



OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMUNIQUE



Director’s Address—Progress

September 2023
Volume II, Issue 4

Greetings MSP Community,

We are pleased to bring you the last issue for 2023 of the **ODEI COMMUNIQUE**. Time flies when you enjoy your work in outreach, writing, training, and engagement with the MDSP community.

Employee engagement describes the relationship staff have with their supervisor, management, and executive leadership. Studies show engaged employees are emotionally invested in their workplace. Engaged employees are productive, motivated, inspired, vocal, and visionary because they understand what attributes they can bring to the agency. They support the agency’s mission and do not subscribe to the “this is the way it has always been done” mantra—a commonality our office shares.

Over the past year, many within MDSP learned that we are more than merely EEO investigations – we offer a myriad of services such as outreach, facilitate partnerships with universities, professional development with subject-matter experts, mediation, employee assistance, various trainings, polling, legislative reporting, and workforce assessments. As we work to construct a DEI framework, examining microaggressions and increasing employee engagement will be pivotal to its infrastructure. DEI is evolving throughout our society and it goes by many names—D&I, EDI, I&D, DEIB (belonging), and JEDI (justice). While each has important distinguishing factors, the sentiment remains the same—to create a better work experience for individuals of all identities and backgrounds. The ODEI will continue to operate with discretion, intention, impartiality, autonomy, and always within the confines of the EEO laws identified on page six.

“All progress takes place outside the comfort zone.” ~ Michael J. Bobak

Thank you for showing us grace as our growing team of EEO professionals continues to roll out DEI initiatives, update written directives, and support opportunities for a bias-free workplace. Lastly, we welcome candid feedback and suggestions to enhance this important work. Let’s go inside...

At Your Service,

Gail V. Tucker

Director
Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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IMPORTANT NOTES

- The MDSP/Morgan State University **DEI Workforce Assessment Report** is available for download on PowerDMS.
- **HOUSE BILL 0309:** State Employee Rights and Protections - Personnel Actions and Harassment-Complaints goes into effect on October 1, 2023, extending the complaint filing deadline.
- **UPCOMING:** ODEI will schedule EEO Training for Supervisors and Managers in December 2023. ODEI will also facilitate EEO Training for all other staff and Academy classes in January 2024.

CIVILIAN SPOTLIGHT: WHY MSP?

ODEI is here to support Maryland State Police employees, both civilian and sworn. Below we have shared insight from civilian employees on why they enjoy working at MDSP and what has kept them in the law enforcement public service field. If you would like to share your “why” to be included in an upcoming newsletter, please email msp.odei@maryland.gov. We would appreciate hearing from you!

What do you enjoy about working at MSP?

“I enjoy working with MSP because I get to see what is on the other side of what we as civilians see in the media. I get to see people just like me trying to help the community and provide for their families. I also enjoy working for MSP because I have been able to create lifelong friendships and networking opportunities. I have been able to learn so much here, lessons in life and in business.”

What has kept you in law enforcement public service?

“What has kept me in law enforcement is having a passion for learning. I am learning something new every day about my job or the intricate details needed to assist our Troopers and deputies with serving the community, keeping themselves safe and providing for their families. There are so many functions necessary to run a successful department and with the many teams I have worked with, I feel I have been a part of maintaining that goal.”

- Charnyce Leslie, Office of the State Fire Marshal

What do you enjoy about working at MSP?

“I enjoy working for MSP because of the professionalism.”

What has kept you in law enforcement public service?

“I stayed because I love dispatching. I have been doing this for 27 years but at MSP for 12 years.”

- Teresa Carder, Berlin Barrack

What do you enjoy about working at MSP?

“Being a part of a Department that strives to uphold the integrity that is expected of all law enforcement agencies in Maryland. The Maryland State Police consistently represents our core values of Integrity, Fairness and Service. Our Department has set a high standard and we are often contacted for guidance and best practices by other allied agencies inside and outside of Maryland.”

