

NRCS

Civil Rights Division (CRD)

Workforce Training Plan for FY 2016

The Civil Rights Division, NRCS (CRD) is committed to providing EEO/CR training, guidance and educational programs to assist customers, managers and employees in understanding their civil rights duties and responsibilities in accordance with USDA's civil rights policy and applicable legal requirements. The training curriculum covers topics such as how to prevent discrimination, roles and responsibilities in the EEO/CR program process, and how managers can work to ensure legal compliance based on anti-discrimination laws and statutes. CRD staff strives to promote a learning environment and excellent customer service in supporting the agency's strategic goal of "getting more conservation on the ground", thus making NRCS a model government agency within the Department.

I. **Mandatory Training in FY 2016**

A mandatory training will be delivered online for everyone to include basic EEO laws, statutes, reasonable accommodation, ADR, the EEO process and the following key topics:

Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Discrimination in the Federal Workplace - USDA has been, and is, a recognized leader in promoting LGBT non-discrimination efforts in the federal workforce. This presentation provides an overview of the history of LGBT discrimination, the definitions of LGBT, and the overall efforts of increasing awareness of LGBT nondiscrimination throughout USDA agencies. The presentation will be delivered online via webinar during the third quarter and the fourth quarter of FY 2016. Further instructions will be announced soon.

No Fear Act - The Notification and Federal Employee Anti-discrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002, better known as the No FEAR Act, requires that federal agencies be accountable for violations of anti-discrimination and whistleblower protection laws. This training will focus on the rights federal employees have under these laws and provide details on how the No FEAR Act is implemented.

Anti-Harassment - This training will focus on not only on sexual harassment, but also provide discussion why allegations of non-sexual harassment have ranked as the number one issue alleged in complaints that were filed in the federal EEO process; the reason(s) for the high rate of non-sexual harassment allegations and how to prevent and report harassment in the workplace.

II. Instructor-Led Training

The following standardized classes are approximately two (2) hours long and can be delivered on-site at the work unit within the Washington DC metropolitan area. . If travel costs are involved at the regional locations, the cost may be shared or reimbursed by the requested office.

- Advanced EEO Training for Managers and Supervisors
- ADR/Conflict Management for Managers
- MD 715 Compliance Requirements
- Prevention of Harassment (Sexual and Non-Sexual) in the Workplace
- Handling reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities”
- Conducting Civil Rights Compliance Reviews

III. CRD Guest-Speaker Series

The Guest-Speaker Series will be presented quarterly to meet the training needs of NRCS customers, managers and employees. This workshop will be planned as a “lunch and learn” to provide participants with information on the topics of EEO, diversity and civil rights. It is designed to enhance participants’ awareness of promoting a diverse, high quality workforce.

IV. CR/EEO/ADR Annual Leadership Conference (December 2015)

Different topics are presented by invited speakers and USDA EEO community leaderships.

Increasing your FITness Education

Overview: This session presents data, insights and practical steps in an interactive and engaging format to allow you to take immediate steps toward becoming Fair, Inclusive and Transparent (FIT). The session will make you laugh and cause you to think as you move your personal, professional and organizational needle forward to a focused and actionable process that can help to improve agency effectiveness, employee engagement, inclusion and transparency.

Cross Generational Communications

Overview: This session will define cultural differences, provide examples of Cultural Differences in the Workplace and provide tips on; How to work effectively with Culturally diverse Customers and Co-workers; Identify how cultural differences between traditionalist, baby boomers, Generations X, Y and Millennials impacts the workforce; Identify cultural differences in how it relates to different levels of Education; How employees’ with diverse personal backgrounds impacts the workforce as they see the world through their eyes, and how an employees’ Ethnicity plays a major role in workplace behavior when their perception is their reality.

Role of Agency Counsel in Civil Rights Cases

Overview: This presentation will help employees understand the administrative federal sector EEO process; How OGC and NRCS work together; When is an Agency representative needed and required; Mediation and representation in the informal process v. formal process; and Preparation for involvement in an EEOC hearing as a witness or a responsible management official.

Reasonable Accommodations & Preventing Disability Discrimination in Employment

Overview: This session will address the Importance of preventing disability discrimination; The reasonable accommodation process; The importance of the interactive process; What does “undue hardship” mean; How to prevent a claim for failure to provide reasonable accommodation; and Department and Agency resources.

