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A Guide to the ARS Office of Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity



United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Research Service



Our Vision

Provide leadership and guidance to create and maintain a competitive and qualified diverse workforce that promotes an all-inclusive environment free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

Message from the Director:

As our workforce has become more diverse, it has also become more challenging to manage. However, if the concept of "equal opportunity" is to retain any meaning at all, it must find some sense of relevancy within our agency that is culturally diverse and inclusive. This means, among other things, learning to work in a collaborative and non-blaming environment where all employees can reach their full potential. It means examining our own programs and practices to detect the presence of minority and gender bias, however inadvertent, and finding ways to address it. It means fostering greater awareness of and sensitivity to the least of those among us.

Honoring and respecting our differences, whatever form they may take, is essential for cultural synergy that celebrates those differences based on combined strengths, concepts, and skills. The value of diversity reaches far beyond the conventional measures of merit; it must also be the foundation for how we treat one another within and outside the workplace. Let us all commit ourselves to a new conversation—one that celebrates our unique differences while acknowledging our common purpose—to becoming the best agency that we can be.

—Donald L. McLellan, Ph.D., Director, ODEO

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Who We Are

We are the **ARS Office of Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity (ODEO)**, serving ARS employees and the general public. ODEO strives to create and maintain a diversified workplace free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, and characterized by an atmosphere of inclusion and career development opportunities. We work together to develop a model Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program and carry out initiatives to increase representation of women, minorities, and individuals with disabilities in the workforce.

ARS Office of Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity (ODEO)
EMAIL: ARS-ODEO@ars.usda.gov

Our Work Matters

Our work helps ARS achieve its mission. When we search for new people to join ARS, we look for individuals with talent, creativity, and energy who are intrigued by 21st-century challenges and eager to solve them.

Visit ARS Careers at www.ars.usda.gov/careers

The Outreach and Recruitment Staff can answer questions you have about the Federal application process and careers in ARS.

Outreach and Recruitment Branch Contact

EMAIL: Careers@ars.usda.gov

PHONE: 202-720-6161

USDA employees are encouraged to demonstrate diversity as a core value. Each and every employee must take individual responsibility for creating and maintaining a respectful, supportive work environment that reflects the world in which we live.

» Visit www.usda.gov to learn how USDA programs and services affect the lives of every American every day.



How we work

» EEO and Compliance Branch

EEO and Compliance Branch is responsible for managing the development and implementation of the agencywide civil rights program, equal employment opportunity, and diversity policies and programs, as well as assisting REE employees in the complaint process. Specifically, this branch is responsible for civil rights and equal employment opportunity (EEO) policy, compliance and reporting, complaint management, and alternative dispute resolution.

Other responsibilities include managing and implementing the requirements of MD 715 that involve assisting the agency in creating a model workforce based on ensuring diversity in all phases of employment with special emphasis on outreach initiatives.

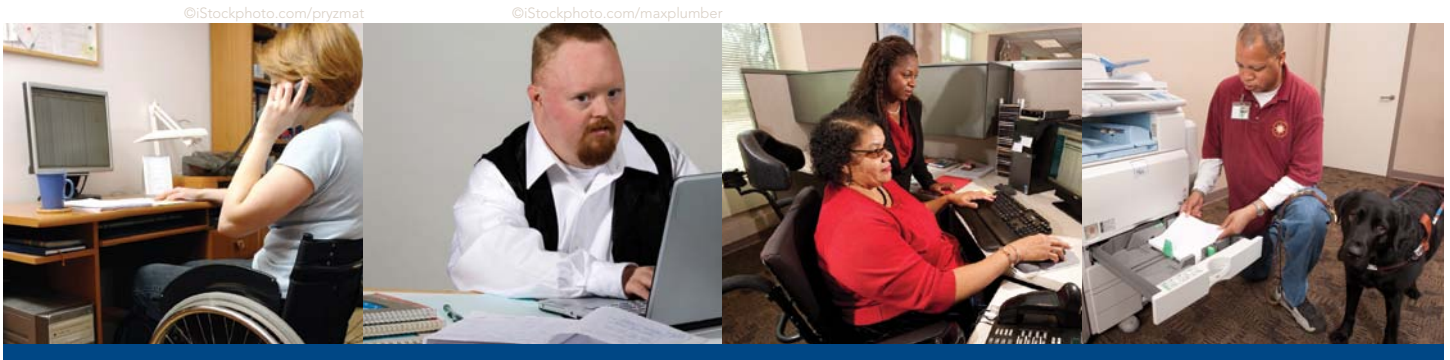
The EEO and Compliance Branch provides assistance to the entire REE mission area on matters related to disability employment and accommodations. The branch also provides training in civil rights and reprisal; EEO; disability laws; regulations; reasonable accommodations; and MD 715 policies and procedures to engender an environment in which all employees can accomplish the agency mission and reach their full potential without systemic barriers and free from discrimination.

