint within the 15-calendar-day time limit. *See* FCA PPM 827 for more information.

Harassment: Harassment is a form of unlawful discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 when it is based on race, color, religion, sex (including, but not limited to, discrimination based on gender, gender identity, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or reprisal for raising or participating in a discrimination or harassment complaint or opposing discriminatory or harassing employment practices. Federal government policy, as set forth in Executive Order 11478, as amended, forbids discrimination in Federal employment based on sexual orientation or status as a parent. The Corporation will address claims of harassment on any of these bases through the grievance system.

Grievance: A grievance is a request by an employee for “personal relief” in a matter of concern or dissatisfaction relating to the employment of the employee that is subject to the oversight of the Corporation. "Personal relief" means a specific remedy directly benefiting the grievant. Although the personal relief available through the grievance system does not include a disciplinary or other action affecting another employee, the Corporation may implement such corrective action as a result of a grievance system claim.

Claims: An employee or job applicant may bring claims based on race, color, religion, sex (including, but not limited to, discrimination based on gender, gender identity, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical

conditions), national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or reprisal for raising or participating in a discrimination or harassment complaint or opposing discriminatory or harassing employment practices. In the Corporation Board Action on Delegations of Certain Functions to Officials at the FCA, BM-21-JUN-01-03, effective June 21, 2001, the Corporation authorized FCA's EEO Director, or alternates as chosen by FCA, to serve as the Corporation's EEO Director. (As noted above, these claims can also be brought under the Corporation's grievance system.)

If an employee or a job applicant chooses to bring an EEO harassment claim, the EEO administrative process for filing discrimination claims (*see* 29 C.F.R. Part 1614) applies. These regulations require them to seek the advice of an EEO Counselor or the EEO Director *within 45 days of the date of the alleged discrimination or, for a discriminatory personnel action, within 45 days of the effective date of the action*. This means, even if an employee is attempting to resolve a concern informally or through the grievance system, the employee may need to contact an EEO Counselor or the EEO Director within the 45-day timeframe so that the employee's rights under the EEO administrative process are preserved.

The EEO process is designed to address and resolve issues of discrimination that have occurred in the workplace, promoting a fair and inclusive work environment. The EEO office conducts policy development, employee training, monitoring of workplace practices, investigation of complaints, and enforcement actions to further support the EEO process and promote fair and inclusive work environments.

Office of Special Counsel (OSC) Complaints: The OSC is an independent Federal investigative and prosecutorial agency whose basic authorities include protecting Federal employees and applicants from prohibited personnel practices. In some circumstances, employees may raise concerns to the OSC. *See* the OSC's website www.osc.gov or call (800) 872-9855 for more information.

Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) Complaints: In some circumstances, employees may be able to bring certain types of harassment claims or appeals to the MSPB. *See* the MSPB's web site www.mspb.gov or call (800) 209-8960 for more information.

CORRECTIVE ACTION

Whether the complaint was made through the EEO process or the Corporation grievance process, if the Corporation finds that harassment took place, the COO will consult with the *parties who need to know* to decide what corrective action to take. Parties who need to know may include:

- Supervisors of the complaining party or harasser.
- Supervisors affected by a proposed corrective action (such as a proposed transfer of the harasser).

- General Counsel.
- EEO Director.

Corrective action includes appropriate disciplinary action against employees who engage in discriminatory practices. Corrective action may also include remedial relief which places the aggrieved in the position they would have been absent the agency's discriminatory conduct. If harassment is found to have occurred, the Corporation will implement corrective action within sixty (60) calendar days of agency awareness of harassment if it is found to have occurred. The Corporation will initiate follow-up procedures to ensure that: (a) the problem has been resolved, and (b) no retaliation occurs.