

**Council on Postsecondary Education
State of Rhode Island**

Policy Number

P-2

Policy Title

Non-Discrimination & Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

Policy History

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Legal Citation

R.I.G.L. § 28-5.1

Policy

It is the belief and the policy of the State of Rhode Island that the race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, disability, age (subject to certain limitations established by law) or veteran status of an individual should neither serve as a barrier to his or her equal opportunity for employment nor be the basis of harassment in the workplace. The Rhode Island Council on Postsecondary Education, ("The Council" or "CPE"), fully endorses this basic policy of nondiscrimination.

State and federal laws and regulations bar discrimination in employment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or veteran status. Notably, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1972, Presidential Executive Order 11246, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Act of 1974, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Persian Gulf Benefits Act of 1991, and the Civil Rights Act of 1991 prohibit employment discrimination. Rhode Island General Law 28-5.1 directs each state agency to make non-discrimination the policy of the agency and to rigorously take affirmative steps to ensure equality of employment opportunity.

The Council recognizes that the mere elimination of discriminatory barriers to employment is often not in itself sufficient to provide equal opportunity. Consciously or unconsciously, practices

or conditions may exist which adversely affect the employment opportunities of entire groups of people. The Council therefore directs the Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, ("OPC") and the public colleges-- namely, the Community College of Rhode Island, ("CCRI"), and Rhode Island College, ("RIC"), to pursue nondiscriminatory employment practices through positive and aggressive measures designed to provide equal employment opportunities for all individuals.

Positive actions are required if employment opportunities are to be open to all and if work and academic environments are to be free from discrimination and harassment. To meet these goals, the Council shall require the creation and implementation of nondiscrimination plans. While the chief executive officers at the public colleges and OPC shall be held accountable for the nondiscrimination programs, all management personnel shall share this responsibility.

The Council furthermore accepts its responsibility to provide leadership in promoting nondiscrimination and equal employment opportunity by ensuring that private institutions approved by OPC provide education for the people of Rhode Island, that complies with state and federal laws regarding equal opportunity.

The Council will commit to and utilize a variety of resources in support of its policies and will make available to education agencies all possible assistance and resources in the provision of equal employment opportunity and nondiscrimination.

The Commissioner of Postsecondary Education, ("Commissioner"), is charged with ensuring that the personnel policies and practices of the Council, OPC, and the public colleges adhere to both federal and state laws and regulations and the policy and regulations of the Council regarding nondiscrimination and equal employment opportunity.

The Commissioner is responsible for the development and promulgation of any additional regulations and guidelines necessary to achieve the purpose of the foregoing policy and for the imposition of appropriate sanctions or penalties where necessary, subject to the approval of the Council.