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## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

### Discrimination in Employment is Unlawful

Aggrieved persons who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, marital or family status, political beliefs, parental status, protected genetic information, reprisal, and equal pay must consult a Counselor prior to filing a complaint in order to attempt to informally resolve the matter.

- **WHO CAN FILE?** Any employee, former employee, or applicant for employment with the Food Safety and Inspection Service may make a claim of employment discrimination.
- **COUNSELING** An aggrieved person must initiate contact with a Counselor **within 45 days** of the date of the matter alleged to be discriminatory or, in the case of a personnel action, within 45 days of the effective date of the action. An aggrieved individual may elect to pursue informal resolution through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) or Traditional Counseling. The EEO Counselor will discuss these options during the initial counseling session.
- **INITIATING A PRE-COMPLAINT** It is the responsibility of the aggrieved employee, applicant, or former employee to seek counseling in a timely manner. If you believe you have been discriminated against, contact the FSIS Civil Rights Division as shown below:

**FSIS Civil Rights Division**  
**Counseling Services Branch**  
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Mail Drop 5261  
Beltsville, MD 20705-5000

**(301) 504-7760 (voice) – Washington DC Metro Area**

**(301) 504-7756 (voice/TDD)**

**(800) 269-6912 (toll free) – All Areas Outside The Washington Metro Area**