

Counseling

To preserve your rights under EEO laws, contact an EEO Counselor within 45 days from the date you learned of the matter that you believe is employment discrimination.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

ADR is an informal, non-adversarial process that offers individuals the opportunity to discuss their concerns and resolve them in a mutually satisfactory manner.

Management Directive 715 (MD-715)

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission MD-715, EEO Program, holds ARS accountable for affirmative programs of equal employment opportunity.

Frequently asked questions regarding MD-715 can be found at the following web site: www.eeoc.gov/federal/qanda-md715.html

The Notification and Federal Employee Anti-discrimination and Retaliation (NO FEAR) Act

The NO FEAR Act requires ARS to be accountable for violations, anti-discrimination and whistleblower protection by posting quarterly statistical data on EEO complaints.

More information regarding the NO FEAR Act can be found at the following web site: www.usda.gov/nofear

EEO Training

- Disability Awareness Training
- EEO Complaint Processing

- NO FEAR Training
- Reasonable Accommodation
- Sexual Harassment Prevention

Special Emphasis Program

- African American Employment Program
- Asian American/Pacific Islander Employment Program
- Disability Employment Program
- Federal Women's Employment Program
- Hispanic Employment Program
- Native American/Alaskan Native Program

Partnerships/Initiatives

- USDA/1890 Capacity Building Grants
- USDA/1890 Centers of Excellence
- USDA/1890 National Scholars Program
- USDA/1994 Native American Institutes
- USDA Liaison Programs
- White House Initiatives
 - Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)
 - Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI)
 - Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU)
 - Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU)

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

ARS Civil Rights Programs

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Research Service
Office of the Administrator
Civil Rights Staff



The Civil Rights Staff (CRS) of the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) represents and assists the Administrator on civil rights and equal employment opportunity (EEO) matters. The CRS mission is to protect the civil rights and equal employment opportunity for employees, applicants for employment, and all beneficiaries.

Federal laws and Agency directives guide implementation of the EEO program. The primary civil rights statutes and regulations governing nondiscrimination in ARS programs and activities are as follows:

- The Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA)
- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA)
- Title I and Title V of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)
- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Sections 501 and 505
- The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978
- The Civil Rights Act of 1991
- Executive Order 11478, as amended

EEO Laws prohibit Employment Discrimination on the following bases:

- Age (40 and over)
- Disability
- Equal Pay
- National Origin
- Race
- Religion
- Retaliation
- Sex (including pregnancy and childbirth)
- Sexual Harassment

Harassment is Prohibited

Employees may not be harassed in the course of employment because of their race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age or disability.

Employees may not be harassed because they have participated in the EEO process or expressed their opposition to employment discrimination.

Retaliation is Prohibited

Participation in the EEO process, and opposition to discrimination are protected activities, therefore employees subjected to harm in the form of adverse employment practices or decisions or harassment have the right to file a complaint of discrimination.

Other Prohibited Personnel Practices

In addition to the prohibitions contained in Antidiscrimination (EEO) and Whistleblower Protection Laws, under Merit System Principles, no personnel action in the Federal Government may be based on an individual's:

- Marital Status
- Political Affiliation
- Sexual Orientation
- Conduct not adversely affecting job performance

Reasonable Accommodation for Disability and for Religion

ARS provides reasonable accommodation to qualified employees and applicants with physical and mental disabilities unless to do so would cause an undue hardship on the Agency.

ARS also provides reasonable accommodation for the religious practices and beliefs of employees and applicants.

Contact CRS for information regarding:

- EEO/Alternative Dispute Resolution
- EEO/CR Information
- EEO Training
- Management Directive 715
- NO FEAR Act
- Partnerships/Initiatives
- Special Emphasis Programs
- Reasonable Accommodation

The Civil Rights Staff is physically located at 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Room 3552S, Washington, DC 20250.

Hours: Monday – Friday
8:00 am–4:30 pm EST
Voice: (202) 720-6161
TDD: (202) 720-3303
Complaints: (202) 720-3410
(800) 340-4289
FAX: (202) 690-0109

Contact us on the web:
www.ars.usda.gov. Select the “About Us” section. “Civil Rights” is listed to the left.