

Subpart E - Asian American/Pacific Islander Emphasis Program

403.70 Purpose

This subpart provides guidance and direction to NRCS organizational units on the development and implementation of the Asian American/Pacific Islander Emphasis Program (AA/PIEP). The purpose of the program is to provide focus on such issues as employment, retention, promotion, training, career development, and advancement opportunities affecting Asian American and Pacific Islander applicants and employees at NRCS.

403.71 Policy

It is NRCS policy to conduct a positive and continuing AA/PIEP that provides equal employment opportunity for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in all personnel management policies and practices and in NRCS-sponsored programs and activities.

403.72 Authorities

- A. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and the Civil Rights Act of 1991, Equal Employment Opportunity.
- B. The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 requires "fair and equitable" treatment in all aspects of personnel management without regard to political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, or disabling condition.
- C. 29 CFR Part 1614, Federal Sector Equal Employment Opportunity.
- D. Executive Order 11478, Equal Employment Opportunity in Federal Government (August 12, 1969) (superseded Executive Order 11246 and parts of Executive Order 11375 applicable to the Federal Government), as amended by Executive Orders 13087 (May 28, 1998) and 13152 (May 2, 2000).
- E. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Management Directive 110.
- F. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Management Directive 715.
- G. USDA Departmental Regulation 4230-002, Special Emphasis Programs (June 4, 2009).

403.73 Program Objectives

The Asian American/Pacific Islander Emphasis Program is an integral part of the overall equal employment opportunity (EEO) program and is designed to—

- (1) Ensure that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders receive equal treatment in all aspects of employment.
- (2) Increase the number of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders employed in all professional, administrative, technical, clerical, and other categories, series, and grade levels.
- (3) Provide opportunities to participate in training, career development, and leadership programs.
- (4) Encourage the participation of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in all NRCS-sponsored programs and activities.
- (5) Provide a network of professional support for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the workplace.
- (6) Provide mentoring support to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the workforce.
- (7) Educate all NRCS employees by raising the level of awareness of Asian American and Pacific Islander workplace issues and concerns.

403.74 Organizational Structure

The AA/PIEP is an integral part of the overall equal opportunity program in NRCS. It is coordinated through the collateral duty national Asian American/Pacific Islander Emphasis Program manager (AA/PIEPM), who is assigned to the Outreach and Advocacy (O&A) Division and serves as the principal staff advisor to the director of the O&A Division on legislation, policies, employment, and program issues impacting Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

403.75 Appointment of the Collateral Duty National AA/PIEPM

- A. The collateral duty national AA/PIEPM vacancy is announced every 3 years, or on an as-needed basis, through a national bulletin and filled through a competitive process. The position is a collateral assignment and appointed by the director of the Outreach and Advocacy Division.
- B. The national AA/PIEPM serves on a collateral duty basis for a 3-year term. At the end of the 3-year term, the incumbent may reapply and if selected may be renewed for an additional 3-year term.
- C. The collateral duty national AA/PIEPM is required to dedicate 20 percent of his or her official time to performing national AA/PIEPM-related assignments.

403.76 Duties and Responsibilities of the Collateral Duty National AA/PIEPM

The collateral duty national AA/PIEPM is responsible for providing program leadership and direction for agencywide activities related to the AA/PIEP. Specifically, the collateral duty national AA/PIEPM—

- (1) Formulates and implements the general direction of the overall NRCS Asian American/Pacific Islander Emphasis Program and evaluates the effectiveness of activities and programs toward achieving AA/PIEP objectives.
- (2) Provides training, guidance, information, and assistance to National Headquarters, regions, State managers, supervisors, and collateral duty State and center AA/PIEPMs concerning their AA/PIEP responsibilities. In addition, the collateral duty national AA/PIEPM serves as the principal resource person and staff advisor on legislation, affirmative employment programs, and unique concerns and problems related to equal opportunities for Asian American and Pacific Islander employees.
- (3) Analyzes and evaluates employment policies, practices, procedures, and workforce profile data to determine if barriers or potential barriers to full participation exist and report findings to the appropriate officials with recommendations for corrective action.
- (4) Establishes and strengthens relationships with organizations and groups representing the Asian American and Pacific Islander agriculture communities.
- (5) Maintains relationships with AA/PIEPMs from other agencies and Asian American and Pacific Islander organizations for the mutual exchange of ideas, advice, best practices, and information.
- (6) Serves as the NRCS representative on the Department's AA/PIEP committee.
- (7) Participates in studies and reviews to identify possible forms of discrimination and barriers to equal opportunity in employment activities (e.g., recruitment, hiring, development, promotion, recognition and awards, retention).

