

ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE
CIVIL RIGHTS UPDATE

November 2007

Volume 9

CIVIL RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE – (CREC)



CREC MISSION STATEMENT

To provide leadership, direction, coordination, evaluation, and support to the Civil Rights efforts of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

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ADMINISTRATOR'S ANNUAL CIVIL RIGHTS AWARD CEREMONY

APHIS continues to provide support for the United States Department of Agriculture's commitment to Civil Rights and has made significant progress in the area of equal opportunity in employment and program delivery. On Thursday, October 25, 2007, APHIS held its 9th Annual Administrator's Civil Rights Awards Ceremony in Riverdale, MD. Cindy J. Smith, Administrator, and Kevin Shea, Associate Administrator, recognized managers, supervisors and employees for leadership and contributions in support of Civil Rights.

AWARD RECIPIENTS

Managers and Supervisors

Dr. Chester Gipson, Animal Care
Dr. Elizabeth Lautner, Veterinary Services
Renee Schnurr, Veterinary Services

Employees

Dan Kaczmarek, Policy and Program Development
David Petendree, Plant Protection and Quarantine
Dr. Roberta Morales, Veterinary Services

Civil Rights Program Achievements

Judy Garrison, Biotechnology Regulatory Service
Dr. Betty Goldentyer, Animal Care
Dr. Mohammad Khan, Veterinary Services

Group

The Veterinary Regulatory Support Group, Plant Protection and Quarantine
Finding Common Ground through Cultural Sensitivity and Perseverance-
Tohono Land Connections Enrichment Program, Plant Protection and Quarantine
The Veterinary Career Pathways for Under-represented Minorities Group,
Veterinary Services

EEO Complaint Filings Decrease!

The Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Center provides EEO counseling and mediation in complaints of employment discrimination raised by employees, former employees or applicants for employment.

In fiscal year 2007, the ADR Center processed 113 informal complaints, of this total, 44 or 39% resulted in the filing of a formal complaint. This number (44) represents a downward trend in the number of complaints filed since 2003 when 130 formal complaints were filed in one fiscal year. We believe this decline can be attributed in part to increased management attention to the resolution of complaints; complaint discussions between managers, EEO Counselors and EEO Complaints specialists and training and briefing sessions provided by the CREC staff.

Civil Rights Events

October is Disability Employment Awareness Month

By a Proclamation signed October 3, 2007, the President of the United States of America, proclaimed October 2007 as National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The National Disability Month observance started in 1988 by Presidential Proclamation which replaced National Employ the Handicapped Week which started in October 1945.

The 2007 Presidential proclamation states that “Americans with disabilities strengthen our country's workforce, and their achievements help keep our Nation the world's economic leader. Landmark reforms such as the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 have helped to ensure that individuals with disabilities are better able to engage in productive work and participate fully in the life of our Nation. It is important that we continue to expand on these opportunities for Americans with disabilities by eliminating the barriers and false perceptions that hinder them from joining the workforce. By enhancing the workplace environment for people with disabilities, employers can help provide access to jobs that allow these individuals to demonstrate their potential and realize their dreams.”

During the month of October, APHIS sponsored four Reasonable Accommodation Workshops for Managers and Employees (October 4th, 12th, 15th, and 18th).

American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month Theme: "Guiding Our Destiny with Heritage and Traditions"

On October 31, 2007, the President of the United States proclaimed November as American Indian Heritage Month. This observance actually began in 1916 as “American Indian Day”. This is the time to recognize the significant contributions and celebrate the

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intertribal cultures of the American Indian and Alaska Native people. In observance of American Indian Heritage Month, CREC sponsored a tour of the National Museum of the American Indian located on the National Mall in Washington, D. C. Lunchtime Movie Series are also planned for Wednesday, November 14, 2007 featuring Tribal Nations - A Story of Federal Indian Law and Wednesday, November 28, 2007, featuring The Indian Picture Opera- A Vanishing Race by Edward S. Curtis. The USDA opening ceremony was held on Thursday, November 1, 2007, 10:00 am, Jefferson Auditorium of the South Building in Washington, DC. The event will be "A Celebration of Native Culture through Music and Song". Native American Heritage Month posters can be purchased at www.diversitystore.com.

For more information please contact: Gwendolyn Smith 301/734-6312 or email at Gwendolyn.a.smith@aphis.usda.gov

Targeted Disabilities Word Puzzle

APHIS has a 3-year Hiring Goal (2007 – 2010) to increase the participation rate of employees with targeted disability by hiring 5 employees each year. In FY 2007, APHIS hired a total of 6 employees with a targeted disability. See if you can find the 10 types of disabilities that EEOC identifies as “targeted disabilities”.



