Civil Rights Presentation
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AND
JUSTICE
FOR ALL
Click on the link below to access the recorded training:

https://alsde.webex.com/alsde/lsr.php?RCID=5562350d3f344eeb8f86101cd747c36a
Mission of FNS Civil Rights Division

• To provide leadership for comprehensive protection against discrimination in employment practices and delivery of programs to the public. Our goal is to ensure that applicants and individuals who are eligible to participate in our programs are treated fairly and equitably, with dignity and respect.
Agenda

• Civil rights coverage and legal authorities

• Areas of compliance
  • Assurances
  • Public notification
  • Complaints of discrimination
  • Civil rights training
  • Racial and ethnic data collection
  • Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
  • Disability compliance
  • Compliance reviews and resolution of noncompliance
  • Voluntary Resolution Agreements
  • Verification of Citizenship

• Questions
Why Civil Rights Training?

• Training is required so that individuals involved in all levels of administration of programs that receive Federal financial assistance understand Federal laws, regulations, instructions, policies and other guidance.
Civil Rights

• The rights of personal liberty guaranteed by the 13th and 14th Amendments of the Constitution and Acts of Congress

• Terms “civil rights” and “equal employment opportunity (EEO)” are not interchangeable
Civil Rights Concepts

• Stereotyping
  • Preconceived beliefs or oversimplified generalizations about a particular group

• Prejudice
  • A set of rigid and unfavorable attitudes toward a particular group that is formed without considering facts

• Discrimination
  • The practice of treating people differently because of how we have grouped them in our minds according to our prejudices
Civil Rights Program Authorities Part 1

- Programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance must abide by civil rights requirements
  - **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**
    - Race, color, and national origin
  - **Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987**
    - Clarifies the scope of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
  - **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**
  - **28 CFR 41 (Government-wide 504 Regulation)**
Civil Rights Program Authorities Part 1 cont..

- Disability
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990/ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008
  - Executive Order 12250 (Disability)
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
  - Sex
- Age Discrimination Act of 1975
  - Age
Civil Rights Program Authorities Part 2

• Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act of 1946
  • Signed by President Harry Truman and established the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

• Child Nutrition Act of 1966
  • Signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson; Special Milk Program (SMP) incorporated into the Act and School Breakfast Program (SBP) established

• 7 CFR Parts 15 a-c
  • Gives USDA agencies authority to develop civil rights requirements
Civil Rights Program Authorities Part 2 cont.

• 7 CFR Part 16
  • Equal opportunity for religious organizations

• 7 CFR Part 210
  • NSLP regulations

• 7 CFR Parts 215
  • SMP regulations
Civil Rights Program Authorities Part 3

- 7 CFR Part 220
  - SBP regulations

- 7 CFR Part 245
  - NSLP/SBP/SMP – determining eligibility for free and reduced price meals and free milk in schools

- 7 CFR Part 225
  - Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) regulations
Civil Rights Program Authorities Part 3 cont..

- 7 CFR Part 226
  - Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) regulations

- 7 CFR Part 250
  - Commodity component for NSLP, SFSP, and CACFP regulations

- 28 CFR Part 35
  - Nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in state/local government service
Civil Rights Program Authorities Part 4

• 28 CFR Part 42
  • Nondiscrimination in federally assisted programs

• Executive Order 13166 and USDA Limited English Proficiency (LEP) policy guidance (79 Federal Regulation No. 229, Friday, November 28, 2014)

• USDA Departmental Regulation 4330-2
  • Prohibits discrimination in programs and activities funded in whole or in part by the USDA
Civil Rights Program Authorities Part 4 cont..

- FNS Eligibility Manual for School Meals
  - Provides additional guidance on determining and verifying eligibility

- FNS Instruction 113-1 and Appendix B - Child Nutrition Programs (CNP)
  - Provides information on civil rights compliance and enforcement
What is Discrimination in CNP?

