

# EEO VIEWS



## Changes in the New York State Human Rights Law

Effective April 2004, the New York State Human Rights Law and the New York City Human Rights Law has been amended to read as follows:

The City's EEO Policy was created to provide equal opportunity for all employees and applicants for employment by ensuring that all workplaces in City agencies are free of illegal discrimination, including harassment,

based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender (including "gender identity" which refers to a person's actual or perceived sex, and includes self-image, appearance, behavior or expression, whether or not different from that traditionally associated with the legal sex assigned to the person at birth), age, disability, alienage or citizenship status, prior record of arrest

or conviction, genetic predisposition (having something in your genes which increases the risk of your having a disease or disability), carrier status (having something in your genes which increases the risk of your children having a disease, even though you do not have it yourself), sexual orientation, military status, or being a victim of domestic violence, sex offenses or stalking.

## Gender Identity Training

Gender Identity has recently been added to the protected categories covered by EEO Law. Dean Spade, founder of the Sylvia Rivera Law Project, conducted a presentation on July 22, 2004 to Bureau EEO Liaisons and EEO personnel on Gender Identity. Mr. Spade is an attorney with extensive experience in dealing with issues that transgendered individuals face both in the workplace and in other settings.

Our goal in offering this presentation was to make EEO professionals and Human Resource managers aware of the impact that discrimination can have on transgendered individuals; the concerns that are particularly relevant for the workplace; and the possible implications for DEP.

Transgender people are those whose gender identity and/or expression does not or is perceived to not match stereotypical gender norms associated with our assigned gender at birth.

Topics covered in the training included:

- Distinguishing between sex, gender, sexual orientation, and gender expression. Gender identity is about who one is. Sexual orientation is about who one is attracted to.
- Learning correct terms to use to describe individuals.
- Forms of discrimination faced by transgendered individuals including housing, educa-

tion, the criminal justice system, medical care, public benefits, and credit.

- Protection for transgendered individuals under EEO Laws.
- How to provide respect: treat individuals as the gender they identify themselves to be. When you're in doubt about which gender a person identifies with or what the appropriate pronouns to use—ask nicely and politely. It is very important to respect each person's self identification.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding gender identity, you can call the EEO Office at (718) 595-3400.

## Summer 2004

**Christopher O. Ward**  
Commissioner

**David Tweedy**  
First Deputy Commissioner

**Dana Reed**  
Deputy Commissioner  
Human Resources and  
Administration

**Martha Osenni**  
EEO Officer

**Edie Kantrowitz**  
Deputy EEO Officer

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*The EEO Office would like to congratulate Naomi & Lee Hamer on the birth of Emily Ann Hamer on Saturday, July 31, 2004.*





# DIVERSITY AWARENESS



## July—Celebrating Independence Day

On July 4, 1776, our founders adopted the Declaration of Independence, creating a great nation and establishing a hopeful vision of liberty and equality that endures today. America's strength and prosperity are testaments to the enduring power of our founding ideals, among them, that all men are created equal. The American creed remains powerful today because it represents the

universal hope of all mankind.

On the Fourth of July, we are grateful for the advantages that freedom represents and for the opportunities it affords. We are thankful for the love of our families and friends and for our rights to think, speak, and worship freely. Liberty has the power to turn hatred into hope.



America is a force for good in the world, and the compassionate spirit of America remains a living faith. Drawing on the courage of our Founding Fathers and the resolve of our citizens, we willingly embrace the challenges before us.

*Taken from: Diversitystore.com*

## Escabeche—Popular Puerto Rican Sauce

½ cup white vinegar (white is traditional, but other types may be substituted)

1 cup olive oil

1-2 large onions, sliced

3 garlic cloves, chopped

½ cup dried red or sweet pepper (morrones)

½ cup green olives

½ cup capers (acaparrras)

1 tsp. black peppercorns

**This is a distinctive and popular Puerto Rican sauce that is used to marinate fried fish, chicken or cooked vegetables.**

Fry the fish or chicken (it may be breaded if desired), or cook vegetables in salted water (do not over cook. Vegetables should be firm and hold together.) Place fish, chicken or vegetables in large jar or covered bowl.

