



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 197TH INFANTRY BRIGADE
5241 23RD INFANTRY REGIMENT STREET, BLDG 3410
FORT BENNING, GA 31905-5922

ATSH-IN

23 January 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Policy Memorandum #6 – Military Equal Opportunity Policy

1. The 197th Infantry Brigade will provide an environment that is free of unlawful discrimination. Discrimination occurs when someone, or a group of people, is harassed, intimidated, insulted, humiliated, or treated less favorably than another person or group, because of their race, color, sex, national origin, sexual orientation or religion.

2. The operational language of the Army is English. Commanders may not require the use of English for personal communications which are unrelated to official duties.

3. Violations of MEO and Harassment Prevention and Response policies may result in disciplinary action under the UCMJ, Arts. 92, 133, or 134.

a. Soldiers must follow policies both on and off-post, during duty and non-duty hours.

b. Policies apply to work, living, and recreational environments (including both on and off-post housing). Members of the Army will not—

(1) Retaliate against a member who files a complaint.

(2) Knowingly make a false accusation of discrimination.

(3) While in a supervisory or command position, condone or ignore discrimination, harassment, disparaging terms, or hostile work environment.

4. The point of contact for this policy letter is the BDE Equal Opportunity Advocate, SFC Danny Rodriguez at 706-505-4787 or danny.rodriguez2.mil@army.mil.

CHRISTOPHER J.C. HALLOWS
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Commanding

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1. 197th Harassment Prevention and Response Program
2. 197th Harassment Complaint Procedures

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SUBJECT: 197th IN BDE Harassment Prevention Response ProgramEnclosure 1

197th IN BDE Harassment Prevention and Response Program

1. Commanders at all levels are the Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) Officers for their organizations and are the primary and preferred channel for resolving MEO issues. All Commanders will familiarize themselves with their responsibilities under the MEO Program as detailed in AR 600-20, paragraph 6-10(i), which include the following:

a. Promote a positive command climate through personal example and command emphasis.

b. Establish effective MEO and Harassment Prevention and Response objectives and ensure it is applied in every command policy, action, and program at all levels of command.

c. Ensure that MEO and harassment complaints are promptly investigated in a fair, impartial manner, and are appropriately resolved without fear of reprisal, intimidation, or retaliation. IAW AR 600-20, paragraph 6-6.

d. Assess the organizational climate both at the outset and periodically during command tenure (see AR 600-20, appendix E).

e. Report all formal, informal, and anonymous MEO complaints alleged on discrimination based on race, color, sex, national origin, religion, and harassment involving hazing, bullying, and other discriminatory harassment to MEO professionals to be entered into Military Equal Opportunity (EO) database.

197th IN BDE Harassment Complaint Procedures

1. Concerns should be resolved at the lowest possible level within an organization. If low-level resolution fails, the situation escalates, or is too malicious to resolve at a low-level, the complaint processing system defines a process for resolution. all DOD personnel have alternate ways to air grievances relevant to the agency such as EO, SHARP, IG, UMT, or Behavior Health. Soldiers should understand under AR 600-20, paragraph 6-6, personnel have the following options under Equal Opportunity complaint procedures:

a. Anonymous complaint - Complaints where the complainant remains unidentified may be handled as either an informal or a formal complaint and entered in MEO database, as such. The commander will determine if sufficient information is provided to proceed as either an informal or formal complaint. The commander will be identified as the complainant on the DA Form 7279 (Equal Opportunity and Harassment Complaint Form) and in the MEO database. Soldiers can submit an anonymous complaint utilizing the hotline at 706-545-6665 or <https://www.benning.army.mil/MCoE/EO/#>.

b. Informal complaint - An informal complaint is one that a Soldier, cadet, or Family member does not wish to file in writing on a DA Form 7279. Informal complaints may be resolved directly by the complainant addressing the offending party, a peer, or another person in or outside the complainant's chain of command or utilizing a NCO, the chain of command, or a MEO professional. Those issues that can be taken care of informally might be resolved through problem identification, clarification of issues, discussion, recognition of inappropriate or misleading behavior, and a willingness to change.

c. Formal complaint - A formal complaint is one that a complainant files in writing using a DA Form 7279 and swears to the accuracy of the information. Formal complaints require specific actions, are subject to timelines, and require documentation of the actions taken.

d. Knowingly giving false complaints (a complaint that has information or allegations that the complaint knew to be false) may be punishable under UCMJ.