What has kept you in law enforcement public service?

“Being a small part of the larger picture and being able to assist the community through public service. Being a civilian in the Maryland State Police that works mostly alongside sworn coworkers has shown me the importance of creating a strong working relationship between civilian and sworn employees. Over the last 10 years I have seen how the Maryland State Police has continued to progress, even through the many challenges law enforcement has faced. While the job can be stressful at times, the work is extremely rewarding. The Maryland State Police civilian and sworn personnel are truly “Maryland’s Finest” and that is what inspires me on a daily basis.”

- Trevor Allen, Internal Affairs Division

YOUR HEALTH MATTERS

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP) & MYMDCARES

October 10th is World Mental Health Day—don't forget to take care of yourself. As State employees, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and MyMDCARES are two programs available to support your mental well-being.

EAP—Employees and supervisors have the ability to refer either themselves or one of their employees to the EAP. Supervisors are encouraged to refer employees when an employee's personal matters may negatively impact work performance. The goal of the EAP is to provide assistance to the employee and maintain satisfactory job performance. For more information, [click here](#).

- **Confidential** service offered to help State employees
- Participation is **voluntary**.
- When a **signed** EAP referral form is received by ODEI, the entire process typically takes less than one week, with some referrals completed within 48 hours.



MyMDCARES—Outside of ODEI and MSP, MyMDCARES is an additional service available to all employees who need help with either personal or professional issues. Common reasons to use MyMDCARES include relationship issues (family, friends, work relationships), life changes (illness, divorce, retirement), emotional well-being risks (burnout, depression, anxiety), and everyday life challenges (daily responsibilities, parenting, financial, legal). Learn more by [clicking here](#).

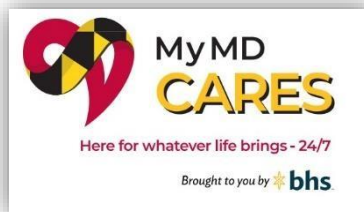
- Free, **confidential** services are available **24/7** with master-level clinicians.
- Call 844-405-8200, or text either **#bebetter** or **#worklife** to 800-327-2251 in order to get started.
- You can also visit their portal utilizing the link above, or download the MyMDCARES app.
- ODEI **does not** share information, track progress, violate HIPAA, or have any involvement in your care.

Gail V. Tucker is the EAP Representative—gailv.tucker1@maryland.gov, or 410-653-4299.

SAVE THE DATE! RECLAIMING JOY - DELIGHT IN EVERYDAY LIFE JOY

The next MyMDCARES webinar takes place on **November 7, 2023** from **11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.**, and focuses on **reclaiming joy**. Webinars are led by a masters-level clinician or coach who will provide tangible skills to utilize in everyday life. Register [here](#).

“Joy may be something that we believe we have to put in a lot of energy to pursue but what if it actually was a matter of tapping into it in the moment. Define joy and discover small ways to spark it in your daily routine.”



CIVIL RIGHTS ARE NOT ONLY FOR BIPOC (BLACK, INDIGENOUS, PEOPLE OF COLOR)

A common misconception the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI) confronts consistently is the idea that our office mainly and/or only investigates Caucasian employees. The idea that white people have no legal recourse when subjected to discriminatory employment practices, policies, and personnel actions is not uncommon in the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) field; however, it is simply untrue both as a general statement and a statement about ODEI.

Historically, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was enacted to end segregation in public places, prohibited unequal application of voting requirements, and under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, banned employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin¹. While the act was born from the Civil Rights Movement and in direct response to the plight of Black people and other minorities in America, the law effectively established a guarantee of equal treatment of every American regardless of race. Similarly, the Governor's Executive Order 01.01.2007.16 Code of Fair Employment Practices advises that the State of Maryland is committed to fair employment practices and establishes zero-tolerance for discrimination, retaliation, and harassment. Although not an exhaustive list of laws and regulations that govern the responsibility of ODEI, Fair Practices is ODEI's core mandate and the bedrock of our mission.