Mix the ingredients and pour over fish, chicken or vegetables, and refrigerate overnight. Serve alone or with rice.

Buen Provecho!!!!

Rosie DeJesus—Bureau of Wastewater Treatment

Share your cultural cuisine with us, send recipes to: EEO Views, 20th Floor-Lefrak Highrise

## 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

One hundred years after the Civil War, President John F. Kennedy called on Americans to fulfill the nation's promise of equal rights and equal opportunities. The President's decision to send civil rights legislation to Congress followed by a decade of strong civil rights activism when civil rights demonstrations were marred with violence and civil strife plagued the nation.

The proposed legislation, which was the first major civil rights legislation since the post-Civil War Reconstruction era, appears to have been shaped principally to deal with the remaining

vestiges of segregation, and to that end it addressed discrimination in voting, public accommodations, and education, as well as employment.

Five days after President Kennedy's assassination in November 1963, President Lyndon B. Johnson addressed a joint session of Congress to say "We have talked long enough in this country about civil rights. It is time to write the next chapter and to write it in the books of law". Backed by public opinion, passage of the Civil Rights bill became a priority in Congress. Research opinion polls showed that 62% of Americans

supported civil rights and 83% of Americans were in favor of equal employment opportunity.

After extensive debate and lobbying by outside groups and the White House, Title VII was passed in June 1964 by strong majorities in both houses and on July 2, 1964 was signed into law by President Johnson.

Title VII's provides all individuals with protection against discrimination in employment based upon their race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

## GET TO KNOW YOUR EEO LIAISON

Recently the EEO Office met with Bureau EEO Liaisons Naomi Hamer and Alan Wasserman. Both were kind enough to share insight on the role a Bureau Liaison plays with the EEO Office.

### *What are your duties as an EEO liaison?*

**Naomi:** My duties include assisting the EEO Office in the investigation of internal complaints of discrimination, assisting the Bureau with EEO related matters, as well as conducting Bureau-wide mandated EEO Training.

**Alan:** Assuring that there are no violations of EEO policy, providing EEO Training when necessary, and attending Agency EEO meetings.

### *What qualities/background is required to become an EEO Liaison?*

**Alan:** You must have knowledge of EEO policy and an even temper, and good investigatory and reporting skills.

### *How did you become involved in EEO?*

**Naomi:** I became an EEO Liaison when the former EEO Liaison Edie Kantrowitz, joined the Agency's EEO Office to serve as the Deputy EEO Officer.

**Alan:** The EEO office years ago was part of the Labor Relations Office where I once worked. I assisted the former EEO Officer in his duties. When the liaison system developed, I volunteered in 1978.

### *What training did you receive to fulfill your role as an EEO Liaison?*

**Naomi:** I attended a five day DCAS training for all new EEO Professionals. I also earned a Certificate in EEO Studies from Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations in Manhattan and I have taken various EEO related courses to keep apprised of changes in the law.

**Alan:** I have gone to numerous courses through DEP and Cornell University. I

also attended EEO training conducted by the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services.

### *What perspective do you bring to EEO as a bureau liaison?*

**Naomi:** As a Bureau Liaison, I not only understand the laws, policies and procedures of EEO, I also have a strong sense of how the Bureau runs and functions. Sometimes it is beneficial to have the combined knowledge in order to offer advice or suggestions on how to best rectify a situation.

**Alan:** I am one of the few male EEO Liaisons in DEP. I also have enforced Minority and Women in Business Enterprise goals and EEO contract requirements (under Mayoral Executive order #50) for at least 20 years. Fulfilling those mandates requires a similar sensitivity and knowledge of what constitutes discrimination as does being an EEO Liaison. I also have been doing EEO for over 20 years.