» Reasonable Accommodation

A reasonable accommodation is any modification or adjustment to a job, an employment practice, the work environment or the manner or circumstances under which a job is customarily done that makes it possible for an individual with a disability to enjoy an equal employment opportunity. Equal employment opportunity means an opportunity to reach the same level of performance or enjoy the same benefits and privileges of employment as those available to an employee without a disability working in the same situation. While many individuals with disabilities can work without accommodations, other qualified applicants and employees face barriers to employment without the accommodation process. Reasonable accommodation is the key.

Although "reasonable accommodation" is a legal obligation under State and Federal disability laws, it is, more importantly, an interactive process through which the employer and employee can explore options and develop ways to allow the employee to be productive. Agencies are required by law to provide reasonable accommodation to a qualified employee with a disability or an applicant for employment unless it proves to be an undue hardship to the employer.

There are many different kinds of reasonable accommodations. Most accommodations are of little or no cost. Accommodations can include the following:



- job restructuring;
- modifying work schedules to include part-time or other arrangements;
- making physical facilities accessible;
- acquiring or modifying equipment or devices such as adaptive computer hardware and software;
- providing qualified readers, interpreters, and assistants; and
- reassigning the person to a vacant position for which he or she qualifies.

Any applicant for employment or qualified employee with a disability is eligible for reasonable accommodation. A qualified employee with a disability is an individual with a disability who has the skills, experience, and education and can perform the essential (critical) functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodation.

A request for reasonable accommodation is the first step in the informal, interactive process between the individual and the employee. The initial request may be oral or in writing. Requests for accommodations must be considered on a case-by-case basis and, in the majority of cases, can be resolved between the employee and the supervisor. Employees or applicants with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are responsible for making their needs known to the appropriate official (supervisor, Disability Program Manager, Human Resources personnel).

For further information or assistance regarding reasonable accommodation, contact the Disability Program Manager at the ARS Office of Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity.

» Cooperative Resolution Program

The Cooperative Resolution Program (CRP) is located in the ARS Office of Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity (ODEO).

With an established legacy for resolving conflicts at the earliest stages, CRP continues to build its solid reputation and also brings to USDA's Research, Education and Economics (REE) mission area community additional conflict management strategies and resources.

CRP continues to offer mediation, consultation, and conflict management training to all REE employees, supervisors, and managers. Facilitation, group intervention, and conflict coaching are also offered.

CRP works with both the ARS Equal Employment and Opportunity (EEO) Branch of ODEO and the Employee Relations Branch of the Human Resources Division to provide guidance, assistance, and Alternative Dispute Resolution services to REE employees, supervisors, and managers.

Cooperative Resolution Program Contact

EMAIL: coopres@ars.usda.gov

PHONE: 202-720-6161

FAX: 301-504-3261

» Area Program Managers

Area ODEO Program Managers serve Area employees and managers and the general public by establishing and maintaining relationships with local organizations, educational institutions, and other community-based groups to promote careers with ARS and broaden and diversify the applicant pool for positions in ARS.



Area ODEO Program Managers serve as a point of contact for students seeking employment within their Areas and have developed many different student programs currently in place.

» Outreach and Recruitment Branch

The Outreach and Recruitment Branch is committed to addressing ARS's recruitment challenges by working together with the Human Resources Division to develop and implement strategies for attracting talented applicants from diverse backgrounds while supporting the agency's efforts to become an employer of choice.

Our goals include...

- Increasing the number of quality applicants, especially from underrepresented populations
- Establishing a pipeline of future applicants for vacancies using outreach and recruitment initiatives

Our initiatives include but are not limited to expanding outreach activities in K-12 schools, colleges and/or universities, minority-serving institutions, and other educational organizations to inform students, recent graduates, and faculty about our scientific research program and professional opportunities available for them at ARS.

Visit careers@ars.usda.gov for more information about career opportunities.