- Different treatment which makes a distinction of one person or a group of persons from others, either intentionally, by neglect, or by the actions or lack of actions based on a protected class

  - Protected classes for CNP
    - Race
    - Color
    - National origin
    - Age
    - Sex
    - Disability
Assurances

• To qualify for federal financial assistance, an application must be accompanied by a written assurance that the entity to receive financial assistance will be operated in compliance with all nondiscrimination laws, regulations, instructions, policies, and guidelines.

• A Civil Rights Assurance must be incorporated in all agreements between state and local agencies.

• See FNS Instruction 113-1, Appendix B and form FNS-74 for Program-specific assurance language.
Assurances Continued

• Sub-recipient agreements must also include a Civil Rights assurance of nondiscrimination.

• **Example:** Many SFAs contract with Food Service Management Companies (FSMC) to provide food service to students. SFAs are responsible for ensuring that their FSMCs are in compliance with CR requirements.

• These assurances are binding on the program applicant and its successors, transferees, and assignees, as long as they receive assistance or retain possession of any assistance from USDA.
Public Notification

• All FNS assistance programs (i.e. CNP) must include a public notification system.

• Elements of public notification
  • Program availability
  • Complaint information
  • Nondiscrimination statement
Elements of Public Notification

- Program availability
  - Inform applicants, participants, and potentially eligible persons of their program rights and responsibilities and the steps necessary for participation

- Complaint information
  - Must advise applicants and participants at the service delivery point of their right to file a complaint, how to file a complaint, and the complaint procedures
Elements of Public Notification

• Nondiscrimination statement
• All information materials and sources, including websites, must contain a nondiscrimination statement. The statement is not required to be included on every page of the program website. At a minimum the nondiscrimination statement or a link to it must be included on the home page of the program information.
Methods of Public Notification

• State agencies and their sub-recipients must:
  • Make program information available to the public upon request
  • Prominently display the *And Justice for All* poster at service delivery points
  • Inform applicants or participants of programs or changes in programs
  • Provide information in alternative formats and languages as necessary
  • Convey message of equal opportunity in all photographic or pictorial program information
Nondiscrimination Statement

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.
Spanish Nondiscrimination Statement

De conformidad con la Ley Federal de Derechos Civiles y los reglamentos y políticas de derechos civiles del Departamento de Agricultura de los EE. UU. (USDA, por sus siglas en inglés), se prohíbe que el USDA, sus agencias, oficinas, empleados e instituciones que participan o administran programas del USDA discriminen sobre la base de raza, color, nacionalidad, sexo, discapacidad, edad, o en represalia o venganza por actividades previas de derechos civiles en algún programa o actividad realizados o financiados por el USDA.

Las personas con discapacidades que necesiten medios alternativos para la comunicación de la información del programa (por ejemplo, sistema Braille, letras grandes, cintas de audio, lenguaje de señas americano, etc.), deben ponerse en contacto con la agencia (estatal o local) en la que solicitaron los beneficios. Las personas sordas, con dificultades de audición o discapacidades del habla pueden comunicarse con el USDA por medio del Federal Relay Service [Servicio Federal de Retransmisión] al (800) 877-8339. Además, la información del programa se puede proporcionar en otros idiomas.

Para presentar una denuncia de discriminación, complete el Formulario de Denuncia de Discriminación del Programa del USDA, (AD-3027) que está disponible en línea en: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html y en cualquier oficina del USDA, o bien escriba una carta dirigida al USDA e incluya en la carta toda la información solicitada en el formulario. Para solicitar una copia del formulario de denuncia, llame al (866) 632-9992. Haga llegar su formulario lleno o carta al USDA por:

(1) correo: 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; o

(3) correo electrónico: program.intake@usda.gov.

