

POINT OF CONTACT

If you have any questions regarding program discrimination complaint processing, please contact:

Steve Shelor
Branch Chief
Compliance and Evaluation
USDA/APHIS/OCRDI
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Office of Civil Rights, Diversity and Inclusion (OCRDI)

Mission Statement

To provide leadership, direction, coordination, evaluation, and support to the Civil Rights efforts of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; to implement and monitor our Agency's progress in achieving established policies and objectives; and to integrate Civil Rights into the APHIS management, evaluation and information systems and processes relative to nondiscrimination in Employment and Program Delivery.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

PROGRAM DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS RECEIPT AND PROCESSING

APHIS OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (OCRDI)

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/civil_rights



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BACKGROUND

Program discrimination complaints are defined as those complaints filed by persons (non-employee), organizations or companies who, based on being a member of a protected class, allege discrimination in a program or activity conducted or assisted by APHIS.

USDA Departmental Regulations (DR) 4330-2 and 4330-3 provide that all program complaints of discrimination against USDA agencies and/or their recipients must be forwarded to USDA's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) within 5 days of their receipt by the agency. ASCR will determine whether the complaint will be formally accepted. If ASCR formally accepted the complaint, APHIS must submit an Agency Position Statement (APS) to ASCR outlining our review of the complaint. ASCR will then review the APS, possibly conduct its own investigation, and issue a final decision stating whether discrimination occurred. APHIS' Office of Civil Rights, Diversity and Inclusion (OCRDI) tracks these complaints for the APHIS Management Team; submits the APS, and works closely with ASCR to ensure timely processing.

PURPOSE

Ensure that APHIS and its recipients are in compliance with DR 4330-2 and 4330-3. Complaints against APHIS/recipient personnel or programs alleging or inferring discrimination or unfair treatment in program delivery or activity must be forwarded to the ASCR for processing.

INSTRUCTIONS

If a person indicates that he or she wishes to file a complaint, APHIS employees **must** advise him or her to contact ASCR at the following address:

**USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary
for Civil Rights**

**1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-9410**

Telephone:

**1 (866) 632-9992 (Toll free)
(800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal Relay)
(866) 377-8642 (Relay Voice Users)
(202) 619-6853(Fax)**

Email: program.intake@usda.gov

This information is also on USDA's "And Justice for All" poster AD-475A which instructs the public on how to file a program complaint in English and Spanish. All APHIS facilities must prominently display this poster.

If any APHIS employee receives a written complaint, that complaint should be forwarded to OCRDI for review. Please note that ASCR is the office responsible for formally processing the complaint, so any inquiries or discussions regarding that complaint should be between the complainant and ASCR, not APHIS personnel.

You must continue to provide the complainant with whatever program services he or she would normally be entitled to from our agency. After reviewing the complaint, OCRDI request that you provide our office with a status report, so we recommend that you complete an incident report or record of the circumstances of the complaint as soon as possible after the complaint is made. Due to the wide geographic locations of our work sites, and the 5 day forwarding requirement, please immediately forward (fax preferred) any program discrimination complaints to:

USDA/APHIS/OA/OCRDI

**Attn: Steve Shelor
Branch Chief**

**Room 2534 South Building
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20250**

Telephone Number: (202) 799-7013

Fax Number: (202) 720-2365