

<b>DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION</b>		Number: <b>4300-6</b>
SUBJECT:  Civil Rights Policy for the Department of Agriculture	DATE:  <b>March 16, 1998</b>	
	OPI:  <b>Office of the Secretary</b>	

1 PURPOSE

This regulation prescribes civil rights policy for the Department of Agriculture (USDA) and identifies civil rights strategic goals for USDA. It also requires agencies and staff offices to incorporate the goals into their strategic plans in compliance with the Government Performance and Results Act.

2 SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Secretary's Memorandum 4300-7, Civil Rights Policy Statement, dated February 28, 1997, is hereby superseded.

Specific objectives to achieve the goals are identified in civil rights implementation plans which are referenced in the civil rights performance element and standard for agency heads and staff office directors.

3 POLICY

Because the policy of the Department of Agriculture is to ensure the civil rights of USDA customers and employees, each Agency Head is expected to act in this commitment by taking the necessary steps to implement a viable civil rights program. To assist in translating this commitment into meaningful action, each Agency Head will achieve the following civil rights strategic goals:

- a Hold managers, supervisors and other employees accountable for ensuring that USDA customers and employees are treated fairly and equitably, with dignity and respect.
- b Ensure equal access and provide equal treatment in the delivery of USDA programs and services to all customers.
- c Eliminate under-representation in the workforce by recruiting and employing a highly skilled, competent, and diverse workforce, free of

discrimination, reprisal, and sexual harassment.

- d Provide sufficient human, fiscal, and organizational resources, and train all employees, to institute a results-oriented civil rights program.
- e Ensure equal opportunity in procurement and contracting opportunities to minority, women-owned, and small and disadvantaged businesses.

This is a "one size fits all" policy for all customers and employees regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status or family status. USDA employees, from Washington to field offices, must commit to uphold this policy. Also, reprisal of any kind against employees or customers will not be tolerated. There are no exceptions. There are no excuses.

Through performance standards, the subcabinet, Agency Heads, managers, supervisors and other employees across the Department will be held accountable for civil rights at USDA. By word and action, all employees must demonstrate a commitment to equal opportunity for all.

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