

Equal Access and Affirmative Action

Work-based Learning Guide 2016

Safety and Access for All Students

All partners in workplace learning have a duty to provide an educational and working environment that is safe and that does not discriminate. All partners must be committed to ensuring equal access for all students, regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, age, or mental or physical disability.

Business and industry partners must also realize that, once they agree to provide the workplace learning component, they must ensure a safe environment and comply with all civil rights laws or they place themselves and their education partners in jeopardy. Responsibilities of each partner are outlined below.

Students should know what laws guarantee the right to participate, in case they are told they could not do something in an educational or work setting because of their gender, race, religion, disability, and so forth.

Parents should know what laws guarantee their children's right to participate, in case they are told their child or children should not enter a specific educational institution or program because the child may not be employable due to race, gender, religion, disability, and so forth.

Employers must be prepared to offer equal access, equal treatment, and freedom from harassment. Educational institutions are prohibited by law from entering into any contractual agreement with employers who discriminate.

Teachers are responsible for reporting to the proper compliance official any student complaints about less than full participation in any educational component because of race, gender, religion, disability, and so forth.

Workplace Learning Teacher-Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that all students have access to any educational component, regardless of race, gender, religion, disability, and so forth. As a first step when entering into any agreement with any agency, educational institution, or private business or industry, teacher-coordinators must communicate the laws. Teacher-coordinators must also monitor activities to ensure equal access, equal treatment, and freedom from harassment, as well as access by all participants to a grievance resolution procedure.

Equal Access Requirements

The local educational agency must ensure that students participating in cooperative education, work-based learning, work-study programs, placement and/or apprenticeship training have the same opportunities, regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, or disability, and so forth, as required under the following laws:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Equal Education Opportunity Act of 1974
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1975
- Vocational Guidelines from the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Education, 1979
- Title II, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990; ADA Amendments Act of 2008
- Title II, Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act Amendments of 1990
- School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994

Non-Discrimination Statement

Written assurances of non-discrimination must be obtained from training sponsors. Include the following statement in each Training Agreement.

It is the policy that all parties do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district's Equity Coordinator, Name, Title, Address, Phone Number, E-mail Address

(The notice may include): Director of the Office for Civil Rights U.S. Department of Education, Citigroup Center, 500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago, IL

Equity Resources on the Web

Check the ADA Web site for more complete information on the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm>

The Web site of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) also provides information for employees and employers on prohibiting discrimination, as well as mediation, training, and more.

<http://www.eeoc.gov>

<http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/index.cfm>

The Iowa Civil Rights Commission enforces the laws prohibiting discrimination in employment and other areas on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, religion, national origin, physical and mental disability, age, marital status, familial status, and pregnancy.

<http://www.state.ia.us/government/crc/index.html>

515-281-4121; 1-800-457-4416

Contact Margaret Jensen Connet, Equity Consultant, Iowa Department of Education at Margaret.jensenconnet@iowa.gov or 515-281-3769 with comments or questions regarding nondiscrimination notification requirements.

Link to Notice of Nondiscrimination guidance from the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oct/docs/nondisc.pdf>