

# **CONCHO VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

## **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY**



**CONCHO VALLEY**  
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

**July 2025**

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# EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY

## POLICY STATEMENT

The Concho Valley Council of Governments (CVCOG) is an equal opportunity employer. In accordance with anti-discrimination law, it is the purpose of this policy to establish these principles and mandates. CVCOG prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type and affords equal employment opportunities to employees and applicants without regard to race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, age, national origin, disability status, genetic information, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law. CVCOG conforms to the spirit as well as to the letter of all applicable state, federal and local laws and regulations.

This Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy applies to all employment actions, including, but not limited to, recruiting, hiring, selection for training, promotions, transfers, demotions, layoffs, terminations, rates of pay, or other forms of compensation. Employment and promotional opportunities will be based on merit and given to the best qualified individuals based on competency, knowledge, and skill.

CVCOG is committed to undertaking and developing a written nondiscrimination program that sets forth the policies, practices, and procedures with goals and timetables, to which the agency is committed and make the EEO Program available for inspection by any employee, or applicant for employment, upon request but is also located on the official "Team Site".

All applicants and employees have the right to file complaints alleging discrimination. Retaliation against an individual who files a charge/ complaint of discrimination, participates in an employment discrimination proceeding (such as an investigation or lawsuit), or otherwise engages in a protected activity is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This statement is confirmed with the Retaliation Policy, located in the CVCOG Employee Handbook.

CVCOG is also committed to providing reasonable accommodations to applicants and employees who need them due to disabilities or religious practices/observances, in accordance with local, state, or federal law, in the absence of undue hardship. This statement is confirmed with the Reasonable Accommodation Policy, located in the CVCOG Employee Handbook.

CVCOG Executive Director (ED), John Austin Stokes, carries the overall responsibility for the EEO policy. The ED will also uphold a high level of accountability for compliance with the EEO policy. To ensure day-to-day management, including preparation, monitoring, and compliance investigations, Felicia Lindsey, Human Resources Director, has been appointed as the EEO Officer. Felicia Lindsey reports directly to John Austin Stokes, and acts on his authority with all levels of management and employees.

I am personally committed to a workplace that acts upon its daily responsibility to treat all applicants and employees with dignity and respect, as well as equitably under the guidelines of our EEO Policy and Program.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Austin Stokes, Executive Director

7/9/25  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

CVCOG understands the burden of this responsibility must be shared. All executives, management, and supervisory personnel are responsible for implementing EEO practices within each department and will be assigned specific tasks to ensure compliance with the implementation and monitoring of CVCOG's EEO Policy. CVCOG will evaluate its manager's and supervisor's performances, regarding their implementation of CVCOG's policies and procedures, in the same way CVCOG manages other performance goals.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Internal Communications**

The EEO policy is referenced in all CVCOG's personnel policy manuals, and a memo or training provided by the CVCOG EEO Officer will be sent or completed annually for all employees regarding the (EEO) Policy. Special meetings will be held annually with supervisory personnel to discuss progress and problems relative to the program. Required EEO posters, CVCOG'S EEO policy, EEO Officer's contact information, along with periodic notices regarding the program will be posted in conspicuous places in all CVCOG facilities.

### **External Communications**

CVCOG will ensure the following information is present on all external communications regarding vacant positions, solicitations, or any other appropriate information being prepared for public consumption:

- All employment advertisements will contain the words "Equal Employment Opportunity Employer."
- All employment applications, paper or electronic, will contain the following clause:
  - "CVCOG is an equal opportunity employer and will not discriminate against an employee or applicant due to race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy status, disability status, veteran status, genetic information, other protected group status unless based upon a bona fide occupational qualification. If you believe you have been discriminated against, you should notify the Equal Employment Officer or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission."

CVCOG will post the EEO policy statement on its website at [www.CVCOG.org](http://www.CVCOG.org) and it will be made available to employees on their internal "Teamsite."

## **MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY**

### **General Responsibility**

The actions of every employee are important in achieving the EEO Plan's objectives. Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee found to be deliberately obstructing implementation of the plan or participating in any discriminatory behaviors. Every supervisor is critically important to program success and should be familiar with EEO policies and procedures.