D	I	S	T	O	R	T	I	O	N	O	F	S	P	I	N	E	O	U	C	H	O	B	L
I	T	L	F	M	I	S	S	I	P	R	Q	U	E	E	N	S	Y	E	F	I	L	I	R
S	T	C	R	N	T	E	R	E	A	T	R	E	M	I	T	I	E	S	F	N	Y	D	R
T	I	O	T	N	E	S	S	E	R	I	E	E	R	A	K	O	N	I	L	D	S	N	T
O	I	H	O	L	Y	S	U	M	T	A	T	T	S	V	I	L	E	T	U	N	Y	E	P
R	C	C	O	N	V	U	L	S	I	V	E	D	I	S	O	R	D	E	R	S	A	K	E
T	O	S	B	O	D	Y	L	O	A	T	E	R	E	D	S	O	X	I	D	E	V	I	T
I	E	M	I	N	I	S	M	M	L	E	S	S	E	C	E	R	R	A	E	T	N	E	E
O	C	O	M	P	L	E	T	E	P	A	R	A	L	Y	S	I	S	O	A	I	E	P	R
N	A	K	J	A	N	I	S	K	A	C	A	R	S	O	N	P	H	D	F	N	T	A	O
O	V	I	M	E	N	T	A	L	R	E	T	A	R	D	A	T	I	O	N	Y	Y	I	O
F	N	E	B	A	D	N	E	S	A	R	I	O	T	N	E	S	S	S	E	L	E	N	T
L	E	P	U	M	E	N	T	A	L	I	L	L	N	E	S	S	X	Y	S	T	I	O	N
I	T	A	N	V	U	L	S	T	Y	D	E	T	E	R	M	I	N	E	S	I	N	G	T
M	Y	I	U	R	I	T	Y	G	S	S	M	A	R	T	N	E	S	S	B	U	N	T	O
B	L	I	N	D	N	E	S	S	I	T	S	M	A	R	T	N	E	S	S	B	R	I	T
S	B	A	L	D	Y	M	I	S	S	I	N	G	E	X	T	R	E	M	I	T	I	E	S

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Hiring People with Disabilities in APHIS

The Federal standard rate of employing persons with targeted disabilities is 2.27%. **EEOC just established a goal of 2% by 2010.** APHIS employment of persons with targeted disabilities is 0.8%. **At the close of FY 2007, APHIS employment included .7% persons with a targeted disability.**

Coming Soon!
**A Series on Avoiding EEO
 Complaints Based on
 Disability Discrimination**

(Text in bold shows
 current statistics).

Targeted Disability (TD) Employment

Date	Persons with TD Type of Employment			APHIS	% TD
	Permanent	Other	Total		
FY 2005	51	11	62	7,985	.78
FY 2006	52	16	68	8,208	.83
10-7-2007	52	12	64	8,595	.74

Barriers to hiring persons with disabilities may be due to employers holding misconceptions about people with disabilities. Some employers may assume that persons with disabilities will “by definition” need accommodation, that the accommodation will be too costly or too difficult to provide, or even that the person with a disability will not be able to meet expected performance measures

We must recognize that there probably will be instances in which reasonable accommodations *are* needed. In fact, on occasion, both applicants and employees may need a range of accommodations in order to apply for and perform many types of jobs. Some employers might not realize that employers may need to provide reasonable accommodation for the *application process*. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) suggests that employers note on applications that applicants may request reasonable accommodation for the hiring process and to specify a contact person.



Common forms of reasonable accommodation include using sign language interpreters and providing written material in alternative format, such as Braille or large print. However, most accommodations are not costly; some are even free. Some computer related accommodations can be obtained free of charge through a contract that USDA has with the Department of

Defense. Other accommodations are relatively simple and involve minimal costs such as office furniture or location modification or schedule changes. Remember, the accommodation does not have to be provided through the purchase of new furniture; the need could be filled from APHIS surplus furniture.

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There are a few other things to be aware of when hiring people with disabilities. EEOC states that during the interview, employers may not generally ask applicants if they need reasonable accommodation to perform a job. However, if an employer knows a particular applicant has a disability, either because it is obvious or because the person has voluntarily revealed it, and the employer reasonably believes the disability might require accommodation to perform the job, the employer is entitled to ask the following two questions:

1. "Do you need reasonable accommodation to perform the job?"
2. "If the answer is yes, what accommodation do you believe you need?"

For more information about hiring persons with disabilities, contact Sophia Kirby, (301) 734-5366 or Lauren Hill, (202) 720-4622. Hiring is handled by Human Resources; Tammie Smith, National Recruitment Coordinator, (202) 720-9817.



Targeted Disability Word Puzzle

Answer: Targeted disabilities are identified by EEOC as blindness (16 across); deafness (20 across, 7 down); missing extremities (7 across, 17 down); partial paralysis (10 across, 2 down); complete paralysis (2 across, 9 down); convulsive disorders (3 across, 6 down); mental retardation (4 across, 11 down); mental illness (5 across, 13 down); distortion of limbs (1 down) and/or spine (1 across)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
1	D	I	S	T	O	R	T	I	O	N	O	F	S	P	I	N	E								
2	I									P															
3	S									A															
4	T									R															
5	O									T															
6	R		C	O	N	V	U	L	S	I	V	E	D	I	S	O	R	D	E	R	S				
7	T									A										D					
8	I									L										E					
9	O	C	O	M	P	L	E	T	E	P	A	R	A	L	Y	S	I	S		A					
10	N									A										F					
11	O			M	E	N	T	A	L	R	E	T	A	R	D	A	T	I	O	N					
12	F									A										E					
13	L			M	E	N	T	A	L	I	L	L	N	E	S	S				S					
14	I									Y										S					
15	M									S															
16	B	L	I	N	D	N	E	S	S	I															
17	S					M	I	S	S	I	N	G	E	X	T	R	E	M	I	T	I	E	S		

APHIS Alternative Dispute Center (ADR) 301-734-6317 or 1-800-342-7231.

If you believe you have been discriminated against, contact the APHIS ADR Center for assistance.

APHIS Manager's EEO Helpline 1-800-372-7428

The EEO Help Line is an opportunity for managers to obtain EEO and Civil Rights assistance quickly and efficiently. Through the Helpline, managers request assistance in resolving EEO and program discrimination complaints and answers to general EEO issues and concerns.