Melting Pot or Salad Bowl: Addressing Conflict in Diverse Organizations

Overview: Federal government strives to have an inclusive workplace where diversity and individual differences are valued. Good leaders know how to leverage diversity to achieve the vision and mission of the organization. Diversity also introduces differences that cause conflict in a workplace. The objective of this interactive training session is to explore ways to address conflict in diverse organizations. Participants will learn how to encourage creative tension and differences of opinions while at the same time resolving disagreements in a constructive manner.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Nondiscrimination in the Federal Workplace

Overview: USDA designated Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Nondiscrimination in the Federal Workplace a mandatory civil rights training topic. All employees are expected to complete this training in fiscal year 2016. This presentation reviews current legal interpretations and their impact in the federal workplace. It defines key LGBT-related terminology, reviews the historical timeline of LGBT employment nondiscrimination, and focuses on the major legal cases addressing sexual orientation and gender identity nondiscrimination in the workplace. The presentation is designed to help USDA create an accepting workplace – one that is free from harassment and discrimination for all employees and customers.

Using ADR Techniques

Overview: Are you considering Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) to resolve conflict but not sure which technique is best for you? This presentation will provide emphasis on the most frequently used techniques in USDA to resolve conflicts (mediation): the parties’ roles in mediation, specifically managers and supervisors; how to prepare as a resolving official for an ADR session; the advantages of utilizing ADR at the lowest level; and the importance and necessity of a written settlement agreement.

How to Prevent Retaliation

Did you know retaliation is the most frequently alleged basis of discrimination in the federal sector and the most common discrimination finding in federal sector cases? This session will focus on the importance of preventing retaliation – EEOC statistics; Real world examples; What is retaliation - Participation and Opposition Clauses; and How to prevent a claim for retaliation.

Anti-Harassment

This training will focus on not only on sexual harassment, but also provide discussion why allegations of non-sexual harassment have ranked as the number one issue alleged in complaints that were filed in the federal EEO process; the reason(s) for the high rate of non-sexual harassment allegations and how to prevent and report harassment in the workplace.

V. AgLearn Online Training: The following courses are available via agLearn:

EEO and Lawful Hiring: As a manager, it is essential to use recruitment strategies that attract the right candidates. But just as important is the avoidance of discrimination, both intentional and unintentional. In this course, you will learn about the Equal Employment Opportunity laws that guide your employers recruiting efforts and how to help ensure your hiring practices are fair and lawful. This course was developed with subject matter support provided by the Labor, Employment, and Employee Benefits Law Group of the law firm of Sheehan Phinney Bass + Green PA.

No FEAR Act: The Notification and Federal Employee Anti-discrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002, better known as the No FEAR Act, requires that federal agencies be accountable for violations of anti-discrimination and whistleblower protection laws. This course will outline the rights federal employees have under these laws and provide details on how the No FEAR Act is implemented.

Civil Rights Compliance in Program Delivery: This training will provide general information on how various Civil Rights laws, rules, and regulations interface to form the foundation for equal access in program delivery. It will equip participants in how to interact, and communicate effectively with partners, program recipients, and stakeholders. It also will provide opportunities for participants to review program delivery in different cultural settings, and appreciation for differentiated perspectives

Limited English Proficiency. On August 11, 2000, former President William J. Clinton issued Executive Order (EO) 13166 that was entitled, “**Improving Access to Services by Persons with Limited English Proficiency**” (LEP). The overall objective of EO 13166 is to improve LEP persons’ access to federally conducted and federally assisted programs and activities. Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Understand why NRCS established an LEP Plan
- Identify LEP persons
- Employ the Department of Justice (DOJ) Four-Factor Framework to assess your LEP service area
- Utilize NRCS’ LEP Plan to provide a more enhanced service support to the LEP persons
- Delineate the differences between NRCS’ Title VI Federally Conducted and Assisted Programs

Civil Rights Advisory Committee (CRAC) Orientation (CRACO). What exactly is the NRCS Civil Rights Advisory Committee, and what does it do? This course explores the: purpose, scope, and roles and responsibilities of the committee as they relate to the Agency's overall civil rights performance and compliance with Federal civil rights laws, regulations, and Agency policies; resources and techniques used to ensure compliance with civil rights and equal employment opportunity programs, including Management Directive (MD) 715, Parts G, H, and I and Civil Rights Compliance Reviews; expectations of a Civil Rights Advisory Committee which include the process of identifying civil rights challenges, making recommendations, and recognizing individuals for outstanding civil rights accomplishments for the Agency's (Chief's) CR individual and group awards.

VI. Customized Small Group "EEO Matters" Training

If our training catalog does not exactly meet your needs, we can custom design a course for you. For further information on this option or for any questions generally, please send an email to Selina.lee@wdc.usda.gov. Please include in your email, information on the topics you wish to have covered in your training, as well as your time frame, location for the training, and a point of contact.

For questions regarding our training catalog, please contact Selina Lee, Director, Civil Rights Division at 301-504-2180.