Georgia Division of Family & Children Services

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USDA Civil Right Training

Prepared by: The state of Georgia

Purpose: USDA Civil Rights Training

Date: Federal Fiscal Year 2017
Vision, Mission and Core Values

**Vision**
Stronger Families for a Stronger Georgia.

**Mission**
Strengthen Georgia by providing Individuals and Families access to services that promote self-sufficiency, independence, and protect Georgia's vulnerable children and adults.

**Core Values**
- Provide access to resources that offer support and empower Georgians and their families.
- Deliver services professionally and treat all clients with dignity and respect. Manage business operations effectively and efficiently by aligning resources across the agency.
- Promote accountability, transparency and quality in all services we deliver and programs we administer.
- Develop our employees at all levels of the agency.
TEFAP CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE TRAINING

- FNS Instruction 113-1
- Civil Rights Compliance and Enforcement
- Nutrition Programs Activities
The purpose of this Civil Rights instruction is to establish and convey policy and provide guidance and direction to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and its recipients and customers, and ensure compliance with and enforcement of the prohibition against discrimination in TEFAP all FNS nutrition programs and activities, whether federally funded in whole or not.
Protected Classes

Program benefits and participation are made available without regard to:

- Race
- Color
- National Origin
- Age
- Sex
- Disability
- Gender Identity
- Religion
- Reprisal
- Political Beliefs
- Martial Status
- Familial or Parental Status
- Sexual Orientation
- Public Assistance Income
- Protected Genetic Information in employment, program or activity conducted or funded by the Department
Public Notification

• TEFAP State or local agencies and their sub-recipients must have a public notification system

• The Purpose of this system is to inform applicants, participants and potentially eligible persons of:

  ➢ Program availability (including dates, times and locations of TEFAP distributions)
  ➢ Program rights and responsibilities
  ➢ Policy of non-discrimination
  ➢ Policy for filing a complaint
Language Assistance

- State agencies, local agencies or other sub-recipients are required to provide access to TEFAP services to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons and participants.
- Take reasonable steps to assure access is provided.
Reasonable Accommodation for Persons with Disabilities

- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- 7CFR Part 15b

Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all services, programs and activities provided to the public by state and local governments. Reasonable accommodations that do not cause undue hardship must be provided.
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 non-discrimination laws, regulations, instructions, policies, and guidelines.
Assurances (continued)

- FNS will obtain a written assurance from each state agency and will ensure that state agencies obtain assurances from recipient/partner agencies

and

- A civil rights assurance must be incorporated in all agreements between state agencies and local agencies
Compliance Reviews

- State agency review local agencies
- Local agencies review their sub-recipients
- State agency must report significant findings to the reviewed entity and FNS
Resolution of Noncompliance

Definition 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.
To Achieve Voluntary Compliance

The State Agency Must:

• Provide immediate **written notice** to the local agency or sub-recipient indicating:
  - The areas of noncompliance, and
  - The action required to correct the situation

• Negotiate with the local agency or sub-recipient to achieve compliance
Complaints of Discrimination

Any acts of discrimination...

“The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or if all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department”
Complaints of Discrimination (continued)

Must be reported to:

US Department of Agriculture, Director
Office of Adjudication
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-9410

Or by fax at

(202) 690-7442

Or by email at

program.intake@usda.gov
Conflict Resolution

- Conflict – A disagreement through which the parties involved perceive a threat to their needs, interests or concerns
  
  - Conflict can be large or small; originate in one person, between two or more people or between two or more groups
  - Conflict can be resolved depending on how it’s managed

- Define the problem. Find the cause. Select an approach to resolve it. Implement it – take action
The Code of Quality Customer Service

Always:
Smile and Be Pleasant
Treat Everyone with Respect and Courtesy
Be Caring and Understanding
Be a Good Listener
Offer Assistance
Serve Clients in A Timely Manner
Apologize for Any Inconvenience
Make Clients Feel Appreciated

*Remember: Your Client is Your Most Important Asset!*
Civil Rights Training

- All levels of TEFAP administration must receive Civil Rights training

- The SDA will train the EFO. The EFO must train the recipient/partner agencies and other “front-line” staff who interact with program applicants or recipients

- Maintain documents after training is performed (i.e. sign-in sheets of attendees, agenda, etc.)
Civil Rights Training Topics

Specific subject matter required, but not limited to:

- Effective public notification systems
- Requirements for language assistance
- Requirements for reasonable accommodations of persons with disabilities
- Compliance review techniques
- Resolution of noncompliance
- Complaint procedures
- Conflict resolution
- Customer service
For Additional Civil Rights Compliance Information

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