ODEI takes the concerns of all MSP staff seriously and we work to ensure that every claim of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, received by our office is processed, investigated, and resolved with the same level of attention and integrity irrespective of the complainant's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

IN THE NEWS

Police Lt. Col. Michael Sacks sues St. Louis City for racial discrimination: St. Louis Police Lieutenant Colonel Michael Sacks filed a lawsuit against the city of St. Louis for racial discrimination. In the lawsuit, Lt. Col. Sacks alleges that even though he was qualified for the position of Chief, he was not promoted because of his race (white). This lawsuit is ongoing. Read more [here](#).

Former Regional Director of Starbucks was awarded \$25.6 million in a lawsuit filed against Starbucks in which Philips alleged she was terminated because of her race (white):

Philips' termination stemmed from an incident that made headlines nationwide in 2018 when two African American men were arrested while waiting to meet with a colleague at the Philadelphia Center City neighborhood Starbucks. Philips, the Regional Director at the time, was not involved in the incident; however, when Philips refused to take personnel action against other white employees in the weeks and months that followed, Philips was terminated. Read more [here](#).



Dohney J. Schlau, J.D.

¹ <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/civil-rights-act>

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CALENDAR

The Diversity & Inclusion Calendar aims to highlight various celebrations and national monthly recognitions. ODEI makes every effort to include all holidays, and recommends visiting the resources listed below for additional recognitions, information, monthly interfaith calendars, and more.

SEPTEMBER

- National Hispanic Heritage Month—September 15 to October 15
- National Recovery Month
- Labor Day—September 4
- Patriot Day—September 11
- International Day of Peace—September 21
- Rosh Hashanah—September 15-17
- Autumnal Equinox: This date marks a variety of religious observances across the globe—September 23
- Yom Kippur—September 24-25

OCTOBER

- National Disability Employment Awareness
- Global Diversity Awareness
- Breast Cancer Awareness
- Filipino American History Month
- National Polish American Heritage Month
- Indigenous Peoples' Day (US)—October 9
- World Mental Health Day—October 10
- Spirit Day—October 17

NOVEMBER

- National Native American Heritage Month
- Movember—A month-long fundraiser that aims to raise awareness for men's issues such as suicide, and prostate & testicular cancer.
- Veterans Day—November 11
- Diwali—November 12
- International Day for Tolerance—November 16
- Transgender Day of Remembrance—November 20
- Thanksgiving—November 23
- Native American Heritage Day—November 24

DECEMBER

- World AIDS Day—December 1
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities—December 3
- International Human Rights Day—December 10
- Hanukkah—December 7-15
- Winter Solstice/Yule—December 22
- Christmas Day—December 25
- Kwanzaa—December 26-January 1

RESOURCES

[National Institutes of Health Diversity Calendar](#)
[Department of Budget and Management Diversity Calendar](#)
[Diversity Resources Calendar](#)

RESOURCES & TRAINING

DISCRIMINATION COVERED UNDER TITLE VII OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964: <https://www.eeoc.gov/discrimination-type>

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP): <http://www.dbm.maryland.gov/employees/Pages/EAP.aspx>

MARYLAND COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS (MCCR): <http://mccr.maryland.gov/>

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITIES: <http://mdod.maryland.gov/Pages/Home.aspx>

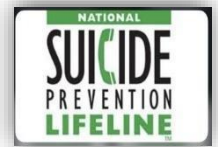
CREATING SAFE SPACES—BEING A LGBTQIA ALLY: <https://safespacetraining.org/>



Safe Spaces workshops are designed to help people reduce the hostile environments in which the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual (LGBTQIA) community navigate in their daily lives. From bullying to the unintentional exclusion by use of certain language, LGBTQIA people frequently find themselves uncomfortable in many situations. Using a hands-on approach, participants examine their role and responsibility in creating a more welcoming environment at work.

