

<b>F</b> ood & <b>N</b> utrition <b>S</b> ervice	<b>F N S N O T I C E</b>	NUMBER
	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE 3101 PARK CENTER DRIVE ALEXANDRIA, VA 22302-1500	2015-1

INFORMATION FOR: All FNS and CNPP Employees

**FNS and CNPP Civil Rights Policy**

1 PURPOSE

This prescribes the civil rights policy for the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP). It also adopts the Department’s policy requiring agencies and staff offices to incorporate the civil rights strategic goals (Accountability; Program Delivery and Outreach; Workforce Diversity and Employment Practices; Alternative Dispute Resolution, Procurement and Cultural Transformation) into their strategic plans in compliance with the Government Performance and Results Act.

2 AUTHORITY

This policy is established consistent with Departmental Regulation 4300-6, Civil Rights Policy for the Department of Agriculture, dated March 16, 1998, revised June 30, 2000.

Specific objectives to achieve the goals are identified in civil rights implementation plans that are referenced in the Civil Rights, EEO and Cultural Transformation Performance Element 2.

3 POLICY

FNS and CNPP are committed to affording every customer, employee and applicant for employment fair and equitable treatment without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, reprisal, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.) Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

If you wish to file an employment complaint, you must contact your agency's [EEO Counselor](#) (PDF) within calendar 45 days of the date of the alleged discriminatory act, event, or in the case of a personnel action. Additional information can be found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_file.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_file.html).

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a Strategic Goals

The Agency is committed to taking the necessary steps to implement a viable civil rights program. To further demonstrate the Agency's commitment, FNS and CNPP will strive to achieve the following civil rights strategic goals:

1 Hold managers, supervisors, and other employees accountable for ensuring that customers and employees are treated fairly, with integrity and equality.

2 Ensure equal access and provide equal treatment in the delivery of programs and services to all customers.

3 Eliminate under-representation in the work force by recruiting and employing a highly skilled, competent, and diverse work force, free of discrimination, reprisal, and sexual harassment.

4 Provide sufficient human, fiscal, and organizational resources, and train all employees to institute an effective civil rights program.

5 Ensure equal opportunity to minority, women-owned, and small and disadvantaged businesses in procurement and contracting activities.

b Performance Management Plans

Civil Rights performance will be evaluated as a part of the performance appraisal process. A critical civil rights performance element will be included in the performance plans of all employees.

c Accountability

Agency officials, managers, supervisors and other employees will be held accountable for discrimination, civil rights violations, and related misconduct. The Agency will take appropriate corrective or disciplinary action.

1 Any final decision containing a finding of discrimination, or any settlement agreement or conciliation agreement in a claim of discrimination against FNS or CNPP employees will be referred to the Agency's Human Resources Division for appropriate action.

2 The Department's Office of Human Resources Management will determine appropriate action in cases in which the benefit conferred by a final decision containing a finding of discrimination, settlement agreement, or

conciliation agreement involves a novel issue that has precedential or Department-wide impact.

We join Secretary Vilsack in his commitment to ensuring USDA's compliance with civil rights, equal employment opportunity, and diversity policies and programs.

We ask each employee to join us by giving his/her full participation and support in making our civil rights program one of which we can be proud.

Audrey Rowe  
Administrator  
FNS

Angela Tagtow  
Executive Director  
CNPP