



Natural Resources Conservation Service
210 Walnut Street, Room 693
Des Moines, IA 50309-2180

November 19, 2009

IOWA INSTRUCTION 230-385 – PUBLIC MEETINGS ACCOMMODATIONS STATEMENT ON IOWA
NRCS WEBSITE

Part 385.0 PURPOSE

This Iowa Instruction provides clarification regarding the requirements for accessibility at all U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) meetings, including a statement on all notices of public meetings. This Iowa Instruction also provides access to the public meeting accommodations statement for local use from the Iowa NRCS website.

Part 385.1 SCOPE

These instructions will be followed by all NRCS and RC&D offices.

Part 385.2 FILING INSTRUCTIONS

File a paper copy of this Iowa Instruction and the attachment in the NRCS file system under file code folder 230 - Equal Opportunity for three years.

This Iowa Instruction will be posted on the Iowa NRCS Employee Website, which can be accessed at <http://www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov/intranet/> under the Iowa NRCS eDirectives System section.

Part 385.3 EXHIBITS

See the attachment.

/s/ Richard Sims
State Conservationist

Attachment

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(IA Instruction 230-385 – First Edition – November 2009)

Helping People Help the Land

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

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1. PURPOSE:

This Iowa Instruction provides clarification regarding the requirements for accessibility at all U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) meetings, including a statement to be used on all notices of public meetings. This Iowa Instruction also provides access to the public meeting accommodations statement for local use from the Iowa NRCS website.

2. BACKGROUND:

Public meetings include Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Commissioner meetings, RC&D Council meetings, and any other meeting that NRCS is involved with solely or as a partner. All meetings conducted by NRCS solely or as a partner, must be held in accessible locations. If an event will be held in a non-accessible location, NRCS should not attend and it should be stated why the agency will not be represented.

GM230, Part 403, Subpart E, Section 403.80 Reasonable Accommodations, paragraph (6) Examples of Reasonable Accommodations, subparagraph (xvi), Meetings, Conferences, Seminars and Training Programs, states, "All NRCS meetings, conferences, seminars and training programs, held either in public or private facilities, must be accessible to employees with disabilities. Accessibility means access both to facilities and to programs and services so that individuals with sensory and mobility disabilities can participate in meetings, conferences, seminars and training programs."

All announcements for public meetings conducted by the USDA-NRCS or partners will include instructions for participants in need of accommodations in order for them to attend and fully participate in the event similar to the following example:

"If you need accommodations, please notify (insert name of meeting organizer) by (insert date) by calling (meeting organizer phone number)."

The announcement should request that individuals with disabilities inform the meeting sponsor of their need for special services far enough in advance of the meeting to enable the sponsor to secure a service.

Some examples of accommodations include but are not limited to; physical accessibility assistance, sign language interpreters, Braille, large print or alternative print formats, and special dietary requirements (if food is provided).

3. EXPLANATION:

The public meeting accommodations statement shown above is now available to copy and paste from the Iowa NRCS website directly into any public meeting announcement. To do this:

Go to the Iowa NRCS website homepage (www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov) and click on the Civil Rights link on the left hand side. Scroll down to the "Other Civil Rights Information" section of that page and click on the Accommodations Statement link. Highlight the statement, right click, and select Copy. Paste the statement into the locally developed public meeting announcement.

Further questions should be directed to Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen, State Outreach Coordinator and Civil Rights Advisory Committee (CRAC) Chairperson, at (515) 284-4525 or tanya.meyer@ia.usda.gov.

Approved By:

Date: November 24, 2009

/s/ Richard Sims
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