During training, participants develop a set of strategies for creating more welcoming environments. Attendees leave with greater understanding and workable solutions for promoting Safe Spaces of respect, acceptance, and support for all.

SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE—Lifeline 9-8-8 has been designated as the *new* three-digit dialing code that will route callers to the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**. Everyone in the U.S. seeking support for suicidal, mental health, and substance use crisis can call or text any time of day.



U.S. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION (EEOC)

<http://www.eeoc.gov/>

ARE YOU IN SHPT COMPLIANCE?

Per House Bill 1423, ODEI is currently facilitating mandatory Sexual Harassment Prevention Training through November 2023. Below are the remaining training dates. Register and take the Quiz via PowerDMS.

CIVILIAN STAFF (Tuesdays)

- September 5 (HCC), 12 (WCC), 26
- October 10, 31

SWORN STAFF (Thursdays)

- September 7, 14, 21, 28
- October 5, 12, 19, 26
- November 2, 9, 16


Equal Employment Opportunity is

THE LAW

- Executive Order 01.01.2007.16 - Code of Fair Employment Practices
- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Civil Rights Act of 1991
- State Personnel and Pensions Article of the Annotated Code of MD, §2-302 and Title 5, Subtitle 2
- State Government Article Title 20
- American With Disabilities Act of 1990
- Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967
- Equal Pay Act of 1963

CITIZEN COMMENT FORM (225) HIGHLIGHTS

ODEI has received over 175 Citizen Comment Forms mailed to our office this year, and the feedback remains overwhelmingly positive. Below we have highlighted some recent commendations from citizens and what they wrote about their interaction with an MSP Trooper.



“He was courteous, respectful, and professional... this event helps me to give an exceptionally positive view of our law enforcement forces.”
- TFC Riley A. Phillips


“I am here to applaud and compliment the actions of MT Vazquez. He shines a clear purpose, evokes efficiency, and projects all values of a Maryland State Trooper. His integrity goes without question. His fairness speaks volumes. MT Vazquez is an integral part of what makes, and keeps, Maryland a safe place to live, work, and visit!”
- M/TPR Alberto Vazquez

“I’d like to commend Trooper Pettitt for her very courteous and professional handling of a traffic stop.”
- TPR Julia A. Pettitt

“My interaction with TPR Nain was a pleasure. He was polite, respectful, and kind. Overall he portrayed excellence in interacting with the community. Keep up the good work!”
- TPR David J. Nain



“TPR Mitchell was very professional and polite. Explained the stop, quick, efficient. A credit to your organization.”
- TFC Mathew T. Mitchell



“This note is to simply thank Trooper Manuel for the professionalism, politeness, and civility he displayed during the stop. He is a shining example of a classy law enforcement professional, and a valuable asset to your department.”
- TFC Kurtis W. Manuel

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

OUR DOCTRINE

Diversity-Equity-Inclusion (DEI) is an ethos that recognizes the value of mixed voices and considers fairness and opportunity as vital facets of its success. The ODEI is unified in shepherding this philosophy for the betterment of us all and those we serve.

OUR FUNCTIONS

Fair Practices is our core mandate.

- Investigate complaints of discrimination-harassment submitted via the MSP 051 form, with autonomy and discretion.
- Mediate to maintain professional standards and workplace cohesiveness.
- Facilitate mandated Sexual Harassment Prevention, EEO, and Cultural Sensitivity Trainings.
- Ensure all personnel actions and civilian hiring practices are administered in an equitable manner to produce just outcomes and mirror compliance.
- Process commendations and complaints received from the MSP CCF (225) form.
- Manage the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) referral process.

Colonel Roland L. Butler, Jr.
Superintendent



Wes Moore
Governor

Aruna Miller
Lt. Governor

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Office Hours by Appointment
M-F, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

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