



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Animal and Plant
Health Inspection
Service

Washington, DC
20250

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Civil Rights Policy Statement

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) employees are responsible for the fulfillment of programs critical to the success of American agriculture. Ensuring that equal opportunity is the standard for delivering our programs and providing opportunities to our employees and employment applicants is essential—and integral—to our mission. We must not only conduct our programs in a non-discriminatory manner, but also reach out to all persons who can potentially benefit from APHIS programs and services.

As APHIS Acting Administrator, I want to clearly convey that all employees must follow both the letter and spirit of the laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination. Discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex (including gender identity and expression), disability, reprisal, sexual orientation, marital status, parental or familial status, political beliefs, protected genetic information, or receipt of public assistance will not be tolerated in employment or program delivery. All APHIS workplaces must be free from any discrimination, harassment or reprisal. In addition, each employee's performance plan should include a performance element covering civil rights and equal opportunity.

I expect all APHIS managers and supervisors to work closely with their employees to provide opportunities for their career advancement. Career planning, leadership development, and mentoring are among the important tools for providing equal opportunity to all employees. Managers and supervisors should encourage employees to apply for development programs and other opportunities to further their careers in public service. Our organization will be strengthened by the development of our individual employees.

We must also continue to build on and expand the diversity of our organization, including the recruitment and retention of veterans and persons who have disabilities. While we have been successful in increasing diversity in APHIS, additional focus and effort are needed. We must reaffirm our commitment to diversity and cultural transformation goals set by the Secretary. Our newly structured APHIS Office of Civil Rights, Diversity and Inclusion will provide employees with resources and guidance to meet the Secretary's goals.

It is important that this policy statement be posted in our workplaces so employees and the public can view our commitment to civil rights. The policy statement and additional information on our civil rights program can be found on the APHIS Office of Civil Rights, Diversity and Inclusion website at www.aphis.usda.gov/civil_rights.

Thank you for your support of equal opportunity and civil rights for APHIS.

Kevin Shea
Acting Administrator

JUL 20 2012



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