

WHAT IS DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION?

Disability discrimination is verbal or physical conduct that is directed at an individual – or someone perceived as an individual - because of a mental or physical disability, and that subjects that individual to different treatment which interferes with or limits their ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the University, or otherwise adversely affects that individual's employment or education.

Examples can include:

- focusing on an individual's disability rather than their abilities during a job interview;
- delaying providing a course syllabus in large print to a student with a visual impairment;
- scheduling an office party in a location that is inaccessible to an employee who uses a wheelchair;
- Denying employment or educational opportunities to an applicant, employee or student because she/he has a disability.

WHAT IS DISABILITY HARASSMENT?

Disability harassment is an illegal form of disability discrimination. Disability harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct directed at an individual - or someone perceived as an individual - with a mental or physical disability that's sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent enough to create a hostile work or educational environment.

Examples can include:

- mimicking a co-worker's speech impairment;
- addressing an individual with a mental or physical disability as "retard" or "crip" or other derogatory or offensive language;
- repeatedly asking the only student in class with an obvious disability, "do you understand?"

WHAT CAN I DO IF I'M THE TARGET OF DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT?

If you feel physically threatened, remove yourself from the situation and seek help immediately from University Security at 389-2111, or dial 911 for the Mankato Police Department.

If the situation is not physically threatening, and you feel comfortable talking to the individual, tell them you're offended by the comment or behavior and ask them to stop.

If you're not comfortable talking directly to the individual, you can identify a third party whom you and the other individual mutually respect and ask for their assistance in helping the two of you talk through the behavior and why you found it offensive.

You should document incidents of discrimination and harassment immediately after they occur – who, when, where, what was said or done, and the names of any witnesses. Then you can report the incident to appropriate University offices or file a discrimination or harassment complaint with the Office of Affirmative Action. A listing of phone numbers and locations for these offices can be found within this brochure.

CAN DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT HAPPEN TO YOU?

Disability discrimination or harassment can occur in a variety of relationships, including faculty - student, supervisor - employee, student - student, employee - employee, and other relationships with persons having business with or visiting the campus. Sometimes comments or actions that constitute discrimination or harassment are intended to be humorous or to express familiarity. This doesn't excuse the behavior or the need to address it.

However, not every act that may be offensive to an individual or group constitutes discrimination or harassment. Harassment includes action beyond the mere expression of views, words, symbols or thoughts that another individual finds offensive. To be considered a violation of university policy, the conduct must be serious enough to deny or limit a student's or employee's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by Minnesota State University, Mankato.

OFFICE OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION
112 ARMSTRONG HALL
507-389-2986

INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT

Minnesota State University, Mankato is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and education opportunity. The Office of Affirmative Action assists students and employees who believe they have been harassed or discriminated against because they are - or are perceived as - an individual with a disability. The Office of Affirmative Action investigates disability discrimination and harassment complaints and acts as a referral agency for students and employees needing additional services from other University offices.

RETALIATION PROHIBITED

Retaliation is prohibited by Minnesota State University, Mankato. Retaliation may occur whether or not there is a power or authority differential between the individuals involved. Forms of retaliation include intentionally engaging in any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment against an individual because she/he:

- made a complaint under this policy;
- assisted or participated in any manner in an investigation, or process under this policy, regardless of whether a claim of discrimination or harassment is substantiated; or
- associated with an individual or group of individuals with a disability.

WHERE CAN I GET HELP?

FOR STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES:

Office of Affirmative Action

112 Armstrong Hall
507-389-2986

University Security

222 Wiecking Center
507-389-2111 (V/TTY)

Division of Institutional Diversity

265 Morris Hall
507-389-6125

FOR STUDENTS:

Office of Disability Services

132 Memorial Library
507-389-2825

Counseling Center

245 Centennial Student Union
507-389-1455

Office of Student Affairs

228 Wigley Administration Center
507-389-2121

FOR EMPLOYEES:

Office of Human Resources

336 Wigley Administration Center
507-389-2015

HOURS

The Office of Affirmative Action is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Office of Affirmative Action

Minnesota State University, Mankato
112 Armstrong Hall
Mankato, MN 56001

Phone: 507-389-2986
800-627-3529 or 711 (MRS/TTY)
Fax: 507-389-5667

Email: affirmative-action@mnsu.edu

Web site: www.mnsu.edu/affact/

People with speech or hearing impairments may reach the above offices at 800-627-3529 or 711 (MRS/TTY)



MINNESOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY
MANKATO

OFFICE OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Disability
Discrimination and
Harassment



Rights & Responsibilities
of
Students & Employees

A member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System. Minnesota State Mankato is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity University.

This document is available in alternative format to individuals with disabilities by calling the Office of Affirmative Action at 507-389-2986 (V), 800-627-3529 or 711 (MRS/TTY) HUMR29BR0608 Revised 6/08