

Open Door Policy

Landry, Jeffrey

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To:

All DOJ Mail Boxes;

Team LADOJ,

I have always believed that the most valuable resource of any organization is the people that make up the organization, irrespective of their positions on the organizational chart. That is why from day one as Attorney General, I have worked with our executive team to identify and institute changes to this office that enhance the work experience and the quality of life for our employees. I am proud of our accomplishments and the things that we have been able to institute, even in the face of political adversity.

Positive change only comes through open dialogue and good communication. That is why from day one I instituted an open door policy. You may remember our town halls, by telephone and in person, and messages which encouraged everyone in the Department to offer ideas, problems, solutions, and other thoughts about the agency. This was - and continues to be - a critical component in having a productive organization.

I want to thank those who have taken advantage of this open door policy over the last several years to do just that: to offer their ideas and concerns. I also want to thank those who have kept the lines of communication open by going to other leaders in the Department with ideas or concerns and those who have interacted across Department offices – Division by Division – with ways we can work together. We are all one Department regardless of our Division or our office location.

With some of the news coverage from the last few weeks, I wanted to be sure you heard directly from me today.

First and foremost, **sexual harassment is wrong and it will not be tolerated in this office**. It does not matter your Division, your job title, or your length of service; if you found to be engaging in this type conduct you will no longer be employed. Actions have consequences, and no one is above reproach.

When our career, professional Human Resources staff receives a written complaint with these concerns – or others – they take action. We did so in this case with an outside, independent investigation. Just like we do when dealing with court matters, they investigate and attempt to apply the law, the rules, and the procedures which govern the Department. Our professional staff in H.R. try their very best to do the right thing and apply the law. They try not to operate on hearsay or innuendo; rather, they apply the facts.

We continue to encourage you to come forward if you have concerns. We cannot act unless we are aware. The sooner a grievance is brought to our attention, the sooner a potential issue can be resolved. This relates to any matter which you feel impacts the workplace.

I also want to again reiterate that my door remains open to you. If you have any apprehension or fear of filing an employee complaint to a supervisor, you can come directly to me. I made it clear when I first arrived at the Department that my door is open, and it still is.

I appreciate that many times these types of issues involve sensitive subjects. That is why we must always apply the law, rules, and procedures to these matters. Our Human Resources team is ever mindful that each of you have certain legal rights.

That is exactly why we filed action in court against those seeking information which we believed would be counterproductive to protecting the rights of those who may wish to express concerns.

I do not have to explain the hostile media environment that exists in today's political climate. I have tried hard to shield you from any attempt to distract from the important jobs you do for the people of our great State.

We believe in transparency, that light is the best source of disinfectant. That is why we provided, to the media, upfront not only the findings of the investigation but also the discipline applied in this most recent case at hand. It was not hidden.

There was no attempt on the part of our staff to hide any information. But as the media must sell newspapers and gain eyeballs on the evening news, sometimes they use hyperbole to get sales or TV viewers. It is unfortunate; and, as they say, no good deed goes unpunished. The professionals in our Human Resources tried to provide all they felt they could under the law.

We try hard to follow the law in ensuring all rights are protected. Career attorneys advised that in this matter a Court should legally decide what additional information could, and could not, be released. They sought a ruling to get those answers. When the Judge issued his ruling that additional records be released, he stated multiple times in open court that our office had done the right thing to request counsel from the courts. Those were his words. They were appreciated.

This case was to ensure that if you come forward with a concern, you should know your rights, and those of others, will be protected in the same manner under the law.

I have worked hard with you to upgrade this office and make the Department of Justice the best agency in the State. From equalizing pay to creating additional support for mothers employed here to enhanced security protocols for all employees, we have made improvements that prioritized your advancement and your safety. And we will continue to identify ways that further promote that cause.

Again, I welcome your ideas and concerns.

Jeff