



Civil Rights Review

Civil Rights Training Checklist

for Workers and Volunteers Who Assist with USDA FNS Programs

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Goals of civil rights – fairness and equality of treatment and benefit delivery.

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Legal prohibitions – discrimination is prohibited on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex (gender identity or sexual orientation), and disability in special nutrition programs funded by the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service.

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Types of discrimination – Disparate treatment (intentional), disparate impact (neutral rule impacts disproportionately on a group), reprisal/retaliation against complainant or his/her family, associates or others involved complaint process or exercising civil rights.

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Exceptions – Congress can establish a program that is intended for certain groups of people, and it is not discrimination to exclude those who do not meet eligibility requirements. For example, Congress can set age limits, and this is not age discrimination or disability discrimination for those who do not meet the age limits.

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When do civil rights rules apply – Civil rights rules apply any time there is any federal financial assistance. Federal financial assistance is receiving anything of value from the federal government – not just cash. It can include commodities, training, equipment, and other goods and services.

Special circumstances

- ☐ Make sure people with disabilities are accommodated. Sites should be accessible to people with all types of disabilities (e.g., mobility, sight, hearing, other) or alternate means of service delivery should be advertised and provided.
- ☐ Provide other language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency who could not gain meaningful access to the program without other language assistance. Assistance must always be provided to LEP households, but the level or type of assistance can vary based on circumstances.

Other requirements

- ☐ Treat all people with dignity and respect.
- ☐ Display the USDA "And Justice for All..." non-discriminating poster in a place where it can be seen by all who visit the premises.
- ☐ Include the USDA non-discrimination statement on all materials that mention USDA funded programs and make sure the statement is also on web sites that mention USDA funded programs.
- ☐ Conduct outreach to ensure that potentially eligible persons and households are aware of the program and have information on how to apply.
- ☐ Provide suggestions about how to make more people aware of the program and how to receive benefits.
- ☐ Maintain confidentiality. It is not appropriate to talk about who is receiving benefits and to make remarks about them. Never share information with others regardless of an expression of good intentions. Refer all requests for information to managers. What happens at the site stays at the site. The exception is any illegal or

inappropriate behavior that should be reported to state or federal officials.

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Collect racial/ethnic data in CSFP and use it to target outreach and to assess participation. Make sure individual data are kept confidential.

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Cooperate with State and Federal reviewers. They are required to conduct periodic compliance reviews to help ensure that program and civil rights rules are being obeyed.

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If there is a non-compliance, correction of problems and voluntary compliance is sought. Failure to abide by civil rights rules can lead to the loss of Federal financial assistance.

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Sexual harassment is prohibited. Do not engage in or tolerate unwanted or unwelcome sexual behavior including jokes, touching, requests for sexual favors, etc. Report violations to management or to state or federal officials.

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Advise people who allege discrimination about how to file a complaint. They may write to: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 or (202) 720-6382 (TTY).

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If conflicts occur, remain calm. Call for assistance immediately if you feel threatened. Consider mediation or a third party to help resolve the situation.

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Treat people the way you would like to be treated.

Signature_____

Date_____

Print Name_____

This is an equal opportunity provider.