Esta institución es un proveedor que ofrece igualdad de oportunidades.
Nondiscrimination Statement: Short Versions

- USDA Nondiscrimination Statement Short versions
  - This institution is an equal opportunity provider.
  - Esta institución es un proveedor que ofrece igualdad de oportunidades. (Spanish)
- Can be used in special circumstances only
  - Make short version approval requests to: Angelice Lowe cnpnslp@alsde.edu
  - Requests will be sent to the USDA for approval
- Translations
  - Other languages are forthcoming
Nondiscrimination Statement Requirements

At a minimum, the full version of the Nondiscrimination Statement must be on:

- Application form(s)
- Notification of eligibility or ineligibility
- Notice of adverse action form
- Program (home) webpage
- Public information, including program literature
And Justice for All Poster

• All sites must display posters in a prominent location for all to view
• AD-475A
• New required version for CNP
Complaints of Discrimination

- Applicants or participants allege different treatment based on protected class(es)
  - Race
  - Color
  - National origin
  - Age
  - Sex
  - Disability
Complaint Procedures

- Complaints processed at the state level:
  - System must be approved by FNS and operated in accordance with FNS Instruction 113-1
- Complaints not processed by the state level
  - Must be forwarded to FNS Civil Rights Division within 5 calendar days of receipt
- Alabama Department of Education follows this procedure
Complaint Procedures: Additional Information

• Complaints based on age (or a combination of age and other bases)
  • Must all be forwarded to FNS Civil Rights Division within 5 calendar days of receipt regardless of complaint procedure utilized above

• Complaint log
  • Civil rights complaints must be maintained in a log separate from other program complaints
Complaint Procedures: Additional Information

• Applicants and participants must file within 180 days of the alleged action
  • Complaints may be written, verbal, or anonymous

• Confidentiality extremely important

• USDA complaint form
  • English version
  • Spanish version
Civil Rights Complaints Process

- Complaints should include:
  - Name, address, and telephone number of complainant
  - The location and name of the organization or office
  - The nature of the incident or action
  - The names, titles, and business addresses of persons who may have knowledge of the discriminatory action
  - The date(s) during which the alleged discriminatory actions occurred
  - The basis for the alleged discrimination
Civil Rights Training: Purpose

Training is required so that individuals involved in all levels of administration of programs that receive federal financial assistance understand federal laws, regulations, instructions, policies and other guidance.
Civil Rights Training Requirements

- State agencies are responsible for training local agencies/sub-recipients on an annual basis.
- Local agencies are responsible for training their staff and sub-recipients on an annual basis.
  - Includes “frontline staff” and those who supervise frontline staff
- New employees must receive civil rights training before participating in Program activities.
- Volunteers, if any, must also receive training appropriate for their roles and responsibilities.
Civil Rights Training Components

• All staff should receive training on all aspects of Civil Rights compliance, including:
  • Assurances
  • Public notification
  • Complaints of discrimination
  • Civil rights training
  • Racial and ethnic data collection
  • LEP
Civil Rights Training Components

- Disability compliance
- Compliance reviews and resolution of noncompliance
- Conflict resolution
- Customer service
Sample of Customer Service Training

Service is:

Effectively communicating with customers,

Responding to their needs,

Valuing their worth, and

Instilling excellence through

Courtesy, confidence, and

Enthusiasm.
Sample of Conflict Resolution Training

• IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM. Identify the problem based on the information the customer gives you.

• DETERMINE A SOLUTION. Depending on the specifics of the conversation and your knowledge of your organization, the solution may involve calling the customer again.

• GAIN APPROVAL FROM THE CUSTOMER. If the customer does not agree to the proposed solution, it will resolve nothing!
Sample of Conflict Resolution Training

• MAKE AN AGREEMENT. You and the customer should determine what is to be done, when it is to be done, and by whom. If it is not possible, suggest an alternative.

