



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education, and Economics
Agricultural Research Service

August 3, 2017

SUBJECT: 2017 Pacific West Area Diversity/Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement

TO: All Pacific West Area Employees

FROM: Robert L. Matteri
Area Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert L. Matteri", written over a horizontal line.

We received a memorandum from Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Administrator Dr. Jacobs-Young, dated June 20, 2017, informing all employees of ARS' top priorities in regards to improving civil rights throughout the Agency and creating and maintaining an environment where all employees are valued, respected, and free to develop and perform to their fullest potential. In addition, the memorandum informed you of ARS' charge with diversifying a work environment reflective of the populations we serve.

We are all called to fully support ARS' 2017 Diversity/EEO Policy Statement to improve civil rights throughout the Agency by eradicating discrimination, sexual/non-sexual harassment, and retaliation, and improving and successfully managing a work environment as diverse as our customers. The Agricultural Research Service has zero tolerance for discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment based on race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, protected genetic information in employment, or where all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program or in any program/activity conducted or funded by the Department of Agriculture. Prohibited bases can vary among programs/employment activities.

An employee with specific questions regarding prohibited bases or if an employee feels he/she has been discriminated against and wish to file an EEO complaint, should contact the Office of Outreach, Diversity and Equal Opportunity (ODEO) at 202-720-6161 or TDD 202-720-3303. Employees requiring alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) or reasonable accommodation should contact the Research, Education, and Economics (REE) Disability Program Manager at 202-720-6161.

Hiring managers may use the [Agency's Management Directive-715 \(MD-715\) Summary](#) and consult with Jan Lewis, the PWA ODEO program manager (jan.lewis@ars.usda.gov; 510-559-6005) in developing strategies for recruitment to enhance the diversity of our applicant pools and workforce. We will notify employees when Area-specific MD-715 information is available on-line.

We all have the responsibility of maintaining a collegial working environment that welcomes and appreciates diversity in all forms. Additionally, we can all contribute to our diversity goals by engaging in mentoring, career development, special emphasis programs, serving on EEO Diversity Committees, and outreach activities that promote workforce diversity.

Thank you in advance for your support and engagement in making ARS a model EEO employer.