Creating a Workplace Culture of Civility and Respect: Preventing Unlawful Harassment and Discrimination

Rose Davenport

University of New Mexico, rdaven01@unm.edu

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This research project identifies a plan to study best practices addressing unlawful workplace harassment and discrimination in New Mexico-based hospital healthcare systems. Initially, this project focusses on Presbyterian Healthcare Services and the University of New Mexico Hospital, with the possibility of including other local healthcare systems.

In light of recent developments from “#MeToo” and “Time’s Up” movements, the issues of unlawful sexual harassment and discrimination are hot topics in today’s society and need to be more openly addressed by all levels of an organization, in order to identify these issues head-on and hopefully prevent them from continuing to occur in our workplaces. This research project will not only focus on workplace sexual misconduct and discrimination but will also include all forms of unlawful harassment and discrimination that occurs within New Mexico-based hospital healthcare systems.

As an exploratory research project, qualitative research methods will be used such as unstructured interviews. In order to identify interview respondents, purposive, convenience and snowball sampling will be used. It is anticipated that these unstructured interviews will take place with subject matter experts, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) staff, local HR professionals and attorneys who have expertise and knowledge with unlawful harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

The research methodology will also be conducted through reviewing and analyzing relevant documents and litigation pertaining to unlawful workplace harassment and discrimination. The June 2016 EEOC report “Select Task Force on the Study of Harassment in the Workplace,” is an important document which will be reviewed and analyzed in this study.
It is anticipated that this exploratory research project will start to facilitate a greater understanding of unlawful harassment and discrimination and how they may be effectively addressed and prevented.