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OPM Issues Guidance on Handling Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation

Washington, D.C. – The Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Janice R. Lachance, unveiled a new guide to help federal employees who believe they have been discriminated against because of their sexual orientation. “Prejudice against any group is intolerable, and it certainly shouldn’t be tolerated in the workplace,” said Lachance.

The guide, entitled *Addressing Sexual Orientation Discrimination in Federal Civilian Employment: A Guide to Employees’ Rights*, comes in response to President Clinton’s historic executive order prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation in the federal civilian workplace.

“Employees should not feel helpless when they believe they are being discriminated against, especially when all they are trying to do is their job,” said Lachance.

While the *Guide* outlines avenues for addressing discrimination in the federal workplace, it does not create any new enforcement rights, such as the ability to file a grievance with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The *Guide* references four avenues for those federal employees or applicants seeking help, including: the Merit Systems Protection Board, the Office of Special Counsel, the Negotiated Grievance Procedure, and the Agency Grievance Procedure. It also outlines the procedures to follow when seeking guidance.

The *Guide* may be accessed at www.opm.gov.

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