Celina Ramirez assumed her role as the UA’s compliance officer on July 1. She has more than 10 years of experience in compliance at the UA, most recently as the Americans with Disabilities Act/504 compliance officer and associate director at the Disability Resource Center. Ramirez, a Tucson native, joined the UA in 2008 after completing her undergraduate and law degrees at Stanford University.

In this Q&A, she describes her office and her responsibilities.

What is compliance?

Compliance means following laws and policies, but it’s really about implementing best practices and staying true to our core values. When laws and policies are passed, it’s because there’s a value that we want to protect, such as safety, privacy or equity. Through the process of creating laws and policies, subject matter experts provide input on best practices for how to protect these values. At the University, we take great care to follow compliance requirements because it’s an essential part of creating a safe, equitable and positive experience for all members of our community.

Are you the first person to hold this position?

This position existed previously, but this is the first time it is reporting to the president.

What is the role of your office and what does that look like day to day?

The University has very experienced and knowledgeable compliance professionals across campus. My primary role is to be a resource to them. I work with them to implement compliance requirements and resolve any gaps in compliance. This could involve revising or creating policies and procedures, instituting new structures or practices, developing training resources, or addressing individual acts of noncompliance. It’s also my role to keep the president and University leaders apprised of compliance efforts.

How many compliance professionals does the UA have and in which areas of the University?
There are over 100 professionals who focus on compliance and many others who have some compliance responsibilities as part of their positions. The primary areas include athletics, Equity/Title IX/American with Disabilities Act, financial aid, financial services, human resources, information security, privacy, research and risk management. Information about the University’s compliance areas is available at [www.compliance.arizona.edu](http://www.compliance.arizona.edu) [1]. Compliance professionals can subscribe to [compliance@list.arizona.edu](mailto:compliance@list.arizona.edu) [2] to stay up to date about compliance-related news and resources.

**Is any special training or background required to be a compliance officer?**

Compliance professionals usually have subject matter expertise in a particular policy area and are skilled at interpreting and implementing regulations and policies. In some areas it’s common for compliance professionals to have law degrees, but it’s not required.

**What is the relationship between your office and the Office of Institutional Equity?**

The Office of Institutional Equity has compliance staff who work to prevent, investigate and address discrimination. As with other compliance units, the Compliance Office partners with OIE to ensure compliance with nondiscrimination laws and policies.

**Your office manages the UA’s Ethics and Compliance Hotline. What is that and how is it used?**

The hotline is a 24/7, anonymous resource for reporting concerns about potential legal or policy violations or unethical conduct. Individuals can call 866-364-1908 or report online at [www.lighthouse-services.com/Arizona](http://www.lighthouse-services.com/Arizona) [3]. When someone makes a report, an outside vendor receives it and sends it to the Compliance Office without any identifying information, unless the reporter chooses to provide it. I strongly encourage anyone who has a policy or ethics concern and who prefers to be anonymous to report through the hotline.

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**Source URL:** https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/lqp/qa-celina-ramirez-head-ua-compliance-office

**Links**

[2] mailto:compliance@list.arizona.edu