403.77 Appointment of Collateral Duty State and Center AA/PIEPMs

- A. Deputy equal opportunity officers (DEOOs) appoint collateral duty State and center AA/PIEPMs within their jurisdictional areas. Collateral duty AA/PIEPMs report directly to the DEOOs on issues impacting Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.
- B. A collateral duty AA/PIEPM should devote 20 percent of his or her time to the program. It is recommended that the AA/PIEPM serve on a collateral duty basis for a 3-year term. At the end of the 3-year term, the incumbent may reapply and if selected may be renewed for an additional 3-year term.
- C. Criteria for selection should include sensitivity to the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, ability to function effectively under pressure, and commitment to EEO and the AA/PIEP.

403.78 Duties and Responsibilities of Collateral Duty State and Center AA/PIEPMs

Collateral duty State and center AA/PIEPMs provide program leadership and support the collateral duty national AA/PIEPM in implementing a viable AA/PIEP agencywide. The collateral duty national AA/PIEPM provides technical guidance and the collateral duty State or center AA/PIEPM ensures that AA/PIEP activities are integrated into the overall equal opportunity program in the organizational unit. In their organizational units, the collateral duty State and center AA/PIEPMs—

- (1) Advise the directors and State Conservationists on matters affecting the employment and advancement of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.
- (2) Serve as members to the civil rights committee in their organizational units to ensure that all NRCS activities are free from discrimination and that barriers to the recruitment, employment, and advancement of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are addressed. AA/PIEPMs assist in evaluating the effectiveness of the overall equal opportunity program in their organizational units and assist in identifying new and changing program needs.
- (3) Coordinate or conduct educational programs (e.g., workshops, seminars, or other types of programs, such as AA/PIEP observances).
- (4) Maintain close contact with community organizations for possible job referrals of Asian American and Pacific Islander applicants and stay attuned to concerns of the Asian American and Pacific Islander populations.
- (5) Attend job fairs or other functions at local high schools, colleges, and universities to obtain names of applicants and provide information on job opportunities; send recruitment literature to schools and community groups; sponsor workshops and speakers, information booths at conferences, career days, and other training programs.
- (6) Keep the national AA/PIEPM informed of field activities affecting Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.
- (7) Serve as local representative at national, regional, and State meetings concerning Asian American and Pacific Islander issues.
- (8) Serve as a communication link between employees and the national AA/PIEPM, keeping State employees aware of AA/PIEP activities and developmental opportunities through electronic messages, memos, bulletins, newsletters, and other appropriate means.
- (9) Perform other duties related to the AA/PIEP as identified by the DEOO, national AA/PIEPM, and AA/PIEP committees, as appropriate.

403.79 Documenting State and Center AA/PIEPM Assignments

- A. The State or center AA/PIEPM's collateral duty will be described in writing as part of his or her

position description and show—

- (1) Scope of responsibility.
- (2) Supervisory roles of DEOO, equal opportunity liaison officer, and the immediate supervisor.
- (3) Percentage of official time to be spent on the AA/PIEP.
- (4) Specific duties and responsibilities of the collateral assignment.

B. In addition, the DEOO, equal opportunity liaison officer, and the immediate supervisor will prepare a memorandum of understanding (see subpart J) that responds to the following questions regarding working conditions:

- (1) How and when will the appointee receive AA/PIEP assignments?
- (2) What percentage of official time will be spent on the AA/PIEP, and how will adjustments be made to meet AA/PIEP objectives?
- (3) Who will appraise the appointee's performance, and how will the appraisals be completed?
- (4) Who will provide clerical support and office facilities, if needed?

403.80 Definition

An Asian American or Pacific Islander is a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent (for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam).

403.81 Annual Business Plan of Operation

A. Annual business plans of operation are important management tools that are effective in gauging progress in meeting short- and long-term goals and in scheduling annual program activities. They also provide the basis for determining the performance of managers in specific areas of responsibility.

B. Collateral duty State and center AA/PIEPMs will develop results-oriented annual business plan of operations. The annual plan should contain realistic and achievable action items in accordance with this subpart.

403.82 Reports

A. Collateral duty State and center AA/PIEPMs will submit quarterly activity reports to the collateral duty national Asian American/Pacific Islander Program manager.

B. Collateral State and center duty AA/PIEPMs will submit an annual report to the collateral duty national Asian American/Pacific Islander Emphasis Program manager highlighting major accomplishments during the fiscal year.