### *What challenges do you face as an EEO liaison?*

**Naomi:** The most challenging part of being an EEO Liaison I find to be two-fold. One, there is no such thing as off-the-record, even if you're speaking to a co-worker/friend who is just seeking advice without necessarily wanting to pursue a complaint. Secondly, it is often difficult to convince complainants that even though I work for the same Bureau that they do, I will be objective while handling their complaint, and not necessarily side with Management.

**Alan:** EEO enforcement often is a matter of perspective. The challenging part is to determine what actually occurred when a complaint is filed. Getting everyone's viewpoints and observations and putting them into a coherent form that permits judgments to be made based on what was perceived to have

occurred, is the most challenging part of the job

### *What do you enjoy the most about being a liaison?*

**Naomi:** I enjoy helping people get resolution to their issues, I also enjoy the training component.

**Alan:** I would say it would be the fact that the position brings into check abuses that could otherwise occur within the Agency. The need for the position is clear and preventing abuse BEFORE it happens is what I get enjoyment from. I also enjoyed some of the training sessions that I gave when I first started in the position.

### *What challenges do you think face EEO today?*

**Naomi:** I think that the field of EEO will become more challenging with all of the new protected categories that have recently arisen. I am both curious and anxious to see how some of these new categories will affect our day-to-day operations.

**Alan:** Balancing politics and those who abuse it with the real need to protect people's right to a workplace free of harassment and discrimination. The biggest challenge however, is separating personality and job related complaints from EEO complaints.

### *What are your goals as a liaison?*

**Alan:** "Truth, Justice and the American way". Wait, that's Superman. My real goals are to assist people in such a way that the need for true EEO Office intervention is minimized or eliminated because DEP personnel are aware of what EEO really means, what constitutes abuse and why such abuses can not be tolerated in a workplace.



Naomi Hamer—Bureau of Water Sewer Operations



Alan Wasserman—ACCO

## BUREAU LIAISONS



**Herb Roth**  
Career Counselor  
Lefrak 18<sup>th</sup> Floor  
(718) 595-3377

Any person who has a question or problem related to the DEP's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, or is interested in filing a complaint of discrimination, may contact one of the persons listed below. An employee is not required to consult only with the Bureau Liaison who works in the employee's bureau.

| Name             | Bureau                              | Phone #        |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| Aimee Edwards    | Environmental Engineering           | (718) 595-5917 |
| Alan Wasserman   | ACCO                                | (718) 595-3211 |
| Delores Toles    | Customer Services                   | (718) 595-4339 |
| Denise Dyce      | Legal Affairs                       | (718) 595-6608 |
| Diane Futrell    | Wastewater Treatment                | (718) 595-6855 |
| Elestene Houston | Environmental Compliance            | (718) 595-4429 |
| Helaine Balsam   | Environmental Control Board         | (212) 361-1594 |
| Mary Grannum     | Environmental Planning & Assessment | (718) 595-4411 |
| Maureen Mair     | Environmental Control Board         | (212) 361-1594 |
| Naomi Hamer      | Water & Sewer Operations            | (718) 595-5372 |
| Sarah Simpson    | Management Information Services     | (718) 595-4038 |
| Sherri Roth      | Water Supply                        | (914) 742-2029 |

## EEO STAFF

**Martha Osenni**  
EEO Officer/Reasonable  
Accommodation Coordinator

**Edie Kantrowitz**  
Deputy EEO Officer

**Jason Hryckowian**  
EEO Investigator/55-A Coordinator/  
Assistant Reasonable  
Accommodation Coordinator

**Michael Walczynsyn**  
EEO Investigator

**Cavita Lewis**  
Administrative Assistant/  
EEO Views Editor

**Support Staff**  
Cleopha Jean-Baptiste  
Beikerlyns Martinez

**EEO Office Main Number:**  
(718)595-3400

**IDEAS? ARTICLES?**

*Tell us what you think or what you  
would like to see in the next issue.*

*Send submissions to:  
NYC DEP  
Equal Employment Opportunity  
59-17 Junction Blvd. - 20th Floor  
Flushing, NY 11373  
Attn: Newsletter*