Contact

EEO and Compliance Branch

PHONE: 202-720-3410

TOLL FREE: 800-340-4289

TDD: 202-720-3303

Reasonable Accommodation Program

PHONE: 202-720-6161

Cooperative Resolution Program

EMAIL: coopres@ars.usda.gov

PHONE: 202-720-6161

Outreach and Recruitment Branch

EMAIL: careers@ars.usda.gov

PHONE: 202-720-6161

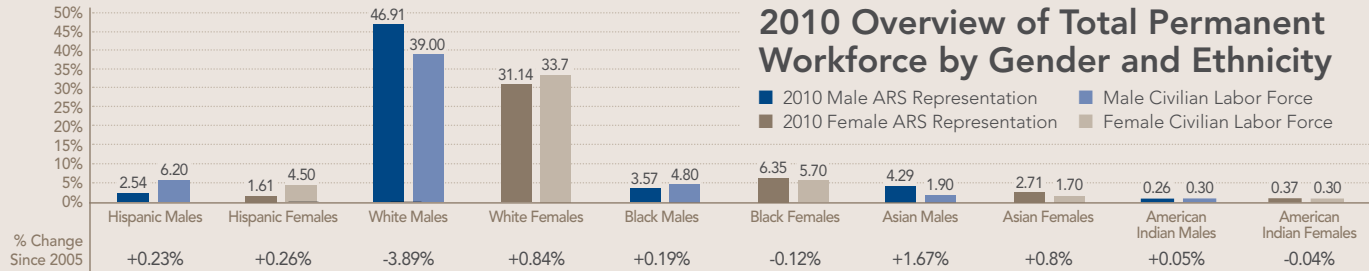
Visit the Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity website at www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ODEO/ for further details, information, news, job postings, and more!

www.ars.usda.gov/Careers/Careers.htm

We welcome your inquiries. We are here to serve you!



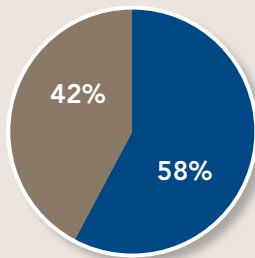
2010 ARS Workforce Facts & Figures



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The average age of ARS employees, compared with 47 in 2005.

ARS Total Permanent Workforce

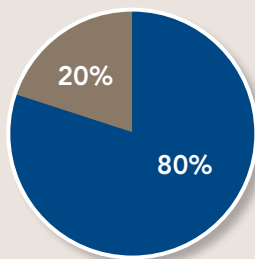


TOTAL PERMANENT WORKFORCE
 Total Employees 7,280
 % Decrease since 2005 3.50%

Hispanic males and females, White females, and Black males remain under the Civilian Labor Force.

GENDER
 ■ Males 58.0%
 ■ Females 42.0%
 % decrease since 2005 0.0%

ARS Total Scientific Workforce



TOTAL SCIENTIFIC WORKFORCE
 Total Employees 1,988
 Decrease since 2005 1.60%

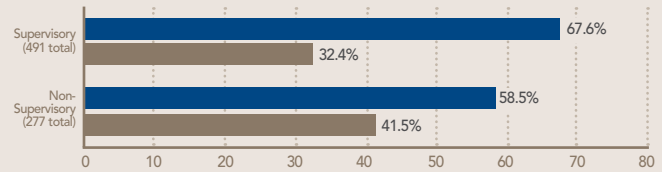
GENDER
 ■ Males 80.0%
 ■ Females 20.0%
 % decrease since 2005 1.75%
 % decrease since 2005 1.74%

Grade Distribution

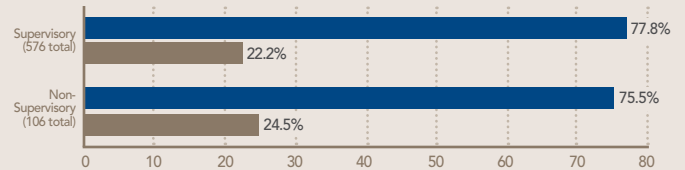
The percentage of supervisory females has increased in all grades since 2005, except for Senior Executive Service.

■ Males ■ Females

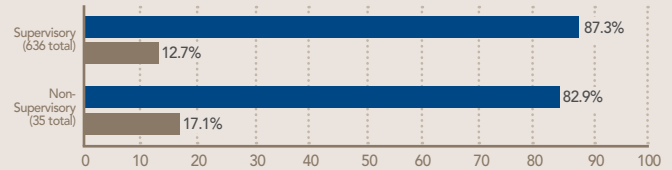
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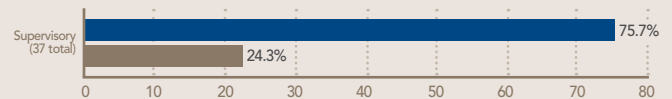
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SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE



27.3

Percentage of the Total ARS Workforce composed of ARS Scientific Employees.

1.03

Percentage of ARS employees reporting targeted disabilities, a 0.14% decrease since 2005.



ODEO Headquarters, ARS, USDA

1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Room 3913

Washington, D.C., 20250

PHONE: 202-720-6161

FAX: 202-690-0109

INTERNET: www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ODEO

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