

## CIVIL RIGHTS

1. School Food Authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, After School Snack Program or Special Milk Program must include the nondiscrimination statement in their student handbook in the section that addresses access to or information about the school meals program. It must also be included on the school's web site if school meal information is available.

### Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
- (2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

If the material is too small to permit the full statement to be included, the material will at a minimum include this statement, in print no smaller than the text: "This institution is an equal opportunity provider."

2. The USDA "And Justice for All" poster must be displayed at each feeding site in a location that is visible to students during meal service.
3. Provide appropriate translations of materials concerning the availability and nutritional benefits of the school meals program, as needed. This requirement can be met through the use of bilingual staff members, volunteers and/or informational materials in appropriate languages.
4. Follow this procedure for Accepting and Filing Complaints of Discrimination in the School Meals Program
  - **RIGHT TO FILE A COMPLAINT:** Any person alleging discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability has a right to file a complaint within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory action.
  - **ACCEPTANCE:** All complaints, written or verbal, shall be accepted by the School Food Authority

(SFA) and forwarded to the Administrator of the Nebraska Department of Education - Nutrition Services within five days. It is necessary that the information be sufficient to determine the identity of the agency or individual toward which the complaint is directed, and to indicate the possibility of a violation. Anonymous complaints shall be handled as any other complaint.

- **VERBAL COMPLAINTS:** In the event that a complainant makes the allegation verbally or through a telephone conversation and refuses or is not inclined to place such allegations in writing, the person to whom the allegations are made shall write up the elements of the complaint for the complainant. Every effort should be made to have the complainant provide the following information:
    - 1) Name, address and telephone number or other means of contacting the complainant.
    - 2) The specific location and name of the entity delivering the program service or benefit.
    - 3) The nature of the incident(s) or action(s) that led the complainant to feel discrimination was a factor
    - 4) The basis on which the complainant feels discrimination exists (race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability).
    - 5) The names, titles and addresses of persons who may have knowledge of the discriminatory action(s).
    - 6) The date(s) during which the alleged discriminatory action occurred, or if continuing, the duration of such actions.
5. Train staff on civil rights annually. Specific subject areas to include:
- **COLLECTING AND USING DATA:** Data is collected on ethnicity and race. Parent self-declares. If they do not report, SFA staff will code based on perception. All program materials must be stored in an area of restricted access and retained for three years.
  - **EFFECTIVE PUBLIC NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS:** Display the “And Justice for All” poster, include the nondiscrimination statement on program materials, provide information in other languages and alternative formats as needed and convey equal opportunity in all photos and other graphics on websites, publications, etc.
  - **COMPLAINT PROCEDURES:** Procedures must be established to accept complaints or grievances based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Participants must be advised of their right to file a complaint, how to file a complaint, and the complaint procedures. If there is a complaint, the SFA must contact the Nebraska Department of Education – Nutrition Services.
  - **COMPLIANCE REVIEW TECHNIQUES:** Ensure civil rights requirements are being followed during review process.
  - **RESOLUTION OF NON-COMPLIANCE:** Inappropriate actions must cease. A corrective action plan is required and appropriate procedures must be implemented.
  - **REQUIREMENTS FOR REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES:** Entrances and exits must exist to accommodate the disabled. Braille signage and alternative arrangements for service must be available, when needed.
  - **REQUIREMENTS FOR LANGUAGE ASSISTANT:** Bilingual personnel and materials must be provided depending on need, resources available and cost.
  - **CONFLICT RESOLUTION:** Use alternative dispute resolution techniques when necessary. Treat others with respect.
  - **CUSTOMER SERVICE:** “Treat others the way they want to be treated (or at least be aware of what that is).”
6. Attach documentation of annual training, including date and attendance roster.

