

**COMMANDING OFFICER  
MARINE ATTACK SQUADRON 542  
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**



The Marine Corps has existed to fight and win our Nation's battles for over 240 years. Our heritage and roots are woven from men and women with varying backgrounds, races and ethnicities. We are one of the greatest military organizations to have ever existed and our diversity has been one of our strengths. At VMA-542, we will treat all Marines with the respect and dignity they deserve. Discrimination in any form, at any level is not acceptable and will not be tolerated and could result in adverse administrative or disciplinary action.

MCO P5354.1D W Ch I defines discrimination as, the illegal treatment of a person or group based on age, color, gender, race, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Discrimination also includes persons condoning, ignoring, or failing to correct negative and hostile working environments, where one or more of the discriminatory factors mentioned above is present, during the performance of their duties. Marines must remember Equal Opportunity does not equate to Equal Outcomes. Some Marines and Sailors will do better than others or will progress faster than their peers; this is not because of unequal opportunity, but because of an individual's effort to drive and excel.

Furthermore, it defines sexual harassment as "a form of discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature."

Sexual harassment, discrimination or favoritism will not be accepted in VMA-542. Any Marine or Sailor that feels they are being discriminated against for any reason will have their concerns addressed without fear of reprisal. Victims or witnesses are asked to report complaints by utilizing chain of command or the Informal Resolution System.

For VMA-542 to succeed in the challenges we have ahead of us we must be a team, a team that sincerely cares about each other. We must be able to place any personal bias' we may have behind us and focus on building each other and embracing our differences. It is imperative we follow three simple rules when dealing with each other.

1. We must treat each other with respect and dignity at all times.
2. We must not tolerate actions or comments that degrade, harm or isolate individuals.
3. We must treat everyone, regardless of rank, gender, race, color, or religion fairly and equally

We will continue to be a winning team if we adhere to the above simple rules. Understand that every individual sees the world with a different perspective and what one may consider disrespectful, racist, or impartial may not be to another. When these situations arise it is your duty to ensure we follow rule #1 and respect the individual's perspective in a given situation and ensure we adjust our actions appropriately. Remember winning teams win because they have a common vision, aligned goals, high standards and respect the value every member brings to the team.

For further information, education, and resources contact your squadron Equal Opportunity Representative SSgt Charles F. S. Wasson or the Equal Opportunity Advisor MSgt Arlene H. Collins at 252-466-2933.

*Semper Paratus,*

*John D. Ferguson*

Lieutenant Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps  
Commanding Officer, Marine Attack Squadron 542