Other EEO responsibilities for agency officials, supervisors and managers include:

- Participating actively in periodic audits of all aspects of employment to identify and remove barriers obstructing the achievement of specified goals and objectives
- Holding regular discussions with other managers, supervisors, employees, and affinity groups to ensure agency policies and procedures are being followed

- In conjunction with the EEO Officer, maintaining and updating the personnel database for generating reports required for the nondiscrimination program
- Cooperating with the EEO Officer in review of information and investigation of complaints
- Encouraging employee participation to support the advancement of the EEO Program (e.g., professional development and career growth opportunities, posting promotional opportunities, shadowing, mentoring)

### **Appointment of Equal Employment Opportunity Officer**

Overall responsibility for EEO compliance for CVCOG is vested in the Executive Director. Felicia Lindsey, Human Resource (HR) Director, is the designated EEO Officer. Individuals who would like to discuss and/or file a complaint alleging discrimination should contact the EEO Officer by phone, e-mail, or in person. All contact information is available on the CVCOG website.

#### **The Equal Employment Opportunity Officer has responsibility in:**

- Developing the EEO policy statement and a written EEO Program.
- Concurring with the hiring and promotion process.
- Designing, implementing, and monitoring internal audit and reporting systems to measure program effectiveness and to determine where progress has been made and where proactive action is needed · Reviewing the agency’s nondiscrimination plan with all managers and supervisors to ensure that the policy is understood.
- In conjunction with human resources, periodically reviewing and assessing employment practices & policies (e.g., hiring, promotions, training), complaint policies, reasonable accommodation policies, performance evaluations, and grievance procedures.
- Reporting at least semiannually to the CEO/GM on each department’s progress in relation to the agency’s goals and on contractor and vendor compliance
- Ensuring the completion of EEO training for all new supervisors and managers within 90 days of their appointment.
- Assisting and counseling all department heads, managerial, and supervisory personnel regarding their EEO responsibilities.
- Providing EEO training for employees and managers no less than once per year.
- Conducting regular discussions with supervisors, employees, and affinity groups to ensure implementation and compliance of the EEO Policy.
- Serving as the liaison between the agency; Federal, state, county, and local governments; regulatory agencies; and community groups representing minorities, women, and persons with disabilities, and others.
- Investigating of EEO discrimination.
- Assisting management in collecting and analyzing employment data, identifying problem areas, setting goals and timetables, and developing programs to achieve goals.
- In conjunction with human resources, advising employees and applicants of available training programs and professional development opportunities and the entrance requirements
- Auditing postings of the EEO policy statement to ensure compliance information is posted and up to date
- Maintaining awareness of current EEO laws and regulations and ensuring the laws and regulations affecting nondiscrimination are disseminated to responsible officials.

## **PERSONNEL PRACTICES**

### **Recruitment**

All available job positions will be posted on the Texas Workforce Solutions (TWS) website, a well-known and active advocate of equal employment. Positions will also be listed on CVCOG’s website and on other appropriate job board

sites. Current employees will receive immediate notification of job postings, in an effort to encourage in-house promotion & growth. All job postings will contain the following statement: "An Equal Opportunity Employer."

### **Job Description Analysis**

Job descriptions will be reviewed annually to accurately reflect the function and duties of all CVCOG positions. This ensures position descriptions accurately indicate the actual skills required, as position descriptions will be set at the minimum level needed for entrance into the job. Position descriptions will also be examined to confirm they are related to job content and are set at the minimum level needed for entrance into the job. As positions evolve, job descriptions should evolve to include new roles and duties.

### **Promotions, Job Assignments, and Termination**

No applicant will be denied a promotion or job assignment based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy status, disability status, veteran status, genetic information, or other protected group status. Applicants and employees will be encouraged to seek out promotional opportunities, when eligible, according to the CVCOG handbook, and selections will be based on capability and potential to train and learn.

During every employee's semi-annual performance management discussion, CVCOG supervisors and managers will ensure succession planning is considered and will ask questions regarding the employees' interest in promotional opportunities. Supervisors and managers will discuss the qualifications the employee currently possesses for said opportunities, and what type of training is needed for those opportunities. Supervisors and managers will gather a list of all those interested and provide it to the Director and HR. Employees observed to have skills or qualifications for promotion or advanced training opportunities, who have not explicitly stated an interest in promotional opportunities, shall be provided with information regarding their performance and strongly encouraged to seek out promotion or training opportunities.

Job assignments will be delivered based on tasks covered in the appropriate job description. Assignments may also be distributed based on employee potential to grow or acquire new skills without regard to any above-mentioned protected classes. Employees will be terminated only for just cause or their own volition.

## **INTERNAL EEO COMPLAINT PROCESS**

Individuals who would like to discuss and/or file a complaint alleging discrimination should contact HR or the EEO Officer via phone, e-mail, or in person. The EEO Officer should be contacted immediately when you believe you have been discriminated against. The following procedures will be used to process discrimination complaints:

### **Filing a Formal Complaint**

The complainant(s) must sign and complete their internal EEO Discrimination Complaint Form before a formal investigation can begin. The complainant(s) should be prepared to support any allegations claimed to be discriminatory by furnishing all pieces of pertinent evidence: letters, memos, dates, times, and/or witnesses to the alleged claim in the complaint. A mere allegation of discrimination is insufficient to make a determination. Be aware that the investigative part of the process is designed to establish the facts with basic information provided by all parties.

