

## Non-discrimination Policy

It is the policy of the Chesapeake Conservancy, Inc. to not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, sexual orientation or marital status in the administration of its programs or activities, and, the Chesapeake Conservancy does not intimidate or retaliate against any individual or group because they have exercised rights protected by 40 C.F.R Parts 5 and 7 or for the purpose of interfering with such rights.

The Chesapeake Conservancy, Inc. is responsible for the coordination of compliance efforts and receipt of inquiries concerning non-discrimination requirements implanted by 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7 (Non-discrimination in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Assistance from the Environmental Protection Agency), including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1973, and Section 13 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (hereinafter referred to collectively as the federal non-discrimination statutes).

If you have any questions about this notice or any of The Chesapeake Conservancy, Inc. non-discrimination programs, policies or procedures, you may contact:

### **Non-Discrimination Coordinators**

Susan Stephenson, director of federal business development,  
[sstephenson@chesapeakeconservancy.org](mailto:sstephenson@chesapeakeconservancy.org)

-or-

EJ Amyot, chief operating officer, [ejamyot@chesapeakeconservancy.org](mailto:ejamyot@chesapeakeconservancy.org)

Address:

716 Giddings Avenue, Suite 42  
Annapolis MD 21401  
443-321-3610

If you believe that you have been discriminated against with respect to a Chesapeake Conservancy, Inc. program or activity, you may contact Susan Stephenson, director of federal business development or EJ Amyot, chief operating officer, identified above.

## Non-Discrimination Grievance Policy and Procedures

Last revised: November 7, 2023

### **Introduction:**

Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.), Parts 5 and 7, Nondiscrimination in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Assistance from the Environmental Protection Agency, prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, sex, or disability in programs or activities receiving financial assistance from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA). It requires recipients of financial assistance from the U.S. EPA to:

- A. Designate a person to be the Nondiscrimination Coordinator to coordinate efforts to comply with 40 C.F.R., Parts 5 and 7;
- B. Collect, maintain, and provide information showing compliance with 40 C.F.R., Parts 5 and 7;
- C. Adopt grievance procedures that assure the prompt and fair resolution of discrimination complaints alleging violations of 40 C.F.R., Parts 5 and 7; and
- D. Provide continuing and prominent public notice of nondiscrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability, and of the identity and contact information for the Nondiscrimination Coordinator.

As set forth below, it is the Chesapeake Conservancy, Inc. (Conservancy) policy not to discriminate on the basis of several factors, including those in 40 C.F.R., Parts 5 and 7. For definitions of terms, please refer to “Definitions” in Section 7.25 of subpart A in 40 C.F.R., Part 7 and Section 5.105 of Subpart A, in 40 C.F.R. Part 5. In addition, the Conservancy adopts the following procedures to implement the requirements of 40 C.F.R., Parts 5 and 7.

### **Policy:**

The Conservancy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, or marital status in the administration of its programs or activities, and, the Conservancy does not intimidate or retaliate against any individual or group because they have exercised rights protected by 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7 or for the purpose of interfering with such rights.

The Conservancy is responsible for coordination of compliance efforts and receipt of inquiries concerning non-discrimination requirements implemented by 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7 (Non-Discrimination in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Assistance from the Environmental Protection Agency), including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 13 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972.

### **A. Nondiscrimination Coordinators**

The Conservancy President & CEO designated the following Nondiscrimination Coordinator(s):

Susan Stephenson, director of federal business development,

[sstephenson@chesapeakeconservancy.org](mailto:sstephenson@chesapeakeconservancy.org) or

EJ Amyot, chief operating officer, [ejamyot@chesapeakeconservancy.org](mailto:ejamyot@chesapeakeconservancy.org)

Address: 716 Giddings Avenue, Suite 42, Annapolis MD 21401 443-321-3610

## **B. Compliance Information**

1. The Conservancy shall collect, maintain, and on request of the U.S. EPA, External Civil Rights Compliance Office within the Office of General Counsel (ECRCO), provide the following information to show compliance with 40 C.F.R., Parts 5 and 7:

- a. A brief description of any lawsuits pending against the Conservancy that allege discrimination which 40 C.F.R., Parts 5 and 7, prohibits;
- b. Racial/ethnic, national origin, age, sex, disability, and disability data, or EPA Form 4700-4 information submitted with THE Conservancy applications for U.S. EPA financial assistance;
- c. A log of discrimination complaints that identifies the complaint, the date it was filed, the date the Conservancy's investigation was completed, the disposition, and the date of disposition;
- d. Reports of any compliance reviews conducted by any other agencies; and
- e. Data and information specific to certain Conservancy programs or activities to determine compliance where there is reason to believe that discrimination may exist in a Conservancy program or activity or to investigate a complaint alleging discrimination in a Conservancy program or activity.

