

Civil Rights/EEO Laws/Regulations and Their Implications on the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station

Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI

"No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance

Title VI Implications for MAFES

- Ensure that MAFES services are non-discriminatory

The Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station, adhering to the guidelines and policies of Mississippi State University and CSREES, provides its research services to all interested recipients in a non-discriminatory manner.

<http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/0302.html>

- Communicate MAFES non-discrimination policy on all written materials disseminated to the public

All written materials developed by the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station workforce for dissemination to the public will contain the MAFES/Mississippi State University's non-discrimination statement. Additionally, all news releases and other written materials will include the non-discrimination statement. Examples are: MAFES does not discriminate. All workshops and field days are open to the general public, etc.

- To ensure MAFES employees are aware of MAFES Civil Rights policies and guidelines MAFES Civil Rights policies and guidelines are posted on the MAFES web site, discussed during Civil Rights/EEO training sessions and covered during department conferences. Additional information may be obtained by contacting the MAFES Special Affairs Advisor.

- Ensure that "Justice for All Posters" are prominently displayed "Justice for All" posters are required in all MAFES office buildings. Posters should be displayed in the office entrance and conference rooms where clients and potential customers congregate. Justice for All Posters can be obtained by contacting MAFES Special Affairs Advisor.

- Actively seek participation of minorities and other underrepresented groups The Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station will actively seek participation of minorities and other underrepresented groups on advisory councils, for field days, tours and other MAFES sponsored events. MAFES will continue to utilize the New Customers prototype to increase participation of minorities, the underrepresented and the underserved potential customers. All advisory/planning committees' organizers will seek to include membership representative of the enterprise/commodity potential recipient base.

- Ensure Mailing List Diversity

The Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station will seek to have mailing lists representative of the potential customer base for the enterprise/commodity involved. MAFES will seek to recruit more women and minorities on mailing lists, if mail lists exist.

- Obtaining Assurance Statements from Private Groups and Organizations

The Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Experiment Station, in partnership with the Mississippi State University Extension Service, provides programming to private groups and private organizations who provide assurance attesting of their non-discriminatory policies. MAFES personnel providing services to private groups on a continuous basis must ensure they are on the state master list or obtain a signed assurance statement.

- Ensure clients and customers are aware of MAFES complaint procedures

Individuals alleging program concerns and complaints are requested to make their concerns known to the individual(s) involved, if possible. Often times, concerns can be resolved by communication between the parties involved. Upon knowledge of a concern/complaint by a customer, the employee should make their supervisor aware of the concern/complaint. The supervisor is expected to promptly report those issues to MAFES Administration. MAFES Administration will discuss the concern/complaint with the involved parties to seek an informal resolution. Upon request by the client/customer, the names and telephone numbers of the immediate supervisor, the Special Affairs Advisor, the Director of MAFES and/or Associate Directors, and the Director, Office of Civil Rights Programs, Washington DC should be provided.

To file a formal Civil Rights program complaint, you may write the Director of MAFES or associates, or the MAFES Special Affairs Advisor. Additionally, a program complaint may also be filed by writing USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 202250-9410 or by calling (202) 720-5964.

Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972

Prohibits sex discrimination in federally assisted education programs and activities. It states that no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Title IX Implication for MAFES

- All planning groups and committees should be representative of both sexes
- Actively seek program participation from both sexes

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504

"No otherwise qualified disabled individual in the United States shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

The American with Disabilities Act of 1990

No person in the United States shall, because of discrimination, prevent qualified individuals with disabilities from enjoying the same program benefits or employment opportunities that are available to persons without disabilities. The American with Disabilities Act guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in employment, public accommodations, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications. This act seeks to remove barriers, which prevent qualified individuals with disabilities from receiving the same program and employment opportunities, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency enjoyed by individuals without disabilities.

Rehabilitation Act and ADA Implication for MAFES

- Ensure full participation of the disabled

The Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station will use all reasonable efforts to accommodate the disabled. To ensure full participation by impaired clients and customers, accommodations will be made available upon request, if possible. MAFES sponsored meetings will be held in accessible facilities, when available. Announcements of educational opportunities will request that, individuals needing accommodations to more fully participate, make their request for accommodations known prior to the event. Visits, calls and/or computer communication will be made upon request, to clients and customers unable to participate in field days, tours, and other programs. Translators, close captioning, locating clients and customers closer to speakers, providing program materials in different formats, and other accommodations will be provided upon request

Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII

Prohibits discrimination in hiring. "Employers are prohibited from discriminating in hiring or any term or condition of employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin."

Religious Discrimination prohibits discrimination against individuals because of their religion in hiring, firing and other terms and conditions. Employers are required to reasonably accommodate an individual's serious religious convictions unless it creates an undue hardship.

Sexual Harassment - Requires employers to maintain a workplace free of sexual harassment, including unlawful, hostile work environments based on sex.

Pregnancy Discrimination - Prohibits discrimination based on pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions. Prohibits employers from refusing to hire a woman because of pregnancy conditions as long as major functions of the job can be performed.

Employee Civil Rights Complaints

Employees who have Civil Rights concerns/complaints are requested to address those concerns with the individual(s) involved or the immediate supervisor, if appropriate. Employees are also welcome to contact the MAFES Special Affairs Advisor, the MAFES Director or Associate Directors. Additionally, employees may raise Civil Rights concerns/complaints by contacting the MSU Department of Human Resources or MSU Director of Diversity and Equity Programs. The Director's office, in concert with HRM and/or the Director of Diversity and Equity Programs as appropriate, will seek an informal resolution. Employee will be advised of the formal complaint process.

The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967

Prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of age for those 40 and over except where age is a bona fide occupational qualification.

Family and Medical Leave Act

Entitle eligible employees up to a total of 12 weeks of leave during any twelve-month period for the birth of a child, placement of a child for adoption or foster care. Eligible employees also qualify for leave due to their serious health condition, or caring for a spouse, child or parents with a serious health condition.

Civil Rights Act of 1991

Extends the coverage of the Civil Rights act of 1866 to include virtually all employment-related decisions. Reversed several supreme court decisions, raised the ceiling for damages for discrimination claims, set up the Glass Ceiling Commission which is an agency of the federal Department of Health and Human Services which focuses on the prevention and control of disease, injury and disability.

Departmental Regulation 4360-1

Agencies of the United State Department of Agriculture shall develop and implement communication strategy including media outreach to under-served customers such as women, racial and ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities.