

<b>DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION</b>		<b>NUMBER:</b> 3300-004
<b>SUBJECT:</b>  Use of Department-Controlled Mailing Lists for Electronic Distribution of Employee Notices	<b>DATE:</b> November 03, 2006	
	<b>OPI:</b> Assistant Secretary for Administration, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, and Chief Information Officer	

Section

1	PURPOSE	1
2	SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS/CANCELLATIONS	1
3	DEFINITIONS	2
4	POLICY	2
5	EMPLOYEE MESSAGE CRITERIA	3
6	RESPONSIBILITIES	4
7	PROCEDURES	5

1 PURPOSE

This regulation establishes U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Headquarters policy and procedures on the use of Department-controlled electronic distribution lists to send electronic and voice messages to USDA employees. It does not pertain to electronic distribution lists controlled by staff offices and agencies that are used by them to send out messages to employees within their respective organizations.

2 SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS/CANCELLATIONS

This is a new Departmental directive addressing this subject area. As such, it supersedes any existing agency or staff office policy that may exist and conflict with it.

3 DEFINITIONS

- a Organizational Point of Contact (OPOC), means an individual USDA official

designated by the Assistant Secretary for Administration, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, agency Deputy Administrator for Management, Staff Office Director, or their designees, to be the focal point for their respective organizations through which requests to distribute messages using Department-controlled distribution lists are approved.

- b Department-controlled distribution list (DCDL), means a listing of USDA employee e-mail addresses or voice mail addresses organized in different configurations by the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) and used to distribute electronic messages to all or portions of the USDA workforce.
- c Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), means the charitable fundraising program established and administered by the Director of the Office of Personnel Management in accordance with 5 C.F.R. Part 950.
- d Employee, for the purposes of this directive, means a Federal employee as defined in 5 U.S.C. 2105, or a county committee employee, as incorporated in 16 U.S.C. 590h.
- e Employee organization, means an association or organization as defined in DR 4020-251 (Associations of Management Officials and/or Supervisors and Other Organizations), and DR 4020-251-1 (Welfare and Recreation Organizations).
- f Labor organization, means an organization defined in 5 U.S.C. Chapter 71 (Federal Service Labor-Management Statute).
- g Employee message, for the purposes of this directive, means an electronic document or voice message originating from a USDA agency or staff office, individual employee or other source that contains information about a topic, event or activity of potential interest to USDA employees and meets criteria established in this directive for distribution via DCDL.

#### 4 POLICY

To effectively share information on topics, events, and/or activities of general interest to all USDA employees or defined organizational segments of the Department, DCDL may be authorized on a case-by-case basis. Given the need to control and balance the content and flow of such information to employees, the use of these distribution lists should be limited to only those employee messages that are most effectively conveyed through such a medium to the targeted employee population.

To be sent via DCDL, employee messages must meet the criteria established in Section 5 (Employee Message Criteria) of this directive and be approved in accordance with the procedures set forth in Section 7 (Procedures).

In accordance with DR 4020-251 and DR 4020-251-1, employee organizations are not authorized to use DCDL. Labor organizations are not authorized use of DCDL. However, agency or staff office-sponsored program activities that are administered in conjunction with an employee or labor organization(s) may be authorized, if requested by the agency or staff office.

## 5 EMPLOYEE MESSAGE CRITERIA

To be authorized for distribution via DCDL, employee messages must meet the following criteria:

- a The message cannot be most effectively distributed to targeted employees using any other means.
- b The message must directly pertain to the targeted employee audience. For example, the subject of an all-USDA employee message must be directly relevant and of likely interest to all USDA employees.
- c Content must comply with all relevant telecommunications, ethics/conduct, and civil rights regulations pertaining to such matters as fund raising, terminology, and visual appearance.
- d Only links to Web site addresses of Federal, state, and local government agencies or transit authorities are permitted.
- e Repeating the same message for the same event is generally prohibited and must be approved by the OPOC for the Assistant Secretary for Administration.
- f Except for emergency situations, requests to distribute messages must be received by the OPOC at least five (5) work days prior to the requested distribution date, and by the OCIO at least two (2) work days prior.
- g Personal announcements, including retirements, will not be sent out using DCDL.
- h Unless the message pertains to an officially-sponsored USDA event, it will not contain the USDA logo or claim/infer USDA sponsorship.
- i All messages must be in compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which requires text written in Plain text or Rich text format.
- j Electronic messages cannot exceed 25,000 characters (250 KB) of space and must be submitted in a commonly used application (e.g. word, power point). Voice messages cannot exceed 5 minutes.

Broadcast Message Technical Requirements:

Audience:

- All messages must clearly indicate the target audience such as All USDA, ALL WASHINGTON AREA.

Subject Line:

- All messages must clearly indicate the subject line.

Message Body:

- Each line of text must be terminated by a hard carriage return.
- Messages that contain HTML, graphics, or images are strongly discouraged due to the space and time required to download such messages. Additional information may be provided using permitted web links.

## 6 RESPONSIBILITIES

- a The Assistant Secretary for Administration, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, agency Deputy Administrators for Management, Staff Office Directors, or their designees:

Designate an organizational point of contact (OPOC) and notify the OCIO at [request4broadcast@usda.gov](mailto:request4broadcast@usda.gov) of the name(s) and contact information of their OPOC(s).

- b Organizational Points of Contact (OPOC):

Publicize the Department's policy on DCDL within their respective agencies and staffs, review requests for employee messages, and apply message criteria. OPOC consult with the Assistant Secretary for Administration OPOC on the application of the employee message criteria and overall application of this policy as necessary, and forward approved employee messages to OCIO at [request4broadcast@usda.gov](mailto:request4broadcast@usda.gov).

- c Director, OCIO Information Technology Services, Washington Communications and Technology Services:

Receives and processes approved employee messages, reviews the messages for adherence to technical criteria, resolves any technical issues with the OPOC, and distributes messages.

## 7 PROCEDURES

- a For requests originating from within USDA Agencies or Staff Offices:
  - (1) The OPOC evaluates the message against the criteria in Section 5 and, upon completion of the assessment, forwards the approved message to the OCIO at [request4broadcast@usda.gov](mailto:request4broadcast@usda.gov).
  - (2) The OCIO confirms the message has been approved by the OPOC, reviews the message for conformance with technical requirements to ensure it can be transmitted using the DCDL, and distributes the message.
  
- b For requests originating from the Office of the Secretary (OSEC) and the Office of Communication (OC), including CFC-related requests from the designated Subcabinet member leading the annual CFC at USDA:
  - (1) The OSEC or OC staff evaluates the message against the criteria in Section 5 and, upon completion of the assessment, forwards the approved message to the OCIO at [request4broadcast@usda.gov](mailto:request4broadcast@usda.gov).
  - (2) The OCIO confirms the message has been approved, reviews the message for conformance with technical requirements to ensure it can be transmitted using the DCDL, and distributes the message.
  
- c For requests originating from agencies or organizations outside of USDA:
  - (1) Requests pertaining to civil rights matters are submitted to the OPOC for the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights. All other requests are submitted to the OPOC for the Assistant Secretary for Administration.
  - (2) The OPOC evaluates the message against the criteria in Section 5 and, upon completion of the assessment, forwards the approved message to the OCIO at [request4broadcast@usda.gov](mailto:request4broadcast@usda.gov).
  - (3) The OCIO confirms the message has been approved by the OPOC, reviews the message for conformance with technical requirements to ensure it can be transmitted using the DCDL, and distributes the message.
  
- d Questions pertaining to application of the criteria in Section 5 and the appropriateness of using DCDL should be discussed with the OPOC for the Assistant Secretary for Administration. Questions pertaining to the technical requirements of messages for conformance with telecommunication protocols should be discussed with the OCIO, Director of Information Technology Services, Washington Communications and Technology Services.

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