



III MEF Support Battalion Commanding Officer's Policy Statement on *Equal Opportunity and Hazing*



III MEF Support Battalion will foster a climate in accordance with the Marine Corps' Policy on Equal Opportunity. Whether in garrison or on the battlefield, our mission requires mutual trust that can only exist in an organization where every individual is treated with respect and dignity – regardless of race, color, gender, religion, age, or national origin.

As your Commanding Officer, it is my responsibility to ensure that your ability to succeed and to accomplish your mission is not hindered in any way by the prejudice or bias of others. I take this responsibility seriously and demand that each of you familiarize yourself with the Marine Corps' Policy on equal opportunity, and the complaint process. I am committed to fostering an environment with fair, impartial, and unbiased treatment to all. I expect/demand this attitude throughout this Command. Let me be perfectly clear:

- Neither discrimination nor harassment of any kind will be tolerated in this battalion. It is my legal and moral obligation to provide an environment in which no one's success is limited by the prejudices of another.
- Maintaining the dignity of every person in this command is a bedrock principle of my ethos, and I will accept nothing less.
- Any substantive incident of non-compliance with this policy or those willfully submitting false allegations will result in administrative or punitive proceedings under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).

Any form of harassment and discriminatory conduct is incompatible with our Core Values of Honor, Courage and Commitment and will not be tolerated. Behavior of this type can quickly erode unit cohesion and I demand that all Marines correct situations or behaviors on the spot that have corrosive effects on the mission readiness of our battalion. We must ensure that optimal conditions exist for each member of our diverse team to succeed. Your conduct will be professional, both in and out of uniform. You will be treated with the respect that has been earned along with the title of Marine. That respect will be extended to the Sailors of this command who have chosen to serve among Marines and the members of our families who support us.

Discrimination is the illegal treatment of a person or group based on race, color, national origin, age or sex. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Discrimination and sexual harassment are fundamentally inconsistent with our core values of honor, courage and commitment. It adversely affects unit cohesion and impedes our ability to perform our mission. Examples of inappropriate or discriminative treatment are: hazing, unauthorized rites of passage rituals of a Marine; racial, ethnic, religious, or gender related jokes; illegal use of electronic mail to send disrespectful or inappropriate comments; disparate treatment of opportunities such as promotions, awards or MOS accountability based on race, color, religion, gender, age, or national origin; and covert reprisal against a Marine for reporting discriminatory practices.

Anyone who experiences or observes acts of discrimination must take appropriate action. If you feel you have been discriminated against or sexually harassed, you are encouraged to try and resolve the situation at the lowest level possible by using the Informal Resolution System (IRS). If the IRS does not solve the problem, you may choose to address the inappropriate behavior formally. Formal complaints will be submitted via the chain-of-command and properly investigated. I will take swift and deliberate action where warranted. Assistance is available through the Battalion Equal Opportunity Representative DSN 623-7103 or CELL 090-8292-9322.

Semper Fidelis,

Douglas J Cobb Jr
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps
Commanding Officer
III MEF Support Battalion