• FOLLOW UP. Personally make sure that the customer has been satisfied; and provide feedback.
Racial and Ethnic Data Collection and Reporting Requirements

- Data collection is mandatory
- Applicants shall be assured that the information is required for and used for statistical purposes only and has no effect on eligibility criteria
- Recipients of federal financial assistance must maintain a system to collect racial and ethnic data in accordance with FNS policy
Racial and Ethnic Data Collection and Reporting Requirements

- Data is used to:
  - Determine how effectively FNS programs are reaching potentially eligible people
  - Identify areas where additional outreach is needed
  - Assist in the selection of locations for compliance reviews
  - Complete reports as required

- Data must be maintained for 3 years

- Must be submitted to FNS as requested
Racial and Ethnic Data Collection: Question Format

• Data must be collected using a two-part question

• **Part 1: Ethnicity**
  • Hispanic or Latino
  • Not Hispanic or Latino

• **Part 2: Race (may select more than one)**
  • American Indian or Alaskan Native
  • Asian
  • Black or African American
  • Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  • White
Racial and Ethnic Data Collection Methods

• How to collect racial and ethnic data if:
  • An applicant chooses not to voluntarily provide the information (in person)?
  • The application process uses an online application (and the applicant does not voluntarily provide the information)?
  • Children are not to be surveyed.
  • Questions must be posed to parents/legal guardians.
Racial and Ethnic Data Collection Disparities

• If disparities or incidents of underrepresentation exist, it will be necessary to investigate the causes.

• If necessary, take action to ensure equal opportunity to participate in the program(s).
Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and Program Access

• Who are persons with LEP?
  • Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English because of their national origin.

• Recipients of Federal financial assistance have a responsibility to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by persons with LEP.
Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and Program Access

• Failure to provide “meaningful” access to persons with LEP could be discrimination on the basis of national origin.

• Title VI and its implementing regulations, Executive Order 13166, and USDA LEP guidance
LEP: Assuring Meaningful Access Part 1

- Factors included in assuring “meaningful” access:
  - The number or proportion of LEP people eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the program
  - The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program
  - The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program to people’s lives
  - The resources available to the recipient and costs
LEP: Assuring Meaningful Access Part 2

• State agencies must conduct assessments to determine language profile for their State, taking into account regional differences and updating as appropriate.

• Translation of vital documents is required.

• Interpretation services are also required.

• Staff training regarding how to provide LEP populations with meaningful access is paramount (frontline staff).
LEP: Assuring Meaningful Access Part 3

• Language services

• Applicants and participants cannot be asked to bring their own interpreters

• Children should not be used as interpreters
LEP: Assuring Meaningful Access Part 3

• Examples of language services
  • Bilingual staff
  • Telephone interpreter lines
  • Oral interpretation services
  • Written language services
  • Community organizations and volunteers
LEP: Assuring Meaningful Access Part 4

• Population data sources
  • US Census data
  • American Community Survey
  • Migration Policy Institute’s National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy
Disability Law

• Section 504 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs & activities that receive Federal financial assistance, such as CNP.

• Title II of ADA prohibits discrimination based on disability in the provision of State & local government services, such as public schools.

• Title II of ADA prohibits discrimination based on disability by private entities that provide public accommodations, including private schools.

• Section 504, Title II, and Title III require recipients of Federal financial assistance, such as SFAs and LEAs, to make reasonable modifications to accommodate children with disabilities, including reasonable modifications to meals & the meal service.
Disabilities

What is the definition of disability? Section 504, the ADA, and Departmental Regulations at 7 CFR part 15b define a person with a disability as any person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more “major life activities” has a record of such impairment or is regarded as having such impairment..
Disabilities

• Major life activity means functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, eating, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, reading and working.

• Functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, immune, respiratory, circulatory, cardiovascular, endocrine, and reproductive functions. (ADAAA of 2008)
Types of Disability Discrimination

- Discrimination because of the disability
  - Denying benefits or opportunity to participate
  - Segregating individuals with disabilities
  - Aiding, perpetuating or contracting with others that discriminate.
- Failure to provide a reasonable modification
- Ineffective Communication
- Inaccessible Facilities
Disability Discrimination: Modifications

- State and local offices **must** provide reasonable modifications in policies and practices, and procedures to accommodate applicants and participants with disabilities when necessary.

