

Agency Name: _____ Agency Code: _____

CIVIL RIGHTS TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEERS WHO ASSIST WITH FNS PROGRAMS

_____ When do civil rights rules apply? Civil rights rules apply any time there is any federal financial assistance. The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) are federally funded.

_____ Legal prohibitions: Civil Rights are non-political rights. Discrimination is prohibited on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, sex, and disability in special nutrition programs funded by the TEFAP and SCFP programs.

_____ Exceptions: Congress can establish a program that is intended for certain groups of people, and it is not discrimination to exclude those who do not meet eligibility requirements. For example, Congress can set age limits, and this is not age discrimination or disability discrimination for those who do not meet the age limits.

_____ Types of discrimination: Disparate treatment (intentional), disparate impact (neutral rules impacts disproportionately on a group), reprisal/retaliation against complainant or his/her family, associates or others involved in complaint process or exercising civil rights.

_____ Goals of civil rights: Provide a knowledge of rights and responsibilities, ensure fairness and equality of treatment, eliminate barriers and provide dignity and respect for all.

_____ Required training: All who work with federally funded programs must be trained. First line workers (including volunteers) and supervisors must receive annual training. Agencies are to maintain documentation of training for current and three years.

_____ Collection and use of data: Data collected about beneficiaries must be kept secure and confidential.

_____ Public Notification: Agencies are required to send out public notifications of their program to potentially eligible persons.

_____ Outreach must insure that potentially eligible persons and households are aware of the program, location of services, hours of distribution, and have information on how to apply.

_____ In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

_____ Non-Discrimination Statement – Short Version: **“This institution is an equal opportunity provider.”**

_____ “And Justice for All” Poster – Must be prominently displayed where participants can easily see it during certification and distribution. Must be the most recent and correct size.

_____ Everyone has the right to file a discrimination complaint. Never discourage anyone from filing a complaint or voicing concerns of discrimination. Cooperate with State and Federal reviewers. They are required to conduct periodic compliance reviews to help insure that program and civil rights rules are being obeyed.

_____ In Michigan complaints may be sent to:

Regional Director, Civil Rights/EEO
USDA, Food and Nutrition Service
Midwest Region
77 W. Jackson Blvd., Floor 20
Chicago, IL 60604-3591
or call 312-353-6657

_____ Compliance Reviews: State and Federal governments are required to conduct reviews to determine compliance with Civil Rights regulations and requirements.

_____ Resolution of Noncompliance: Corrective actions may results from the findings during the review process. Agencies are required to cease inappropriate actions and institute appropriate procedures.

_____ If there is non-compliance, correction of problems and voluntary compliance is sought. Failure to abide by civil rights rules can lead to loss of Federal financial assistance.

_____ Reasonable Accommodations: Make sure people with disabilities are accommodated. Sites should be accessible to people with all types of disabilities (e.g. mobility, sight, hearing, other) or alternate means of service delivery should be advertised and provided.

_____ Language Assistance: Provide other language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency who could not gain meaningful access to the program without other language assistance. Assistance must always be provided to LEP households, but the level or type of assistance can vary based on circumstances. Children who are minors should not be used as interpreters. Volunteers may be used, but make sure they understand interpreter ethics—particularly confidentiality!
See www.lep.gov for more information.

_____ Customer Service: Treat everyone with dignity and respect; make sure all participants receive equal treatment and service. Equal does not mean identical, i.e., one participant receives corn, another receives green beans.

_____ Conflict Resolution: Remain Calm. Listen and be empathetic and use information to determine what the issue is. When appropriate, apologize for the situation. Explain the situation (rules, expectations). Offer solutions and follow up. Get help, especially if threats or if violence is possible

_____ If conflicts occurs, remain calm. Call for assistance immediately if you feel threatened. Consider mediation or a third party to help resolve the situation.

Additional Resources:

www.Michigan.gov/mde-fdp - MI's Food Distribution Programs
www.fns.usda.gov/civil-rights - USDA Civil Rights Division
www.ascr.usda.gov – Office of the Secretary for Civil Rights
www.lep.gov – Limited English Proficiency

Staff/Volunteer Signature: _____ Date: _____

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