

<b>DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION</b>		<b>NUMBER:</b> 4300-006
<b>SUBJECT:</b> Civil Rights Policy for the Department of Agriculture	<b>DATE:</b> June 30, 2000	
	<b>OPI:</b> Office of the Secretary	

## 1 PURPOSE

This regulation prescribes civil rights policy for the Department of Agriculture (USDA) and identifies civil rights strategic goals for USDA. It also requires agencies and staff offices to incorporate the goals into their strategic plans in compliance with the Government Performance and Results Act.

## 2 SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Departmental Regulation 4300-6, Civil Rights Policy for the Department of Agriculture, dated March 16, 1998, is hereby revised.

Specific objectives to achieve the goals are identified in civil rights implementation plans which are referenced in the civil rights performance elements and standards for agency heads and staff office directors.

## 3 POLICY

The Department of Agriculture is committed to affording every employee and customer fair and equitable treatment without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status.

a STRATEGIC GOALS. Departmental officials and agency heads will act on this commitment by taking the necessary steps to implement a viable civil rights program. To assist in translating this commitment into meaningful action, each agency head will strive to achieve the following civil rights strategic goals:

- (1) Hold managers, supervisors, and other employees accountable for ensuring that USDA customers and

employees are treated fairly and equitably, with dignity and respect.

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

(3) Eliminate under-representation in the workforce by recruiting and employing a highly skilled, competent, and diverse workforce, 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 USDA procurement and contracting activities.

**b PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PLANS.** Civil rights performance will be evaluated as a part of the performance appraisal process of all USDA employees. A separate critical civil rights performance element will be included in the management performance plans of all supervisors.

**c ACCOUNTABILITY.** Department officials, managers, supervisors and other employees will be held accountable for discrimination, civil rights violations, and related misconduct. Agencies 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 USDA employees will be referred to the Agency Human Resources Management Office 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 Departmentwide impact or exceeds a financial threshold to be established by the Assistant Secretary for Administration.

This policy applies to all customers and employees regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status or family status. USDA

employees, in Washington and all field offices, must commit to uphold this policy. Also, reprisal of any kind against employees or customers will not be tolerated.

The Subcabinet, agency heads, managers, supervisors and other employees across the Department will be held accountable for civil rights at USDA. All employees must demonstrate a commitment to equal opportunity for all.

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