## BUREAU ADMINISTRATORS

| Name               | Bureau                           | Phone #        |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Carmello Emilio    | Water Board                      | (718) 595-3603 |
| Leslie Laylock     | Engineering Audit                | (718) 595-3315 |
| Grace White        | Public Affairs                   | (718) 595-6603 |
| Michael Moran      | E.C.B.                           | (212) 361-1776 |
| Constance DeSantis | Fleet Administration             | (718) 326-6100 |
| Michael Mannino    | A.C.C.O.                         | (718) 595-3224 |
| Mary Grannum       | E.P.A.                           | (718) 595-4411 |
| Michael Schneider  | Water & Sewer Operations         | (718) 595-5335 |
| Stella Kyriakides  | Environmental Engineering        | (718) 595-6004 |
| Oscar Medina       | Wastewater Treatment             | (718) 595-5103 |
| Carol Davis        | Customer Services                | (718) 595-4293 |
| Elizabeth Simmons  | Water Supply                     | (914) 742-2059 |
| Frank Camardella   | Management & Budget              | (718) 595-3655 |
| Virginia Smyth     | Environmental Compliance         | (718) 595-4404 |
| Terry Pupillo      | Facilities Management            | (718) 595-4355 |
| Shamalina Khan     | Environmental Health & Safety    | (718) 595-4746 |
| Julia Boudier      | Legal Affairs                    | (718) 595-6554 |
| Denise Kerr        | Office of Information Technology | (718) 595-4152 |



**Confidentiality:** All EEO matters will be handled under the supervision of DEP's EEO Officer, in consultation with the DEP's Office of Legal Counsel where appropriate. The EEO Officer will treat complaints and other information provided by employees confidentially. This means that information obtained from a person who seeks the assistance of the EEO Officer will not be discussed with other personnel except as necessary to investigate and resolve a complaint or other matter.

### 55-A Program

If you have questions or concerns regarding the 55-a Program, call:

Jason Hryckowian  
55-A Coordinator  
(718) 595-5742

## Upcoming Events:

### 🔗 Municipal Credit Union

Representatives from the Municipal Credit Union will be setting up a table in the Lefrak Cafeteria on **September 2, 2004** from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Cafeteria is located on the 3rd Floor in the Lefrak Tower. The representatives will have information on the Municipal Credit Union and The Family Security Plan.

### 🔗 Deferred Compensation

The Deferred Compensation Plan allows you to put aside a portion of your pay before federal, state and local income taxes are deducted. Your taxes will be reduced as a result of the contributions you make, and your contributions and the earnings on them will accumulate tax-free until you withdraw them. On **September 13 & 14, 2004** representatives will be in the cafeteria from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. to answer any questions.

### 🔗 New Hire Orientation

The Agency's Human Resources Management (HRM) Division has developed an orientation program. This program is designed to acquaint newly hired DEP employees with the Department's mission, goals, structure, and functions. As part of the orientation, bureau management as well as the Division of Human Resources Management present overviews of their roles and responsibilities.

### 🔗 Blood Drive

Each year there is high demand and limited supply of blood. The Greater New York Blood program is experiencing a serious shortage due to a fall-off in donations. More than 1,000 pints of blood are needed every day for hospitals serviced by the New York Blood Services to supply this blood. A continuous and steady supply is essential because blood is perishable. The Department of Environmental Protection will be conducting the Fall Blood Drive on **September 21, 22 & 23, 2004** from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the Conference Room located on the 6th Floor, Lefrak Towers.

### 🔗 DEP Education Fair—FY'05

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in conjunction with District Council 37 (DC-37) will host its second annual Education Fair on Tuesday, **October 26, 2004**. DEP employees/members will have an opportunity to get information on education programs offered at various colleges, universities and educational institutions. The Education Fair, sponsored by DEP's Quality of Work Life Labor/Management Committee and DC 37's Education Fund, will take place at the DEP High-Rise Building Cafeteria, located on the 3rd floor of 59-17 Junction Blvd., Flushing, NY, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.