### **Mediation**

The first step in resolving discrimination complaints is mediation. This step is used to determine whether the complaint can be resolved through discussion or training. Attempts will be made to help both parties discover a solution to their problem. Emphasis at this point is early resolution.

The EEO Officer is responsible for mediation of the complaint(s) by attempting to identify the problem and assist in providing solutions that satisfy everyone. The EEO Officer will:

- Verify the issues
- Identify whether the complaints are covered by the EEOC enforced law
- Mediate discussion on the problem
- Identify options
- Attempt to work out a resolution agreeable to all concerned, if possible
- Provide information on external enforcement agencies (i.e., EEOC, Texas Commission on Human Rights, Federal Transit Agency (FTA) and Department of Transportation (DOT)).

The EEO Officer has five working days to verify if a problem exists, then an additional five days to mediate or resolve the issue. However, if at the end of this time period there is no resolution in sight, the complainant(s) will be informed of their right to proceed with their complaint.

### **Rejecting a Complaint**

If the EEO Officer decides to reject a complaint, the complainant(s) will be notified in writing within five working days after filing a formal complaint. It is within the authority of the EEO Officer to reject any claim if the officer determines that the allegations are not within the realm of the discrimination guidelines. If the EEO Officer makes this determination, then such notice of rejection will be final and cannot be appealed unless new evidence can be presented to the EEO Officer and such evidence falls within the discrimination guidelines of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy status, disability status, veteran status, genetic information, or other protected group status.

### **Investigation**

If a complaint is filed and mediation cannot be reached, the EEO Officer will continue to investigate the complaint fully. The investigation will be completed within twenty-five working days of the failed mediation. An investigation may be extended beyond the twenty-five working days if it is deemed necessary to conduct a more thorough and in-depth investigation. The EEO Officer will conduct interviews, take affidavits as needed from complainant(s) and other apparent witnesses, and will gather any other pertinent information from various sources.

In order to properly investigate any allegation of discrimination, it will be imperative that any employee with relevant knowledge assist in the investigation. Such participation may be in the form of verbal communications, written statements or providing other records that may be determined to be of a relevant matter. All employees deemed to have relevant knowledge of the allegations shall participate to the best of his or her ability during these investigations.

### **Informal Resolution**

The EEO Officer, when feasible and consistent with CVCOG policies and procedures, will continue to informally attempt to resolve the complaint both during and at the conclusion of the investigation. The complainant(s) must sign and date any resolution offered that has been accepted. Such acceptance constitutes settlement of the complaint, however, any resolution offered and accepted does not constitute an admission of any wrongdoing by CVCOG or any of its agents.

One of the major objectives of the complaint process is fairness and early resolution of complaints. Consequently, CVCOG regards the efforts made by all parties in early resolution attempts as extremely important and crucial to the integrity and intent of this process.

### **Complaint Disposition**

At the conclusion of the investigation not resolved by mediation, the EEO Officer will issue findings of fact and conclusion and will make recommendations for corrective action, if required, or other resolutions. The complainant will be contacted to receive and sign off on their acknowledgment of receipt of the EEO Officer's disposition of their complaint. Thereafter, the accused person(s) will be notified of the EEO Officer's recommendations.

### **Appeal of Disposition**

If the complainant(s) is not in agreement with the EEO Officer's findings and determination contained in the disposition, the complainant(s) may appeal the EEO Officer's decision in writing within five working days to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will then review the alleged violation and relevant facts, the Executive Director will issue a decision within five working days, in consultation with the EEO Officer.

If the complainant(s) is not in agreement with the Executive Director's findings and determination, he or she may appeal the decision in writing within five working days to the CVCOG Executive Committee. Complainant(s) will be advised that if the final decision is unacceptable, an appeal may be made to the EEOC, Texas Commission on Human Rights, or FTA.

