

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION STATEMENT**

### **41 C.F.R. Section 60-741.44(a); 60-300.44(a)**

University of South Florida (USF) complies with Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which prohibits discrimination by Federal government contractors and subcontractors against individuals on the basis of disability and requires affirmative action on behalf of qualified individuals with disabilities. USF also complies with the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Act of 1974 (VEVRAA), which prohibits employment discrimination against protected veterans by covered Federal contractors and subcontractors and requires each covered Federal contractor and subcontractor to take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment these veterans.

Employees and applicants shall not be subjected to harassment, intimidation, threats, coercion, discrimination, or retaliation because you engaged in or may engage in any of the following activities:

1. Filing a complaint;
2. Assisting or participating in an investigation, compliance evaluation, hearing, or any other activity related to the administration of Section 503 or VEVRAA or any other Federal, state, or local law requiring equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities or protected veterans;
3. Opposing any act or practice made unlawful by Section 503 or VEVRAA or their implementing regulations or any other Federal, state, or local law requiring equal opportunity for protected veterans or individuals with disabilities; or
4. Exercising any other right protected by VEVRAA or by Section 503 or their implementing regulations.

USF supports its Affirmative Action Program and policy of non-discrimination and equal opportunity in compliance with Executive Order 11246, as amended, as well as applicable state and local laws, directives, and regulations. USF recruits, hires, trains, and promotes persons in all job titles without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, genetic information or protected veteran status. USF's hiring and promotion decisions are in accordance with equal employment opportunity principles by imposing only requirements that are job related and that other employment decisions further the principle of equal employment opportunity. USF's personnel actions such as compensation, benefits, company-sponsored training, education, tuition assistance, transfer, demotion, termination, layoff, return from layoff, and social and recreational programs are administered without regard to protected group status.

Equal opportunity can only be achieved through leadership and implementation of a viable Affirmative Action Program. Our Affirmative Action Program sets forth specific affirmative action and equal employment opportunity responsibilities of managers, supervisors, and all employees. It is incumbent that employees not discriminate in any policy, practice, or procedure on the basis of protected group status. All employees are expected to make every reasonable effort to carry out their Affirmative Action Program responsibilities in spirit, as well as in letter, to assure that equal opportunity is available to all. We further expect all employees to demonstrate sensitivity to, and respect for, all other employees and to demonstrate commitment to the University's equal employment opportunity and affirmative action objectives.

Administrative responsibility for this vital Affirmative Action Program, including regular monitoring and periodic reporting to top management, is delegated to the University's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at (813) 974-0537.

In addition, USF has designed and implemented an audit and reporting system that will: (1) measure the effectiveness of our Affirmative Action Programs; (2) indicate any need for remedial action; (3) determine the degree to which objectives have been attained; (4) determine whether individuals with protected characteristics have had the opportunity to participate in all company-sponsored educational, training, recreational, and social activities; (5) measure our compliance with the Programs' specific obligations; and (6)

document the actions taken to perform items (1) through (5) above. If, after performing this audit, we determine that our AAPs are deficient, we will undertake necessary action to bring our Programs into compliance.

Our Affirmative Action Plans for Individuals with a Disability and Protected Veterans are available to applicants and employees, upon request, on regularly scheduled workdays by contacting the Equal Opportunity-ADA Compliance Program within the Office of Compliance & Ethics at 813-974-4373. Any applicant or employee who has a disability and needs access to this Policy Statement in a different format should contact this office. In addition, employees may voluntarily self-identify as an individual with a disability or a protected veteran at any time by going through GEMS. However, if you should need assistance regarding this process, then please contact the Equal Opportunity-ADA Compliance Program.

This Affirmative Action Program is supported by the USF President, Rhea Law.