



Animal and Plant
Health Inspection
Service

Office of the
Administrator

1400 Independence
Avenue SW
Washington,
DC 20250

Voice 202.799.7000
Fax 202.720.3054

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Civil Rights Policy Statement

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) employees are critical to programs that protect and promote U.S. agricultural health, help feed and clothe the world, and support USDA's mission of growing American agriculture. Our success relies on conducting programs and employment practices in a non-discriminatory manner. This means ensuring that individuals receive equal treatment and do not experience unfair treatment or discrimination. It also means that we must provide access to Agency programs and services to all who can potentially benefit.

The opportunities afforded to all employees through civil rights and equal opportunity are boundless; by treating one another with fairness and respect, we all benefit, as do our customers and stakeholders. Discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex (including gender identity and expression), disability, reprisal, sexual orientation, marital status, parental or familial status, political beliefs, protected genetic information, or receipt of public assistance will not be tolerated in employment or program delivery.

We are also committed to continuing to examine and update our policies and practices to ensure that our programs are accessible to everyone. In July 2014, USDA amended its regulations to add protection from discrimination based on political beliefs and gender identity under USDA conducted programs. The new regulation provides a wider range of protections that are especially significant for members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community and those who have not traditionally participated in our programs. These amendments are an important component of our programs and outreach activities, particularly with regard to minorities, women, members of the LBGT community, and individuals with limited English proficiency. We are working to fully comply with the updated regulations and ensure APHIS remains a model employer and service provider.

I encourage APHIS employees to be proactive in identifying and addressing civil rights issues and demonstrate their commitment to equal opportunity by, among other things, taking part in Special Emphasis Programs, serving on the Civil Rights Diversity and Advisory Committee, and participating fully in Civil Rights Compliance Reviews. Through these efforts and others we can maintain a discrimination-free work environment and provide equal access to employment and programs—which, ultimately, benefit us all.

This policy statement must be posted in all workplaces so employees and the public can view our commitment to civil rights. Along with this policy statement, additional information on our civil rights program and guidance on civil rights issues can be found on the Office of Civil Rights, Diversity, and Inclusion website at www.aphis.usda.gov/civil_rights.

Kevin Shea
Administrator

FEB 10 2016