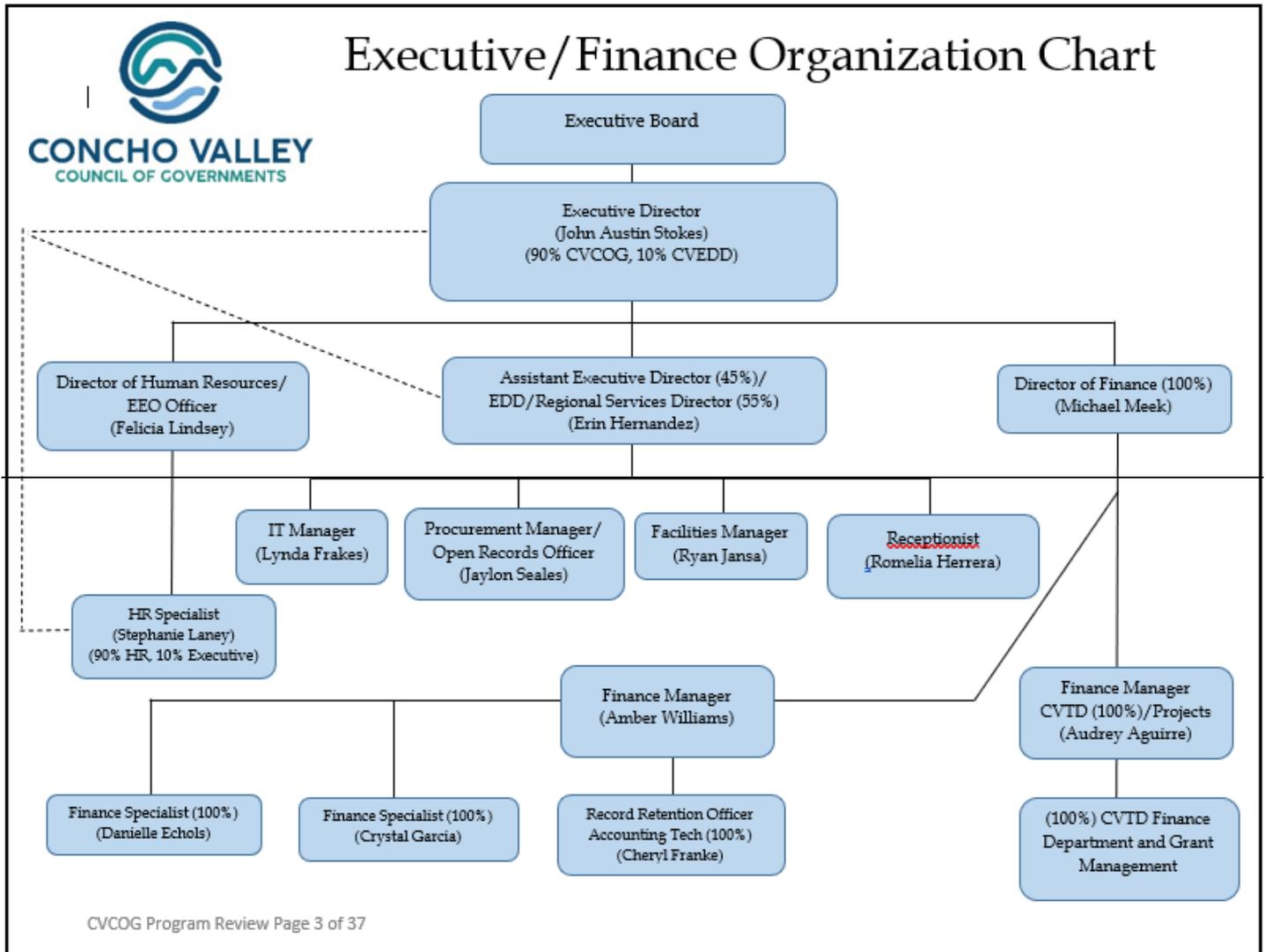
*CVCOG believes with current policies and procedures being followed, most complaints can be resolved internally. CVCOG strives to follow all federal laws prohibiting discrimination, including any enforced by EEOC. Therefore, CVCOG is obligated to inform its employees that an employee who believes they have either witnessed or fallen victim to discrimination may contact the EEOC at any time before, during, or after the CVCOG investigation.*

### **Special Provision**

If any allegation of discrimination arises with the EEO Officer and/or against the EEO Officer, such allegations will be referred directly to the Executive Director to process and investigate accordingly. Any attempts at resolution will be according to the above stated procedures.



# CVCOG ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





# Memo

**To:** Executive Committee

**From:** Felicia Lindsey, Director of Human Resources

**Date:** 07/09/2025

**Re:** CONSIDER AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION – ITEM 27

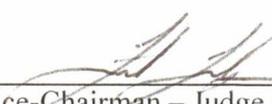
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## ITEM 27

Felicia Lindsey, Director of Human Resources, is seeking consideration and approval the updates to the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policy.

*Approved at the Executive Committee Meeting on July 9, 2025.*

  
Chairman – Judge Hal Rose

  
Vice-Chairman – Judge Frank Tambunga