



Animal and Plant
Health Inspection
Service

March 27, 2024

APHIS Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement

Office of the
Administrator

Washington, DC
20250

At the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), we are committed to the values of diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and equal opportunity for all employees and those we serve. As Administrator, I am committed to working with leaders at all levels across the Agency to intentionally build and advance a culture of belonging and excellence across APHIS. It is APHIS' mission to actively advance racial justice and equity for one another by rooting out systemic discrimination and inequities and strengthening civil rights programs while building trust within and outside the Agency. This commitment is also reflected in APHIS' Strategic Plan 2023-2027.

As an Agency, APHIS is committed to uphold USDA's core values of respect, dignity, equity and inclusion, trust, integrity, service and results, serve as guiding principles, defining appropriate behaviors and expectations for all employees, and directing decision making throughout all levels of the organization.

No employee, former employee, or applicant for employment will be denied equal opportunity (EO) because of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, retaliation, or any other non-merit-based factor. This not only is the law; it is an essential component of APHIS' mission and our responsibility to the public we serve.

All employees have the freedom to compete on a fair and level playing field with EO for available employment, advancement opportunities, and compensation. Equal employment opportunity (EEO) covers all personnel/employment programs, management practices, and decisions, including recruitment, hiring, merit promotion, transfer, reassignments, training and career development, benefits, and separation. These EEO principles are more than an employees' right by law—they represent the core values at USDA/APHIS.

In APHIS, we are a leader in EEO and a model employer. All APHIS applicants and employees have the right not only to be free from harassment and discrimination but also to raise an allegation of harassment or discrimination and not fear reprisal. Any form of workplace harassment or reprisal against anyone who engages in protected activity will not be tolerated. USDA's Anti-Harassment Program Departmental Regulation 4200-003, reenforces that sub-component agencies are required to respond to, address, and correct any harassing conduct before it becomes severe or pervasive. In compliance with DR 4200-003, APHIS will continue to process complaints of harassment, discrimination, and reprisal and provide robust EEO training to all employees.

Employees and managers will be held accountable for doing their part to ensure all APHIS applicants, customers, constituents, and stakeholders are provided equal access to all opportunities, programs, and services available through APHIS. Accordingly, all senior leaders, managers, and supervisors must act in a manner that is deserving of the public's trust and with the utmost integrity in everything we do as public servants, leading always by example, treating everyone with dignity and respect, and promoting an ethical, equitable, and inclusive culture. All employees must comply with EEO principles as we perform APHIS' mission.

Sincerely,

Michael Watson
Administrator