- Reasonable modifications:
  - Must be related to the disability or limitation caused by the disability
  - The disabled person does not carry a high burden of ‘proving’ that he or she has a disability.
Disability Discrimination: Modifications

• Must be funded through State/local offices, not by applicants and participants
• Require good communication between all parties involved
• Provide the same level of service to applicants and participants in an alternative way
• Providers must still accommodate even where the person requesting modification believes more should be done.
Disability Discrimination: Accessibility

- Accessibility of state and local agency websites, and online application systems to persons with visual impairments and other disabilities.

- Physical program access to persons in wheelchairs and with mobility disabilities.

- Accessibility through braille, large print, and audio tape and other alternative formats.

- Accessibility to American Sign Language (ASL) and interpreters.
Program Accessibility

• Ensure food service areas are accessible.
• Provide auxiliary aids and services, if needed.

Examples:

➢ Food Service Aides
➢ Adaptive Feeding Equipment
➢ Meal Tracking Assistance
➢ Other Effective Methods
Disability Discrimination: Compliance

• State agencies must have a 504/ADA Coordinator responsible for ensuring compliance.

• State agencies must have published grievance procedures and due process standards for “fair and prompt” resolution of 504/ADA complaints.
Integrated Environment

• Integration clause in Section 504 means that disabled individuals should be accommodated in the least restrictive and most integrated setting possible.

• In the food allergy context, this most often comes into play where children with food allergies are ostracized in some way during mealtime.

• Providers must always balance safety vs. stigma. Age and severity of allergy are the primary considerations.
Implementation & Compliance

- **Develop procedures** for parents/guardians to request reasonable modifications.
- **Train** school and food service staff on reasonable modification procedures and legal requirements.
- **Appoint a 504 Coordinator** to ensure compliance.
- **Assemble a team** to implement guidelines and render decisions on modification requests.
Procedural Safeguards

• Provide **Notice** (in appropriate languages and formats) of-
  ➢ Process for requesting modification
  ➢ Decision
  ➢ Procedural rights

• Opportunity to **examine the record and file a grievance**.

• An **impartial hearing** with parental participation and legal representation (if desired), and

• A review procedure (avenue for **appeal**).
Compliance Reviews: Overview

• Examine the activities of state agencies, local agencies, and sub-recipients to determine civil rights compliance.

• FNS civil rights and program staff review state agencies.
  • FNS staff and state agencies review local agencies and sub-recipients.

• Significant findings must be provided in writing to the reviewed entity and FNS.
Types of Compliance Reviews

There are three types of compliance reviews:

- Pre-award compliance reviews
- Routine (post-award) compliance reviews
- Special compliance reviews
Pre-Award Compliance Reviews: Overview

• State and local agencies must be in compliance with civil rights requirements prior to approval for Federal financial assistance.

• Usually conducted as desk reviews.

• Reports must be maintained in appropriate program files.

(FNS Instruction 113-1, Appendix B)
Pre-Award Compliance Reviews: NSLP, SBP, and SMP

- Pre-award Civil Rights information included as part of the application must, at a minimum, include:
  - Copies of free and reduced price policy statements, letters to parents, public releases, and any other materials used to publicize the program’s availability and nondiscrimination requirements
  - Estimated data on the racial and ethnic makeup of the applicant organization’s program service area and enrollment
Pre-Award Compliance Reviews: NSLP, SBP, and SMP

• A description of membership requirements as a prerequisite for admission to the applicant’s institution (if applicable)

• The names of other federal agencies providing assistance to the applicant organization and whether the applicant has ever been found to be in noncompliance by those federal agencies
Routine/Post-Award Compliance Reviews

- FNS and state agencies must conduct routine compliance reviews as identified by FNS Instruction 113-1 and program-specific regulations and policies.