2. When preparing compliance information, the Conservancy shall use the racial classifications set forth in 40 C.F.R., Section 7.25, in determining categories of race, color, or national origin;

3. THE Conservancy shall keep records of the compliance information identified in paragraphs (1)(a) through (1)(e), above, for at least three (3) years after completing a project for which the Conservancy was a recipient of U.S. EPA financial assistance. When any complaint or other action for alleged failure by the Conservancy to comply with 40 C.F.R., Parts 5 and 7, is brought before the three-year period ends, the Conservancy shall keep records until the complaint is resolved; and

4. The Conservancy shall:

- a. Give ECRCO access during normal business hours to its books, records, accounts, and other sources of information, including its facilities, as may be pertinent to ascertain compliance with 40 C.F.R., Parts 5 and 7;
- b. Make compliance information available to the public upon request; and
- c. Assist in obtaining other required information that is in the possession of other agencies, institutions, or persons not under the Conservancy's control. If such party refuses to release that information, the Conservancy shall inform the ECRCO and explain its efforts to obtain the information.

## **C. Grievance Procedures**

Any person who believes someone has been subjected to discrimination may file a grievance under this procedure by contacting the Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s). It is against the law for the Conservancy to retaliate against any person or group because they have exercised rights protected by 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7.

The Conservancy adopts the following grievance procedures in order to assure the prompt and fair resolution of complaints that allege a violation by the Conservancy of 40 C.F.R., Parts 5 and 7:

1. Grievances must be submitted to the Conservancy Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s) within 30 days of the date the person filing the grievance becomes aware of the alleged discriminatory action. Grievance submissions, in the preferred language of the complainant, can be emailed to

[sstephenson@chesapeakeconservancy.org](mailto:sstephenson@chesapeakeconservancy.org) or [ejamyot@chesapeakeconservancy.org](mailto:ejamyot@chesapeakeconservancy.org), called in through the office number at 443-321-3610 or mailed to the Conservancy office address listed below:

Chesapeake Conservancy  
716 Giddings Avenue, Suite 42  
Annapolis MD 21401

2. A complaint must be in writing, containing the name and address of the person filing it and/or the identified representative. The complaint must state the date of the occurrence and the problem or action alleged to be discriminatory and the remedy or relief sought. The complaint shall specify with as much detail as possible:

- a. The actions or inactions by the Conservancy that support an alleged violation of 40 C.F.R., Parts 5 and 7;
- b. The alleged discrimination that did or will result from such actions or inactions;
- c. The identity of the person(s) harmed or potentially harmed by the alleged discrimination; and
- d. The basis for why the action is believed to be discriminatory, and if possible, identifying the sections of 40 C.F.R., Parts 5 and 7, that were allegedly violated.

3. The Conservancy Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s) (or their designee) will acknowledge receipt of the grievance within 14 days and shall conduct an investigation of the complaint. This investigation may be informal, but it will be thorough, affording all interested persons an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. The Conservancy Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s) will maintain the files and records of the Conservancy relating to such grievances. To the extent possible, and in accordance with applicable law, the Conservancy Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s) will take appropriate steps to preserve the confidentiality of files and records relating to grievances and will share them only with those who have a need to know.

