

Departmental Administration

Departmental Administration (DA) is USDA's central administrative management organization. It is responsible for leadership and oversight of cross-cutting administrative management activities in all of USDA's mission areas and staff offices. In support of USDA's goal to expand economic and trade opportunities for agricultural producers and other rural residents, DA's operations and activities involve timely, accurate, and high-quality delivery of products and services related to civil rights, small and disadvantaged business utilization, outreach programs, human resources management, procurement and property management, and safe and healthy work environments. The following offices are under Departmental Administration:

- **Office of Civil Rights**

The Office of Civil Rights (CR) is charged with facilitating the fair and equitable treatment of USDA customers and employees. CR provides leadership and guidance to agencies in civil rights, while using its oversight responsibility to ensure compliance and accountability.

CR established a set of goals that will allow it to fulfill its mission over the next 5 years. These CR goals establish its priorities and direction. CR's goals are to:

- Fully implement the recommendations in the Civil Rights Action Team report described below,
- Ensure compliance with civil rights in employment and program services,
- Establish an infrastructure within the Office of Civil Rights and the agencies to efficiently and effectively perform civil rights functions,
- Integrate automated systems that can be accessed by all CR employees and agency civil rights personnel, which lead to the streamlining of processes,
- Establish outreach programs to meet underserved customers' needs and expectations and to communicate information regularly through various means to educate, assist, and support all employees and customers, and
- Ensure accountability in civil rights.

The expectations of the Office of Civil Rights are to monitor USDA customers' needs and adapt to any changes in their needs over time. CR's performance in carrying out its mission will be evaluated by its customers, both internal and external.

Primary contacts:

Lloyd E. Wright, Director, Office of Civil Rights, (202) 720-5212;
Susan Reilly, Deputy Director, Office of Civil Rights (202) 720-3130;
Jeremy Wu, Deputy Director, Office of Civil Rights (202) 720-5681.

- **Civil Rights Implementation Teams**

In response to a demonstration by black farmers outside the White House in Washington, DC, and documented cases of discrimination in program delivery and employment practices, Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman appointed a team of USDA leaders to take a hard look at the issues and make strong recommendations for change. The Civil Rights Action Team (CRAT) was charged with developing a set of recommendations to address institutional and underlying problems and ways to implement actions to ensure accountability and follow-through at USDA.

In addition to auditing past reports, the team sponsored 12 listening sessions in January 1997, in 11 locations across the country to hear from customers--especially socially disadvantaged and minority farmers--and from USDA employees. Three sessions (Tulsa, OK; Window Rock, AZ; Rapid City, SD) were targeted toward American Indian Americans. However, due to inclement weather in South Dakota, the session in Rapid City was canceled out of concern for the safety of all participants.

The listening panels were composed of either Secretary Glickman or Deputy Secretary Richard E. Rominger (with

one exception), CRAT members, Members of Congress, and members of the State Food and Agriculture Council. Customer sessions were tailored to address the civil rights concerns of specific cultural groups.

The CRAT members reassembled in Washington, DC, and developed a report, *Civil Rights at the United States Department of Agriculture, A Report by the Civil Rights Action Team*, containing their findings and conclusions. Most importantly, it contains recommended actions that are being taken to remedy many of the long-standing problems plaguing the Department and weakening its credibility among customers and employees.

Assistant Secretary for Administration Pearlie S. Reed created 34 Civil Rights Implementation Teams (CRIT) to develop strategies for implementing the 92 recommendations developed by the CRAT. A publication, *Implementation of the Civil Rights Action Team Report at USDA - An Interim Progress Report*, has been compiled to document the status of the 92 recommendations.

Among the more prominent actions being taken in response to specific recommendations relating to American Indians and Alaska Natives in the CRAT report are the following:

- The Department will establish USDA Service Centers on tribal lands.
- USDA and the U.S. Department of the Interior have committed to work cooperatively with tribal governments to develop a strategic outreach plan utilizing USDA's Food and Agriculture Council (FAC) to identify and address the needs of American Indian agriculture and conservation.
- USDA is committed to improving the equity of funding of the 29 Land-Grant Tribal Colleges, and supporting the enactment of legislation to make these institutions eligible for Smith- Lever Act 3(d) Extension Service Funds.

Primary Contact:

Kathy Gugulis, Civil Rights Implementation Team (CRIT) Leader, (202) 720-3291.

- **Special Emphasis Programs**

In May 1990, the Office of Special Emphasis Programs (SEP) was developed to advise the Director of Civil Rights of unique concerns and problems related to equal opportunity for American Indians and Alaska Natives, Asian Pacific Americans, Blacks, Hispanics, People with Disabilities, and Women.

The American Indian Program is the Department's intermediary to the American Indian and Alaska Native communities on employment and civil rights issues. The functions of the office are to:

- Serve as the Department's principal advisor on employment and civil rights issues relative to American Indians and Alaska Natives,
- Work with the Office of Personnel to provide employment-related outreach to American Indian and Alaska Native organizations and educational institutions,
- Analyze departmental policies and issues affecting the employment and civil rights of American Indians and Alaska Natives,
- Coordinate USDA's participation in conferences on employment and civil rights that are sponsored by and for American Indians and Alaska Natives,
- Provide training to USDA employees to facilitate the efficiency of their work with American Indians and Alaska Natives, and
- Coordinate USDA's annual celebration of National American Indian Heritage Month.

Primary contact:

American Indian Program Manager, Special Emphasis Programs, Office of Civil Rights, (202) 720-0352.

- **Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)**

The Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) was established June 26, 1979 pursuant to

Public Law 95-507. OSDBU serves as USDA's lead agency in providing an integrated focus for implementing and executing programs to assist small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned businesses in supporting USDA's missions. OSDBU develops policies, standards, and programs consistent with Federal guidelines for developing, managing, analyzing, evaluating, and improving Departmental, agency, and staff office Affirmative Procurement Programs. OSDBU also provides guidance to assist agencies and staff offices in developing and implementing activities that ensure outreach efforts involve all targeted groups, and to ensure that the participation of small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned businesses in the Department's contracting and program activities is increased.

OSDBU provides Department-wide leadership in implementation and execution of programs under Sections 8 and 15 of the Small Business Act, as amended, as well as Executive Order 12432, to promote the growth and competitiveness of small, minority, and women-owned businesses through equitable participation in the Department's procurement and program opportunities. These programs are called the Procurement Preference Programs, and include:

- The **Small Business Set-Aside Program**, under which the Department permits competition on certain solicitations only among small businesses;
- The **Section 8(a) Program**, under which the Department enters into contracts with the Small Business Administration for supplies and services, and the SBA subcontracts noncompetitively for these requirements with approved socially and economically disadvantaged firms;
- The **Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Program**, under which the Department takes affirmative action to contract on a competitive basis with minority businesses;
- The **Women's Business Enterprise (WBE) Program**, under which the Department takes affirmative action to ensure that businesses owned and controlled by women are offered an opportunity to compete on contracts awarded by the Department;
- The **Subcontracting Program**, under which P.L. 95-507 requires prime contractors (large businesses) with contracts over \$500,000 for supplies and services and \$1,000,000 for construction to establish subcontracting plans that provide maximum utilization of small and disadvantaged businesses; and
- The **Small Business Competitiveness Program**, under which the Department monitors the ability of small businesses to compete in 4 designated industry groups and to increase small business procurements in 10 industry categories traditionally lacking small business participation.

Primary contacts:

Sharron Harris, Director, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, (202) 720- 7117;
Stella Hughes, Procurement Analyst and American Indian Liaison, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, (202) 720-7117.