- Assess all of the civil rights compliance areas

- Sample post-award review questions:
  - Do printed materials contain the nondiscrimination statement?
Routine/Post-Award Compliance Reviews

- Is the *And Justice For All* poster displayed appropriately?
- Are program informational materials available to all?
- Is data on race and ethnicity collected appropriately?
- How are applicants and participants advised of their right to file a civil rights complaint of discrimination?
- Are reasonable modifications appropriately made for people with disabilities?
- Are appropriate language services provided?
Special Compliance Reviews

- Conducted by USDA’s Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights independently or in conjunction with FNS program or civil rights staff
- May be scheduled or unscheduled
- To follow-up on previous findings of noncompliance
- To investigate reports of noncompliance by other agencies, media, or grassroots organizations
Special Compliance Reviews

- May be specific to an incident or policy
- History of statistical underrepresentation of particular group(s)
- Pattern of complaints of discrimination
Resolution of Noncompliance

• A factual finding that any civil rights requirement, as provided by law, regulation, policy, instruction, or guidelines, is not being adhered to by a state agency, local agency or sub-recipient agency

• Steps must be taken immediately to obtain voluntary compliance

• A finding’s effective date is the date of notice to the reviewed entity
Voluntary Resolution Agreement

- A Voluntary Resolution Agreement (VRA) is an agreement that recipient(s) are willfully consenting to undertake remedial actions to address identified areas of noncompliance or in violation with applicable civil rights laws and/or regulations.

- The VRA may be between multiple parties such as the officials in authority to regulate civil rights laws (FNS, CRD), recipient or sub-recipient (State Agency or school), and program participant (Complainant).

- VRA’s may be used to closeout a Civil Rights Compliance Review at the discretion of FNS CRD in lieu of issuing a written Compliance Review report with findings.
Verification of Citizenship or Immigration Status

• This issue should never give rise to discrimination.
Civil Rights Response to Coronavirus

Civil rights protections and responsibilities still apply, even during emergencies. Federal agencies, state and local governments, and recipients of Federal financial assistance are an integral part of our shared effort to uphold civil rights.

The following principles should assist in meeting these nondiscrimination obligations:

• Combat hate crimes, harassment, and other discrimination against the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities and businesses.

• Ensure equal access for people with disabilities and avoid disability discrimination.
Civil Rights Response to Coronavirus

• Reduce further learning loss for vulnerable students.
• Protect correctional staff, incarcerated and detained people, and their families.
• Protect vulnerable populations facing housing instability.
• Provide information in languages other than English.

Under Executive Order 12250, the Department of Justice is responsible for ensuring the consistent and effective implementation of Federal civil rights laws “prohibiting discriminatory practices in Federal programs and programs receiving federal financial assistance”.
Civil Rights Response to Coronavirus

The Civil Rights Division will continue to convene meeting of Federal civil rights offices to:

1) exchange information and resources for agencies to take action on COVID-19 related harassment and discrimination;

2) monitor and address civil rights issues related to COVID-19 and recipients of Federal financial assistance;

3) identify strategies to ensure Federal, state and local efforts to achieve equitable outcomes in current and future emergency planning and response;
Civil Rights Response to Coronavirus

4) work with Federal agencies to develop and identify data sources or indices that will assist recipients of Federal financial assistance to collect data from communities of color and other underserved populations.

The Civil Rights Division, together with other agencies throughout the Federal government, will continue to monitor civil rights issues related to COVID-19 and vigorously enforce civil rights laws.

To file a complaint with the Civil Rights Division, please fill out the online form at https://civilrights.justice.gov.
Non Discrimination Statement

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement For all other FNS nutrition assistance programs, State or local agencies, and their sub recipients, must post the following Nondiscrimination Statement:

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.
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