- a. The Conservancy's Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s) is/are responsible for making information available to non-employees regarding rights to services, aids, benefits, and participation without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, or marital status. The Conservancy's Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s) will periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the Conservancy's efforts to offer such services, aids, benefits and participation opportunities when feasible.
- b. The Conservancy's Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s) is/are responsible for ensuring that intimidation and retaliation against any person or group because they have exercised rights protected by 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7, or for the purpose of interfering with any such rights, is prohibited and that claims of intimidation and retaliation will be handled promptly if they occur.
- c. The Conservancy's Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s) will coordinate or facilitate training efforts for the Conservancy staff regarding the Department's obligations to comply with non-discrimination statutes, and policies and procedures.
- d. The Conservancy's Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s) will track all complaints filed against the Conservancy under this policy or with the EPA and shall review all complaints on a semi-annual basis to identify and address any patterns or systemic problems. The Conservancy's Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s) will also ensure that complainants are updated on the progress of their discrimination complaints filed with The Conservancy, if requested. The Conservancy's Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s) will promptly inform the complainant as to any determinations made.

e. The Conservancy's Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s) is/are responsible for providing notice of this policy and carrying out the process, as prescribed by this policy, of the investigation of nonemployee complaints. The Conservancy's Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s) may delegate an investigation to another investigator or designee, if necessary, on a case-by-case basis.

4. The Conservancy Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s) will issue a written decision on the grievance, based on a preponderance of the evidence, no later than 30 days after its filing, including a notice to the complainant of their right to pursue further administrative or legal remedies. The written decision will include whether discrimination is found and the description of the investigation process.

5. The Conservancy assures that intimidation and retaliation are prohibited and that claims of intimidation and retaliation will be handled promptly and fairly pursuant to the Conservancy Non-discrimination Grievance Policy and Procedures in the same manner as other claims of discrimination.

6. The person filing the grievance may appeal the decision of the Conservancy Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s) by writing to the Conservancy Board of Directors within 15 days of receiving the Conservancy Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s)'s decision. The Conservancy Board of Directors shall issue a written decision in response to the appeal no later than 60 days after its filing.

7. The availability and use of this grievance procedure does not prevent a person from pursuing other legal or administrative remedies, including filing a complaint of discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex or retaliation, in court or with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, External Civil Rights Compliance Office. A person can file a complaint of discrimination electronically by writing to [TitleVI\\_Complaints@epa.gov](mailto:TitleVI_Complaints@epa.gov) or by mail or phone at:

U.S. EPA External Civil Rights Compliance Office  
Office of General Counsel (Mail Code 2310A)  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.,  
Washington, D.C. 20460  
PHONE: (202) 564-3316

The availability and use of this grievance procedure does not prevent a person from filing a complaint of discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, or marital status with the state of Maryland. Complaints of discrimination or retaliation on the basis of these classes can be filed electronically with the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights or by mail to:

Maryland Commission on Civil Rights  
6 Saint Paul Street, Suite 900  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202-1631  
1.800.637.6247

The Conservancy will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that individuals with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency are provided auxiliary aids and services or language assistance services, respectively, if needed, to participate in this grievance process. Such arrangements may include, but are not limited to, providing qualified interpreters, providing taped cassettes of

material for individuals with low vision, or assuring a barrier-free location for the proceedings. The Conservancy Non-Discrimination Coordinator(s) will be responsible for such arrangements.

#### **D. Notice of Nondiscrimination**

The Conservancy shall provide continuing notice that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, or marital status in any of its programs or activities. Methods of notice shall accommodate those with impaired vision or hearing. At a minimum, this notice shall be posted in a prominent place in the Conservancy's offices or facilities and on the Conservancy's internet homepage. Methods of notice may also include publishing in newspapers and magazines and placing notices in the Conservancy's publications. Where appropriate or upon request, such notice shall be in a language or languages other than English. The notice shall identify the current Conservancy Nondiscrimination Coordinator(s) as the responsible Conservancy employee designated to coordinate the Conservancy's efforts to comply with its obligations under 40 C.F.R., Parts 5 and 7. The text of the notice to be provided under this policy shall read as follows:

It is the policy of the Conservancy to not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, or marital status in the administration of its programs or activities, and, the Conservancy does not intimidate or retaliate against any individual or group because they have exercised rights protected by 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7 or for the purpose of interfering with such rights.

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[ejamyot@chesapeakeconservancy.org](mailto:ejamyot@chesapeakeconservancy.org)

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The Conservancy's Non-discrimination Policy and Procedures are reviewed on an annual basis (for both in-print and online materials), and revised as necessary, to ensure prompt and fair resolution of discrimination complaints.