

NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

CHARTER

PREAMBLE

In the spirit of cooperation, mutual respect, and trust, the National Civil Rights Leadership Committee (NCRLC) hereby establishes a commitment to foster true equality of opportunity for Veterinary Services (VS) employees, program beneficiaries, and all other stakeholders.

MISSION

To foster a cooperative, constructive working environment in VS, and to develop means to implement the U.S. Department of Agriculture's civil rights goals and objectives. The mission will be carried out by:

- Developing national Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights (EEO/CR) initiatives with organization-wide benefits;
- Evaluating and monitoring VS progress in implementing the VS Civil Rights Strategic Plan;
- and
- Interfacing with local and regional EEO/CR Advisory Committees.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the VS NCRLC, also referred to as the Committee, is to provide leadership and guidance in developing a national approach to Civil Rights program implementation within VS.

II. AUTHORITY

The NCRLC exists and operates under the authority of the VS Deputy Administrator.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

A. The membership of the Committee will be comprised of a maximum of ten core (voting) members. Three additional representatives serve as Ex-Officio (non-voting) members, including a VS EEO Program Manager Liaison, a member of the Civil Rights Enforcement & Compliance (CREC) staff, and a member of the VS Management Team (VSMT) (only if a VSMT representative is not a core member).

B. There are no grades or occupational series requirements for employees to serve on the Committee. Employees will be appointed without regard to race, gender, age, color, national origin, religion, disability, or sexual orientation.

C. Any permanent full-time VS employee may apply for Committee membership upon vacancy announcements with the approval of their supervisor. The NCRLC will rate and rank applications for Committee membership. If selected, the employee will sign and forward a Memorandum of Understanding to their supervisor, VSMT Representative, the Deputy Administrator, and the Director of Civil Rights and Compliance (all signatures are required for membership) which will indicate that the employee will be allowed up to 20% of their official work time to perform their assignment. The Deputy Administrator will have final approval for Committee membership. The starting date for new members will be October 1st of the year selected unless selected mid-term to fill a vacancy (see following paragraph).

In the event a member (non-officer) leaves the Committee before the expiration of their two year term, the following actions will be taken:

- If the term is less than six months, the position will not be filled.
- If the term is more than six months, the position will be advertised and filled per established procedures.

The term of service will not exceed a life time of three 2-year terms, unless elected as an officer during their final two year term – a one year extension will be granted to fulfill their obligation. At the end of the member's two year term, they may elect to remain on the Committee for another term of two years, not to exceed a maximum of six years, with the approval from the Committee without going through the selection process mentioned above. Members elected as officers will serve two years. The Committee will elect officers every two years at the first face-to-face meeting of the fiscal year. Special elections for officers will be held as necessary by the Committee.

IV. OFFICERS OF THE COMMITTEE

A. The members of the Committee will elect a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary. If the Vice-Chairperson or Secretary resigns or is otherwise unable to complete their term, a special election will be held to fill the position for the remainder of the term.

B. The duties of the Chairperson are to:

- conduct orderly meetings;
- serve as the liaison with the Deputy Administrator and other management officials;
- assign liaison duties to the following EEO committees: Eastern Region, Western Region, CVB/NVSL, CEAH, and Headquarters Committee;
- review/approve/disapprove expenditure requests from Committee members;
- provide input of committee members performance to their supervisor; and
- monitor and manage the NCRLC budget.

C. The duties of the Vice-Chairperson are to:

- act in the absence of the Chairperson;
- assist the Chairperson as directed;
- assume the position and duties of the Chairperson for the remainder of the unexpired term in the event of their inability to complete their term; and
- serve as the liaison with the designated VS EEO Program Manager Liaison and CREC Ex-Officio members.

D. The duties of the Secretary are to:

- record and distribute copies of the minutes of each meeting to the Committee and Ex-Officio members within fourteen days;
- maintain organizational and financial records;
- assist the Chairperson as directed in the disposition of correspondence and other matters;
- provide notification of vacancies on the Committee to the VS EEO Program Manager Liaison.

V. CORE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

A. The duties of the Committee members are to:

- honor their commitment to the Committee;
- serve on subcommittees as directed;
- assist the Officers as required;
- serve as role models to VS employees;
- carry out the mission and purpose as stated in the charter;
- attend face-to-face meetings unless excused by the Chairperson;
- be present on at least ten teleconferences per fiscal year unless excused by the

Chairperson;

- serve as facilitator/moderator during monthly teleconferences; and
- complete assignments in a timely manner.

B. Members of the committee will be assigned liaison duties as outlined below:

- attend at least one meeting each fiscal year;
- participate on phone conferences when possible;
- provide leadership, direction and guidance;
- provide a report once a year on your Regional Committee;
- review accomplishments;
- report progress (including problems) activities and achievements; and
- provide feedback on recruitment and outreach strategies if applicable.

VI. EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

A. The duties of the VS EEO Program Manager Liaison are to:

- prepare and post vacancy announcements for Committee membership; and
- provide administrative support to the NCRLC.

B. The duties of the CREC member are to:

- provide information, leadership, direction, coordination and support to the NCRLC; and
- monitor the Committee's progress in achieving established policies and objectives.

C. The duties of the VSMT member are to:

- provide VSMT guidance and perspective on issues that are being discussed during NCRLC meetings and teleconferences; and
- provide input of Chairperson's performance to their supervisor.

VII. REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

- Semi-annual reporting on the accomplishments of the NCRLC; and
- Prepare special reports as necessary.

VIII. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

- For any meeting to be conducted, a quorum of seven core members must be present;
- As funding permits, meet in-person a minimum of two times per fiscal year;
- Teleconference calls (monthly and as necessary); and
- As funding permits, attend Agency and Departmental national meetings relevant to EEO/CR.

Committee meetings will be attended by VS Deputy Administrator, Officers, Members, Ex-Officio Members, and invited guests.

IX. FUNDING

The Committee will develop and submit an annual operating budget each year to the VS, Management Support Staff no later than May 15th of the preceding fiscal year. The budget request will include funding for travel, training, special initiatives, and other miscellaneous expenses.

X. CHARTER REVISION

In order to amend this Charter, all members must be present during discussion and a consensus reached.

***Note: See NCRLC Member Handbook for additional guidance on the charter.**